



ST PETER'S
PREP SCHOOLS

THE THINKING KEYS

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Students Using Powerful Reflection Tools during the FLP

The Flexible Learning Programme (FLP) provides an opportunity for rich, differentiated learning to take place within the school. During the FLP last term, the Grade 4 girls had the following question posed to them: "How can you make a difference in your community and encourage others to do the same?" They watched video presentations on a variety of issues impacting our community. In order to make a decision on what aspect they would like to investigate and solve, they used a selection of powerful reflection tools. The girls completed the following Thinking Tools: CSI (Colour Symbol Image), PNI (Positive, Negative and Interesting), Thinking Hats, "I see, I think, I wonder" and a Chalk Talk. The ability to make a carefully considered decision can be a difficult skill to learn at any age. During the FLP, the girls were encouraged and empowered to reflect in divergent and multidisciplinary ways at different points during the week. On the last day, the girls reflected on the process of learning by completing the Thinking Routine "I used to think...and now I think" which allowed them to articulate how their thinking had changed as a result of the FLP.



Grade 4 girls engaged in their FLP

Promoting Visible Thinking in Learning Environments

As a Thinking School, we endeavour to make our thinking programmes visible in order to reinforce the tools we use. In most cases, this takes the form of visual displays in classrooms. We decided to take this a step further and commissioned a company to make wallpaper displays for our common areas.

In the Boys Senior Prep, the wallpaper is situated outside the dining hall and the boys and girls have enjoyed touching the wallpaper as well as looking at the colourful designs. It is evident that they recall the content of the wallpaper as they often refer to it when we discuss one or more of the thinking tools in class.



The colourful 'I'm a thinker' wallpaper outside the dining hall

St Peter's Prep School's Teachers are Blogging!

As a proudly accredited Thinking School, we strive to continuously collect evidence of the maps, tools and routines used at St Peter's Prep Schools. Previously, we asked teachers to hand in examples of work completed in class and a portfolio of all the evidence was compiled. We are, however, always conscious of our environment and aligning all we do with the Eco Committee and their efforts to help us reduce our use of paper and material resources. So we decided to move with the times, integrate with the IT Department as well, and get blogging! Not only does blogging help us to save on resources, but also provides a more meaningful process that is on-going and makes a difference to our student's learning. By having access to the 'Teachers Thinking Toolkit' at our fingertips, teachers are able to view what other teachers have done across the schools and grades, as well as reflect on what worked and what could be changed or improved. This has encouraged exchanging of ideas, sharing of powerful lessons and discussion around Thinking Skills.



Successful Bloggers!



A Valuable Resource for Teachers

Creational Centre Launches at the Girls School



There was much excitement at the beginning of the second term, as the girls came back to a new and innovative space launched as the *Creational Centre*. This space allows for pursuit of interests and passions, where girls are encouraged to design, innovate, learn and create without the boundaries of a curriculum, time pressure or assessment schedule. Learning is facilitated through guiding questions, as the girls extend their thinking and challenge themselves to broaden their skills and knowledge. Use of higher-order thinking tools is encouraged to allow for independent and collaborative problem-solving, idea creation and implementation of design, creativity and innovation processes.

Creative thinking is not a talent; it is a skill that can be learned. It empowers people by adding strength to their natural abilities which improves teamwork, productivity and, where appropriate, profits.

Edward de Bono