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Founder's message



An auspicious year begins

The year 2012, the year of the dragon in the Chinese zodiac, is a significant year which, within the Chinese culture, is particularly fortuitous. I was able to join the centre teams in many of the Singapore pre-schools during the Chinese New Year period and would like to thank the Pre-school Directors for ensuring that these visits were truly celebratory, many had the participation of children; many kitchens prepared favourite dishes for the event. It was truly wonderful to see the sense of team that exists in our pre-schools and to talk informally with staff of their plans for the year.

Literacy learning at EtonHouse:

We have dedicated this newsletter to highlight the many ways that EtonHouse educators support children's understandings of communication and literacy learning.

The 21st century is a time of rapid change throughout the world and children are expected (at an ever earlier age) not only to be text literate, but also to be familiar with a range of technological literacies as well as environmental print. The Internet, email and various technological tools e.g. scanners; interactive whiteboards; I-Pad and I-Phone applications are research tools which are highly useful to children as part of their work with inquiry, however they require different skills to traditional book handling skills. At EtonHouse we accept our responsibility to ensure that children have exposure to a diverse range of rich literacy experiences as part of a typical day – shared storybook, guided and independent reading; access to computer technology; the establishment of

communication centres within the classrooms where children are encouraged to write for a purpose.

In Reggio Emilia, the educators speak of the 100 languages of children. At EtonHouse we understand this as building children's capacities to communicate across many different media, as well as traditional print-text. Inquiry curriculum supports children as sophisticated thinkers and communicators, with many opportunities to represent their thinking via the visual and performing arts, as well as print. We believe this capacity to be multi-literate equips children well as citizens of a global context.

EtonHouse International School, Wuxi China, receives IB authorisation

Heartiest congratulations to the staff at Wuxi esp. Mr. Rob Stewart, Principal and Ms Betty Brown, PYP coordinator for this outstanding achievement.

Singapore opens a new pre-school:

Two successful Open House days were held at the new EtonHouse pre-school in Claymore Road the week of March 12th which coincidentally was the anniversary of our 17th year of operation. From our very first setting at Broadrick Road to this new preschool, we have experienced an exciting journey of learning, with many positive challenges and happy memories. There are now 52 EtonHouse pre-schools/schools across 8 different countries within the Asia Pacific Region and this newsletter is an important connector for the families and teaching staff across the EtonHouse family. The articles reflect children's enthusiasm for learning and the commitment of our teachers to their work that have come to be synonymous with EtonHouse classrooms.

I wish all families and centre teams a happy start to the year – let's work together to achieve great things.

Ng Gim Choo
Group Managing Director,
EtonHouse International Education Group



News Flash



EtonHouse International School Wuxi – Official IB World School!

This week EtonHouse Wuxi was formally announced as an IB World School by the international Baccalaureate Organisation. This means the school is now fully authorized to run the Primary Years Programme. Congratulations to all of the Wuxi school community for this outstanding achievement. For such a young school to achieve this high standard in such a short time is a reflection on the hard work and professional standards it sets for itself. A special thank you to Mrs. Betty Brown, the PYP Coordinator, who led the school so well through the 'Authorisation' process. Her knowledge of the PYP and organizational leadership is outstanding and much appreciated.

EtonHouse International Pre-School at Claymore off Orchard Road, the newest EtonHouse campus in Singapore opened its doors to the public on the 16th and 17th of March 2012. The campus received an overwhelming response with around 200 visitors over the 2 Open House days. Situated in the heart of the city, this beautiful environment offers children and teachers endless opportunities for engaging teaching and learning experiences.



Representatives of the Korean chapter of OMEP (World Organisation for Early Childhood Education) visit EtonHouse pre-schools and the EtonHouse Education Centre to talk about our work to support young children's understandings of sustainability.

EtonHouse Education Centre update

by Heather Conroy, Executive Director of Pedagogy

Working within an inquiry curriculum, requires a different 'skill set' to working with a prescriptive curriculum (which basically tells teachers 'what to do when'). Teachers need to develop a repertoire of diverse teaching strategies to support not only the process of inquiry, but also the documentation and assessment of children's learning through an



The new EtonHouse Claymore team reflecting on pedagogical documentation as a learning teaching tool as part of their induction week.

integrated and play based approach.

Since moving to its new location in January 2011, the EtonHouse Education Centre (EEC) has been responsible for supporting teachers in their professional development through workshops, seminars, network meetings (across centre meetings facilitated by teacher practitioners) and International conferences.

Supporting our teachers' professional development is one way for us to show we value the professional knowledge base of our teachers said Mrs Ng Gim Choo, and reminds us of the importance of lifelong learning.

The start to the year has been a busy one for the EEC with week-long workshops in EtonHouse Japan and Malaysia, as well



We see teachers as researchers who regularly document children's ideas, thoughts, skills and behaviours to support their understanding of children's learning and development

as several dialogue sessions in the Singapore pre-schools. The EEC is also convening its first International Conference for 2012. Titled Provocations for Practice, conference speakers come directly from Reggio Emilia and the Reggio Children International Network in New Zealand (REANZ). Conference content will focus our attention on high quality pedagogy and will further support our understandings of the practice of pedagogical documentation. The conference will be held in Singapore 26th – 28th April, at the Concorde Hotel in Orchard Road.

<http://www.etonhouse.com.sg/media/news-events/160-reggio-emilia-is-coming-to-singapore-in-april.html>

The Writing Environment

by John Cooley, Advisor-EtonHouse



As an educator with a career spanning far more years than I would sometimes wish to remember, one enduring constant has been my desire for the highest quality of literacy education to be accessible for every child in a pre-school and primary classroom. This desire is for all the usual reasons that children should receive the best possible foundation literacy education in a civilised community i.e to be able to receive and articulate feelings and ideas; and to utilise language to be able to think – and expand upon that thinking.

The articles in this edition of the EtonHouse Corporate Newsletter explore these possibilities, particularly within the context of Inquire-Think-Learn or International Baccalaureate inquiry learning, which place the child at the centre of the literacy inquiry cycle. This is exactly as literacy should be facilitated with the awakening and development of skills, and awareness in the child being a co-operative learning adventure mentored, motivated and guided by the classroom teacher.

In the area of writing, this reciprocal relationship is particularly critical and the area I would like to further explore. From experience, I have found that young writers have a potential for imaginative written communication that can be considerably in advance of the imagination of their classroom teachers. What can limit creative written



output in the classroom is not the ability of the young writer but the adult mind partnering this output. While this may at first appear to be a radical position to argue, consider the last occasion as a teacher or parent that time was taken (or available) to write a poem, create a story or paint a watercolour. Also reflect for a moment when you last had a conversation with an imaginary friend or played in a world created entirely from your own imagination. When it comes to the

world of imagination, children are the active daily agents and experts - and adults, the onlookers. Children, every day, journey in a world in which reality and fantasy overlap without boundaries that constrict their thinking or their writing. Adults live a far more prosaic reality.

Another great asset that a child has as a creative thinker/writer is the unbridled immediacy to use ideas, images and words without the filter of an adult mindset programmed to continually funnel ideas back within expected norms. Children experience the world with a raw open-minded and open-hearted intimacy that most adults have been weaned from over many decades.

Now this is not to propagate the idea that the best of children's creative thinking and writing will simply flow when the teacher steps back and the child, as writer, steps forward –it's a little more complex than this simple traffic movement. However, it's an important recognition that the child should be the expert and the teacher the muse/editor/coach with the support role to play.

The other critical factors to bring into the writing environment are time for the children's quiet, uninterrupted gestation and elaboration of ideas - and the opportunity for these young writers to then share their ideas for the process of further inspiration and exploration. It will be in this sharing process that ideas will begin to percolate and flavour. This brewing exchange is essential to identify the richness of potential ideas in the creative pot and for young writers to use these ideas as the catalyst for further depth and diversity.



While these steps can sound cumbersome and unnecessarily time consuming, in reality the process is naturally organic and seamless – and enormously inspiring and liberating. It is the process by which young writers can reach “eureka” moments realising the potential to be explored in the words and images they conjure from their own experience and imagination. To be in a classroom when this level of writing excitement and creative thinking is being achieved is truly exhilarating - and then boundless in its possibilities.

In summation I reinforce the importance of the child being placed at the core of all writing activities and the responsibility of the teacher to be the classroom coach always ready to support these efforts. The classroom writing environment should



feel like a studio in which ideas are given the opportunity, and time, to be explored, abandoned, reworked, played with, shared and enjoyed. In such an environment creativity and thinking will be robust, truthful, gloriously immediate and inspiring for every individual in that classroom.

Thinking about being Multi-literate, across 100 Languages

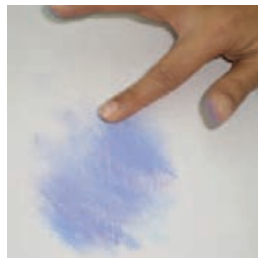
by Heather Conroy, Executive Director of Pedagogy, EtonHouse Preschools



Early childhood environments typically offer children daily opportunities to engage with a variety of different symbol systems i.e. number symbols, print and picture labels and combinations of

both e.g. a child's cubby is generally identified with a picture image and their printed name (at EtonHouse, this typically occurs in English and Chinese).

These opportunities support children in constructing awareness of the importance of 'shared' symbol systems i.e. when I record an idea, or thought,



using traditional 'letters' other people understand my message even when I am not present to tell them (this differs from the use of 'personal' symbol systems, whereby children make marks which 'represent' their thinking, however the symbols used are invented and unique to the writer).

In EtonHouse classrooms which work with the inspirations of Reggio Emilia, we are attempting to build children's capacities to communicate their thinking, feelings and emotions, in many different 'languages', that is, to be 'literate' in the languages of music, dance and movement, wire construction, drawing and painting, clay sculpture, composition with natural and



man-and made materials; poetry... and so on.

Each 'language' has its own code, or symbol system, through which we communicate e.g. the visual arts is a language of line, colour, symmetry, shape and form. When children are invited to reflect on

and to represent their thinking in many ways, we invite them to consider the essential purpose of communicating with others – to share their thinking with and to 'listen' to and reflect on the thinking of others.

Considering Multiple Literacies

EtonHouse @ Orchard

by Leanne Sunarya, Pre-School Director, EtonHouse International Pre-School, Orchard



"We read the world through images, symbols, colours, signs, body language and in the gaps and margins as well as through printed text ... The notion of "text" has broadened to include texts of all kinds including images, sounds, and even the body."

- Dr. Janette Hughes, 2007

This view of literacy is critical to a child being a successful learner in the 21st century. Literacy can no longer be considered as just speaking, reading and writing. It is exciting for us to consider the possibilities for children to express their emotions,

their thinking and their ideas through the many ways of the child that Loris Malaguzzi suggests in



Expression through movement
As the child moves to express the idea of a swimming sea creature, an emotional connection is explored by the child. Through song, the educator connects the language to the feeling and movement. The child is thus empowered to express their thinking in a new and more complex way.

his poem, "The Hundred Languages of Children". The children's interactions within the units of inquiry are continually developing their understanding of the world. It is of course a child's right to become a reader and a writer. Through the developmentally appropriate learning proposals so carefully considered by the educators, the child explores not only print but also the multi faceted areas now considered as "literacy".



Sharing the wonder and joy of learning
Children revisit their learning through the documentation created within their environment. The images and work samples provide an access point to reflect with their friends, family and teachers and they are often drawn to the print to read what it was they said and thought. By developing connections between the spoken and written word, the educator scaffolds the child's learning about text. The connection the child has to the experience further creates an opportunity to engage in the text in a meaningful way.

Every book read aloud, conversation about pictures, perceptive response to noticed signs or symbols, or mark that has been made has been inviting the child to make sense of text. Every opportunity to consider, problem to investigate or theory to pose has been an authentic exploration for the child into the uniqueness and richness of language and its power in communicating effectively. Every non verbal gesture that has been made, song that has been sung, movement that has been danced, painting that has been created or drama that has been performed has

strengthened the child's connection to the use of the language that surrounds them. From all of these experiences the wonder of language is explored by the child and the educators who journey with them. Children begin to speak with increasing fluency and complexity, they make marks that flow from simple messages to intricate expressions and they enter books with wonder and joy as they learn through the meaning of the print. At EtonHouse International Pre-School (Orchard), children are not only supported in becoming literate in the traditional notion of text but also in the definition of "text" as it is thought of currently as multiple literacies.

New Beginnings

EtonHouse International Pre-School Claymore

by Karen Nicholls, Project Director, EtonHouse



Over the years EtonHouse has built a reputation synonymous with quality education in Singapore. The idea of taking old buildings full of charm, character and history and restoring them to their former glory for the purpose of use as international pre-schools has proven successful at both EtonHouse on Orchard Boulevard and at 718

Mountbatten Road.

EtonHouse has again embarked on a project to restore a 2 storey bungalow in Claymore Road, just off Orchard Road. This former residence contains many of the elegant features of the other two buildings; sweeping staircases extending an invitation into interesting spaces, open al fresco dining areas and a large playground that opens up endless possibilities for play and exploration.

The international and Singaporean teaching team supported by the EtonHouse Education Centre will ensure that this



school will be a sister school to the other EtonHouse campuses. Learning areas, designed with purpose and the curriculum will be engaging and supportive of all children and will take into consideration their interests in order to extend their knowledge and support their learning.



The school officially opens its doors to students on the 9th April 2012. Enormous interest has already been shown in this school and we look forward to welcoming another high quality learning environment into the EtonHouse group.

What does it mean to be a Literate Person in our Modern World

EtonHouse @ Broadrick

by Cheryl Kelly, Principal, EtonHouse International School Broadrick



At the heart of literacy is the ability to effectively communicate using social contextual cues, deriving and

conveying meaning and using language and knowledge to achieve a desired purpose.

EtonHouse Broadrick's Year 4 Poetry Café provided an opportunity for students to showcase their literacy and communication skills. Parents and friends joined the students for a Café evening to share their enjoyment and understanding of the language of poetry. Students had researched and written their



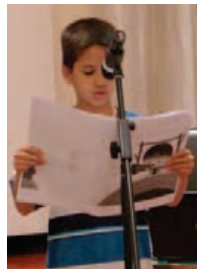
poems, developed their understanding of the context of the poems, and then presented them from the stage. As being literate also includes being able to use symbolism; the atmosphere was carefully planned and orchestrated by the students to reflect the mood of their poems. Building a home school partnership in learning is central at Broadrick and parents also shared their favorite poems with the students and staff.

While the Poetry Café was delivered in English, Broadrick students also engage in Hindi, Japanese and Chinese



language. Sean Inglin from Year 4 also participated in a public bilingual reading of a book at the Singapore Arts House recently. Israeli author Elad Weingrod's first bilingual children's story 'Like You, Like Me' tells the tale of a young boy in Israel wondering if there is a young boy in China just like him. Sean confidently delivered the story to the public audience.

The concept of literacy is an evolving one. The curriculum at Broadrick also includes "literacy" in information and communication technologies and critical literacy.



Inquiry through a Real-life Experience

EtonHouse @ Outram

by Jessica Khoo, Class Teacher, EtonHouse Pre-School, Outram



Literacy is traditionally understood as reading and writing. Before children can read and write, they need to grasp other forms of language such as speech and the use of print, pictures and real life experiences.

Our K1 children chanced upon a caterpillar, found lying on a fallen leaf in

the playground. The children engaged in a discussion as to how caterpillars grow and change.

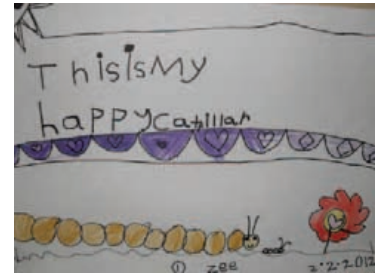
The children composed a song (Caterpillar, Caterpillar), which explored, through dramatization, the caterpillar's movement and habitat.

With the caterpillar as the focus of their observations, discussion, narrations and predictions, the children began to document a story book which recorded the growth and change process. This experience offered opportunities for literacy



through writing the story as well as illustrating (using picture symbols) to complement the children's narratives.

The children also recorded their predictions (making connections to mathematical concepts i.e. how long it will take for the butterfly to emerge).



Literacy Learning through Units of Inquiry

EtonHouse @ Newton

by Ms Barbara Robb, Senior Team Leader and K1 Class Teacher

Ms Tracey Boyle, Pre-School Director, EtonHouse Pre-School Newton



**K1 Polar Bears Class:
Unit Of Inquiry:
"Exploring Materials"**

**Central International
Baccalaureate Idea:
Understanding
the way materials
behave and interact
determines how
people use them.**

During our Unit of Inquiry "Exploring

Materials", the children in the K1 Polar Bear class inquired about the materials from which play dough is made. Through research and investigation, a class recipe was created and we proceeded to then work with the recipe to make dough.

The experience of the dough recipe led to thinking about "food recipes". Ethan made a "Jelly Pancake" from oil, flour, salt and sugar;



Maegan, a "Delicious and Colourful Ice Cream" and Prai made a "Wedding Cake" from ribbons, flour and water. Prai's wedding cake was admired by the whole class and led to many individually designed wedding cakes, which were confidently drawn, labelled and shared amongst class members.

The idea of the dough, then promoted thinking about creating wedding cakes.

The children's play dough wedding cakes, their recorded design and photographic images were proudly displayed in the school foyer. The language and dialogue observed from the display was a true indication of the level of learning that had taken place through the "Exploring Materials" unit of inquiry.

As a class culminating activity the class made the icing and decorated real cakes with a variety of materials. The beautiful



cake creations were then shared amongst the staff and students at Newton.

Reflection from Ms Barbara, K1 Polar Bears Class Teacher:

"As well as applying their knowledge and understanding of the materials and procedure required to make play dough and wedding cakes the students' enthusiasm, curiosity and willingness to participate in this class project was overwhelming. All students were fully engaged

and eagerly participated in the exploration, decision making and risk taking that was required. This unit of inquiry not only further developed the children's literacy learning but also every other early years curriculum learning area."



Looking beyond ‘Skills’

EtonHouse @ Vanda

by Ms Emelia Prayogo, Pre-School Director, EtonHouse Pre-School Vanda



Exploring ideas

In play-based learning experiences, the focus is on exploring to build understanding. There is therefore less pressure to produce ‘correct’ answers or final ‘products’. Play-based learning experiences offer players the freedom to manipulate materials, experiences, roles and ideas in new, creative, experimental, “as if” ways (Bruner, 1977; Garvey,

1974). This freedom may lead children to discover or invent possibilities as some new ways of doing things and new ways of thinking about ideas.

Approaching writing and reading with such an experimental, “as if” attitude may help children realize that written language is something they can manipulate in a variety of ways and for a variety of purposes. “Experiencing purposeful writing and reading experiences - by mark making, drawing, pretending to write, or pretending to read - may serve to open up the activities of writing and reading for children’s further consideration and exploration (Bruner, 1976; Sutton-Smith, 1979).



Exploring the environment: Architectural features support children’s understandings about letter shapes

To these relationships and experiences, children bring their curiosity, their interest in communicating and interacting with others, and their inclination to be a part of their wider environment naturally. They too take more control of materials and tools that they perceive as important to their experiences.



Applying understanding

An Alphabet of Nature

EtonHouse @ 717 Mounbatten Road

by Charlotte Choy, Supervisor, EtonHouse Pre-School, 717 Mounbatten Road

Utilizing the outdoor landscape provides a wonderful alternative to the traditional classroom setting in supporting children’s understanding about the language of nature. We introduce and invite children to examine the aesthetic elements of the natural environment. The term, ‘aesthetic’ refers to the emotions that arise and the expressions of wonder towards the beauty around us as we build on the children’s expression and appreciation of the beauty of nature through the use of their senses (Crowther, 2008).



Building relationships with the natural environment can be fostered through a variety of multi-sensory experiences. This can be undertaken by encouraging children to explore the differing aspects and variations provided by the great outdoors: the differing textures of leaves found in our garden, the soft sound of leaves rustling in the wind,

the contrasting hues of colours seen on leaves, flowers, and fruits, tasting the mangoes grown in our backyard, and enjoying the fresh aromatic scents of mint and rosemary. As such children are building a language (of different sensory features e.g. the scent, fragrance; or aromatic qualities of a plant) and an alphabet of symbols to represent this sensory thinking.

As children form awareness about the environment around them, they ‘develop enhanced powers of observation and creativity, through appropriate interactions with nature’ (Grain, 2001). Through regular contact with nature,



these learning experiences instil values such as respect and empathy for all living things.

Learning opportunities in the natural world encourages self initiation when children maintain agency in building authentic experiences with flora and fauna. Their early encounters with nature promote interest and develop a sense of responsibility in order to protect, preserve and nurture a lifelong love of nature.



Mmmm-marigold

EtonHouse @ 764 Mountbatten Road

by Suzanne Rossouw, N2 Teacher, EtonHouse Pre-School, 764 Mounbatten Road

The importance of instructing beginning readers in phonics and phonemic awareness has received wide support among researchers. Phonemic awareness refers to the ability to identify and manipulate the sounds of a language, while phonics is used when we associate these sounds with letters and letter patterns.

Decoding skills, which develop as a result of phonemic awareness and knowledge of phonics, are essential for fluent reading in later grades.

In an integrated learning environment, it would only make sense to build children's literacy experiences upon our current inquiries. This makes the learning experience more meaningful



for the learners, as it justifies their learning.

In one of our Nursery 2 classes, the first sound the children learned this year was the m-sound. Earlier that week, they had looked at many flowers in order to choose a name for their class. After a

voting process, they decided on the name Marigold. And so our learning centred around marigolds: their colours, their smell, textures and shapes. When it came time to turn our focus to literacy, the natural question to be asked was: What is the first sound

you can hear in the word 'Marigold? Mmmm-marigold!'

Learning should be fun. It should be relevant and it should inspire further thinking and questioning. By making it a 'game' of guessing the 'word of the week', or having a 'mystery bag', children enjoy the experience. By linking it to what they are

learning and thinking about, it becomes relevant. And by giving them the opportunity to think of their own words, it requires further thinking in order to link it to things they already know.



Sharing about Literacy with our Parent Community - making our Teaching Visible

EtonHouse @ 718 Mountbatten Road

by Lisamarie Hughes, Assistant Pre-School Director
Jessica Dawson, N2 Class Teacher



Observe and collect information

We take opportunities throughout the year to highlight focus topics with parents in an effort to support their understanding of our approach and curriculum framework. In addition, through sharing, we aim to build relationships and collaborative partners. "Remembering, not only are parents their child's first teacher, they are also their child's most frequent teacher" Allen, E. Edwards Cowdery, G. Johnson, J (2009 .p.237).

Below, you will find a lens into our sharing with parents, highlighting

our role as intentional teachers at 718 when planning for rich and meaningful literacy experiences.

Role of Intentional Teacher when thinking about literacy

1. Observe and collect information
2. Extend ideas
3. Further growth of new theories
4. Application

Reflective sharing:

Inquiry into Doctors - The children's interest appeared when they used the wooden blocks 'as if' it were a thermometer. To facilitate literacy further in their pretend play, we intentionally invited the children to use clipboards, pencils, carbon paper, and notebooks as a doctor would to record for a purpose. The children used these materials as part of their play and demonstrated



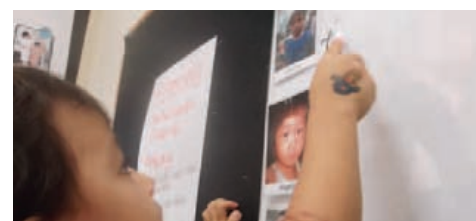
Further growth of new theories

being responsible in their work as a doctor. Our next step was to take these two developments, mark making for a purpose and responsibility, from our pretend play into our daily routines. With knowledge of our children and our curriculum framework goals, we intentionally introduced the idea of rosters to the children. They

engaged with the rosters as a way to record their name (mark making for a purpose) and to take responsibility for an area of our daily routine. We were intentional in supporting the children to apply the work that they had done in their pretend play into their everyday lives from today into the future.



Extend ideas



Application



Advanced Placements and Diplomas for Global Learners

EtonHouse @ Suzhou

by Marnie Weeden, Senior Years Coordinator, SY & MYP Science Teacher

Suzhou EtonHouse is very excited by the development of our school into the Senior Years. We are over half way through our first year, with students now beginning to focus on the exam period ahead. This year we offer two programmes aimed at meeting the needs of our students; the first is based on the American Advanced Placement (AP) programme, where students will attempt to gain an AP International Diploma, with the second being the EtonHouse High School Diploma-offering a well rounded and balanced two year course.

Advanced Placement provides students with an opportunity for learning that goes beyond just facts and figures. The rich course material, classroom discussions and demanding assignments typical of AP courses will help students develop the



knowledge and critical thinking skills expected of university students. What's more, by participating in the AP, students have the opportunity to earn university credit and to greatly improve their chances of university admission.

Community and service also plays an important

and productive role in the Senior Years, with an example being weekly reading and numeracy support for Year 1, as well as maintaining an active role in our Tuesday afternoon co-curricular activities.

In preparation for the world outside of EtonHouse, our students regularly discuss and compare the concept of a job and a career. We have taken a historical perspective of careers, focusing specifically on the roles of gender in the workplace, categorizing careers into indoor/outdoor, etc. Students have selected five of their 'top career' choices and examined why they have chosen these particular areas, what they would need to aim towards them in their lives (study, dedication, skills, stamina, etc.), and what could possibly prevent them from achieving their goals.

Earth Week 2012: Literacy in Action

EtonHouse @ Yiwu

by Jeremy Van Sluytman, Principal, EtonHouse International School, Yiwu



Throughout the week of March 26 – 30, the community of EtonHouse Yiwu celebrated Earth Week as a way to cherish our planet and explore ways in which we can be a part of sustaining it. The week culminated with

Earth Hour at 8:30 on March 31 when families of EtonHouse Yiwu along with hundreds of millions of people around the world will switched off all electrical power in their homes in support of this enormous environmental event.



Each day students will participated in experiences such as planting vegetables/plants to create class gardens - as well as creating posters out of reused materials and writing letters and stories to express what we knew and have learnt about the environment and global climate change.

Earth Week is an example of how we take literacy skills and use them in real and relevant ways. Students, teachers,



and parents worked together in a variety of languages using numerous research and communication methods as part of our Earth Week efforts. As such, we are all able to not only learn more about the crucial issues facing our environment, but also how we can put our literacy skills into action to make a difference.



Reading at EtonHouse Wuxi

by Lizzie Lawrence, Literacy Coordinator, EtonHouse International School, Wuxi



There are many ways for a child to begin their reading journey. At a young age a child's first experience is usually looking at picture books or being read to by their parents. As they enter the school environment, we try to make reading an equally enjoyable and positive experience. If you visit the classroom you might see children sharing a book together or a group of readers huddled around their favourite



book. You might see children sharing a book with an older child or in the library. We understand that all readers access texts at different levels according to their comprehension of both the picture and the written word and therefore we aim to provide a wide range of reading experiences for all our children.

Guided reading at EtonHouse has been designed to support all abilities. It is a program which we use from Reception to Year 6 in order to develop and extend comprehension levels. Guided Reading literally means to be 'guided' and it is a session where small groups of readers work with either the teacher or the teaching assistant on one specific

text or chapter. It takes place four days out of five at Wuxi and is planned carefully by each class teacher. Each child is placed within a group of similar reading ability. The younger children receive a different book weekly; however older children using

chapter books may study the same book for a few weeks. Guided reading is not used to simply read the 'word' on a page. It is about drawing meaning from the words and developing deeper levels of understanding. Alongside the development of comprehension skills we focus on vocabulary,



spellings, sentence structure and grammar. Each text is used to support and extend this learning. When these books come home your child should be able to read them fluently and they should be able to answer all your questions about the text.

Literacy, a day-to-day Approach

EtonHouse @ India



Reflecting the early years pedagogy of 'Inquire, Think, Learn' developed by EtonHouse, VIVERO and SERRA International Pre-schools, actively promote literacy by engaging children in a range of daily experiences that

encourage experiences instead of activities.

Play has a crucial role in a child's development and at SERRA International Pre-school Aundh, Pune it serves as an opportunity to integrate literacy into dramatic play.



Children use open ended materials like buttons, beads, shells, pebbles, dough etc. as they collaboratively create spellings through social interaction. Literacy is also integrated into day-to-day experiences, like the daily experiences, where children learn not only to read name tags, spell and write their own name, but also identify and create the names of their peers, the months of the year and days of the week.



A journal serves as a great tool to chronicle every day events and activities. At VIVERO International Kalyani Nagar, Pune, children



in K1 and K2 are encouraged to maintain a daily journal. They are asked a number of open ended questions, based on the curriculum or current events, to which they creatively express themselves in their journals through pictures and words. The journal, besides serving as a portfolio of their progress in writing skills, also reinforces their learning of phonetics and sight words - plus children love sharing their journals with peers and teachers.

Explorations in Literacy

EtonHouse @ Tokyo

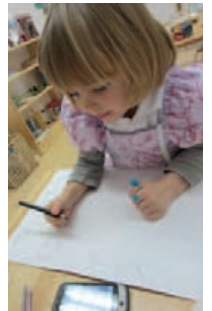
by Peter Ackerman, Director, EtonHouse International School, Tokyo



At EtonHouse Tokyo we believe that young children eagerly choose to read, write, and converse with others as they have significant and meaningful things to communicate. Young children have an innate desire to use language. We endeavour to provide opportunities for our students to use and develop their language and literacy



skills through social interactions in a literacy rich environment. In order to achieve this, we have strived to create safe, comfortable, print-rich classrooms that support relationships and invite exploration. Language and literacy learning occurs within our project based emergent curriculum as opposed to the more structured methods and systems of teaching early literacy. To paraphrase Carlina Rinaldi, former Director of the Municipal Early Childhood Centres in Reggio Emilia, when



teaching literacy it is preferable for teachers to use a road map rather than a train schedule. A road map clearly indicates where you have started from, where you are going, as well as essential and beneficial routes and landmarks along the



way. However, what is even more significant is that having a road map allows you to make detours for interesting explorations. A train schedule does not give the option of taking exciting detours and to spend time exploring.

Literacy - The “Hundred Languages”

EtonHouse @ Malaysia

by Claire Blake, Pre-School Director, EtonHouse Malaysia

At EtonHouse Malaysia we create an environment filled with diverse, everyday literacy experiences. The children come to understand its value and meaning and are then eager to decode and reproduce these symbols in their world.



Young children need to see first-hand the function of print and how it can be useful and pleasurable to read and write. Simultaneously, they deserve to have other forms of symbolic representation respected and nurtured so that they can continue

to develop as creative flexible thinkers and communicators. As early childhood educators, our first task is to strengthen our own understandings of symbolic representation and literacy development. Clear thinking will lead to planning a

more conducive environment for the experiences of decoding symbols and for the physical, emotional and cognitive development that leads

to reading, writing and creative representations. Our efforts to provide for literacy development should include a bilingual education as well as



visual literacy and image making, learning to read and express what the educators of Reggio Emilia refer to as the “hundred languages”.

Communication, Language and Literacy Development

EtonHouse @ Jakarta

by Sonya Marie, Nursery 2 Teacher, EtonHouse International Pre-School, Jakarta



Most parents today are pushing their children to read and write at a younger age because many international primary schools require the children age 5+ years to sit for an entrance exam which focuses on language/literacy and mathematical understandings.

Here at EtonHouse Jakarta, we understand completely our parents' anxiety in preparing for their child's entrance



exams and are working closely as partners in their child's education process, inculcating a love of learning through an inquiry based method of learning, and not merely preparing them for exam purposes. We believe that living is learning and learning is a life-long process.

At EtonHouse we believe that exposing young children early to books, paper and crayons and with adults around, role modelling the love of reading and guiding their learning, helps support young children's language and literacy development. We provide



lots of opportunities for young children to explore books, listen to stories, sing nursery rhymes, role-play characters from books, engage in art and crafts related to books, conduct class projects using science, maths, cooking, and build on vocabulary, make learning meaningful to young children. These hands-on activities involve children in an active learning process that helps them see connections and add to their previous knowledge and experiences.



Strengthening Foundations in Literacy

EtonHouse @ Korea

by Lorena Lytle, EtonHouse International Pre-School, Dongtan

In South Korea, literacy development is a high priority for families. As such, we have been looking for opportunities to integrate literacy into our inquiries. So, when our children expressed interest in writing letters home to mom and dad we decided to develop our inquiry around writing and posting letters.

After deciding we needed a postbox to mail our letters, the children examined pictures of postboxes around the world, picked their favorite traits, and then worked together to build their own class postbox. Then, we started writing.



Yulin composes a letter to his mom before he starts writing.

First, we brainstormed common words and phrases the children wanted to write, and created sentence strips that students could use to form messages before they began writing their letters.

For the culmination of our letter-writing inquiry, we went to the local post office to mail our letters. After that, the post office became a permanent fixture in the classroom where students could continue to practise their

writing. Children who initially had little interest in writing clogged our class post office with letters to

family and friends, because posting letters allowed them to practise writing for an authentic purpose.



Waiting for everyone to stamp their letters so we can go outside and mail them!