

news

news from the trunk
Thursday, November 22, 2018



Thanksgiving at KAS

Superintendent's Message

As a follow up to last week's E News article, I am letting the community know about the new teachers hired so far for the next school year. We continue to interview and look for highly qualified and experienced teachers.

Teachers Hired for 2019-2020:

Bill Collins – High School Science – Bill has a BA with a triple major of Math, Chemistry and Physics. He also has an MA in Physics. Bill has several years teaching experience. He has taught in the U.S. Navy, the University of Northern Iowa, Iowa public high schools, and Saudi Arabia. Bill is an American citizen.

Sally Loughborough – Curriculum Coordinator – Sally has a BA in American History and an MA in Education. Sally has several years experience and has taught in Thailand, the U.A.E., Indonesia, Taiwan and the U.S. Sally is an American citizen.

Kelsey Caldwell – Kindergarten – Kelsey has a BA in Education and an MA in TESOL. Kelsey has taught in South Korea, Indonesia, and presently teaches in Ohio in the U.S. Kelsey is an American citizen and will be coming with her husband Jon and two small children.

Jon Caldwell – Grade 4 – Jonathan has a BA in Elementary Education and an MA in Education Technology. Bill has taught in South Korea, Indonesia and presently teaches in Ohio in the U.S. Bill is an American citizen and will be coming with his wife Kelsey and two small children.

Sally Bektor – EAL/English – Sally has a BA in English Linguistics and a Preliminary MA, also in English Linguistics. Sally has taught in Egypt and with us at KAS since 2015. Sally is an Egyptian citizen. Sally has over 10 years experience teaching EAL and English.

KAS Board Meeting

The next KAS Board meeting will be on December 9, 2018

Steve Alexander
KAS Superintendent

KAS Students visit to Khartoum Botanical Gardens



Letter from the Middle & High School Principal

Dear Parents and Friends,

Today Americans all around the world celebrated a very special day – Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving is celebrated each year on the fourth Thursday of November in the United States. Thanksgiving Day is traditionally a day for families and friends to get together for a special meal. The meal often includes a turkey, stuffing, potatoes, cranberry sauce, gravy, pumpkin pie, and vegetables. Thanksgiving Day parades are held in some cities and towns on or around Thanksgiving Day. This is one of the busiest periods for travel in the USA. Some people have a four-day weekend, so it is a popular time to take trips and to visit family and friends.

Many people trace the origins of the modern Thanksgiving Day to the harvest celebration that the Pilgrims held in Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1621. However, their first true Thanksgiving was in 1623, when they gave thanks for rain that ended a drought. These early Thanksgivings took the form of a special church service, rather than a feast. In the second half of the 1600s, Thanksgiving after the harvest became more common and started to become an annual event. George Washington, the first president of the United States, proclaimed the first national Thanksgiving Day in 1789.

Thanksgiving Day is a time for many people to give thanks for what they have. Here, at Khartoum American School, we have many things to be thankful for. We have a wonderful school with outstanding teachers and excellent facilities. We teach our students to be thankful and we emphasize the importance of gratitude. We, as teachers, are thankful for being educators and we are thankful for the opportunity to be working with your children and for making a difference in their lives.

I hope that you all have a lovely weekend, being thankful and spending time with family and looking hopefully to the future.

Susan Boutros
Middle & High School Principal

Sewing the key to happiness?



Have you ever worked on a sewing project, or any arts and crafts project, and got lost in it for hours without noticing? This phenomenon is called “flow.” Flow is essentially when you become completely absorbed in an activity, leading to the feeling of joy and forgetting the world around you. The relaxing effects of flow are similar to those of meditation. Psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi believes that flow is the key to happiness.

<https://www.allfreesewing.com/Reference-Information/Health-Benefits-of-Sewing>

The reason I started teaching sewing during my ‘Do It Yourself’ exploratory class, was because I myself enjoy it and think it’s a skill everybody should have.

I thought the students would enjoy it too, but the popularity of the class really took me by surprise. In this day and age where kids would rather be playing on an electronic device, to have a group of about a dozen students completely immersed in their sewing projects was really refreshing.

Throughout this year the students will be creating their own personalized variations of laptop sleeves to protect their precious devices. The closures used will be zippers, velcro and buttons and then there are those students who will add their own extra touches like straps and pockets, depending on their creativity and ability.

The range of skillset in the groups was quite extensive, from some students who had never threaded a needle, to those who had some experience.

The students were all very engaged and were very excited to complete their projects by the end of the quarter, as they were the lucky few selected for the coveted class. The students were very proud of their unique completed bags and at any given instant they can be seen carrying them around campus.

Sara Abugarga
Student Support Services

The Importance of Teaching Content Through the Lens of Reading Instruction



Khartoum American School though soundly entrenched in an American curriculum, is most profoundly a school of English Language Learners. The first language of most of our students is Arabic while many of our Asian students speak their native languages at home. In order to help our students grow and succeed in the American curriculum we teach, it is critical that we view our content areas through the lens of reading instruction.

How do we get our students excited about learning a particular subject? ALL learning is built upon prior knowledge. Students must be able to access that knowledge or schema in order to engage with new knowledge. Reading teachers know this is easy to do with books. Early primary readers are asked to do a picture walk and talk about what they see. Older students are asked to read the blurb on the back of the book to discover the key characters, the setting of the story, and the main problem to be encountered. Thus background knowledge is provided to the student setting the tone for a successful reading experience. In the content area subjects this is not so easy to do. We cannot count on students' prior knowledge when so many come and go from our community, all with varying proficiencies of English. Our texts carry American references that may or may not be understood by our students.

To provide our students with the background knowledge that will engage them for continued study, it is imperative that we preteach each area of our subject. Students need to be introduced to key content vocabulary along with academic vocabulary we often take for granted.

Even the universal subject of math needs to have direct vocabulary instruction particularly when solving word problems. Students often ask me about words that I never thought would cause trouble. After we go through the language of reading, we go through the language of math. Students are asked to pick out all the math words they see and explain what they mean. If they do not get them all, I help them. Once the English and math vocabu-

lary have been deciphered, we read the problem again for the purpose of solving.

When it comes to Science and Social Studies, it is important to preteach content and academic vocabulary before reading. This should be followed by a chapter preview with the students reading titles and subtitles, photo captions, charts, diagrams, and maps. This type of textbook "walk" followed by a discussion of what the students can expect from the chapter, will provide the background knowledge necessary for students to understand the information they will be reading. The same thing can be done before assigning an internet article to be read. Students can be paired to do chapter and article walk throughs together, then be given the opportunity to discuss their reading and check for understanding.

Writing is an important part of reading comprehension. Students should be encouraged to write questions or comments they may have while reading. This is not something they will readily do on their own. It should be modeled for them again and again until they see writing as a natural extension of reading. With these little additions to our content instruction we can ensure our English language learners will be successful.

Jananne Healey
Grade 5 Teacher

Saying of the Week

To suggest somebody has a **Brass Neck** is to imply they have some nerve and will try anything to suit their own purposes, usually with the reluctant admiration of others for their cheek. The origin of this phrase lies with the legend of a highwayman who was sentenced to hang from a tree for his crimes. This method of hanging brought about a slow death by choking so the highwayman came up with a cunning plan. he would swallow a piece of brass tube, with a wire attached to it and held inside his mouth, in the hope this would prevent his throat being crushed and allow him to breathe long enough for the crowd to disperse. All he then needed was an accomplice who could cut him down, remove the tube and save his life. Unfortunately it is not known if this is actually true, but the legend is certain where the term 'brass neck' came from.

Minette van der Bijl
High School English Department