



Core Communication - Pause, Be Attentive and Wait!

This month, we're going to review a very important strategy for our students; waiting. Waiting is not always easy. As verbal communicators, we are used to immediate feedback when we communicate. Sometimes our children need a longer time to process information and formulate a response.

Why Do Our Children Need Extra Wait Time?

- To process what has been said or asked
- To give them time to consider their opinion on the topic
- To focus on the topic and away from other stimuli in their environment
- To consider how they want to communicate (core board, vocalization, a gesture, signing, body language, etc.)
- To physically move their body to access their system or communicate their response
- To formulate a response in their head
- To decide if they want to respond or not

How Do I Do It?

- Model then wait
- Wait with an expectant look
- Count to 10 slowly in your head
- If your child doesn't respond, model and wait again (even longer this time)
- Remember, silence is okay!
- If still no response, you can model a response your child might want to say such as "I know that you really like this activity, so I think you want to do MORE, let's do MORE"
- Waiting will seem very uncomfortable at first but with practice it will start to feel more natural as you determine how much wait time your child needs

If you would like core boards to use at home with your child to practice modeling, waiting, and to encourage communication, please let your child's classroom know and they can be provided.

Inside this issue...

- Core Communication
- Black History Month
- Literacy Intervention
- Holiday Assembly
- Pink Shirt Day
- Rotary Arts with Mrs. T
- Brain Computer Interface
- Sensory Stories
- Best Buy Grant
- Eco School

Upcoming Dates...

- World Autism Day 4/2/23
 - The Great Gulp 4/18/23
 - Spring Picture 5/3/23
 - School Fun Day 5/5/23
 - 21st Century Day 5/18/23
 - Miracle League Day 5/24/23
 - Dental Screening 5/30/23
 - PA Day 6/9/23
 - Graduation/End of the Year 6/22/23
 - Last day of school for students 6/28/23
 - PD Day 6/29/23
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School News

Black History Month

February was Black History Month. Here at JMSA, we have been learning about Black culture through art and music, and about historic people who have made significant contributions to society. Read below to see how our classes honoured this important month.

Class 1 - Read the story "One Love" by Bob Marley and then worked together to create a collaborative art piece.

Class 2 - Read the story "I Love My Hair" and explored the different hair colours and textures of the students in their classes. They learned that all hair is beautiful.

Class 3 - Listened to various musical genres that celebrated black artists. They used core vocabulary to share if we "liked" each song and if they wanted to hear "more." As part of their TELL extension activities focusing on body parts, they clapped their hands, kicked their legs, wiggled their hips and more, as they danced and moved their bodies to the beat.

Class 4 - Students learned about the lady who appears on our ten dollar bill, Viola Desmond. She was a Canadian civil and women's rights activist who challenged racial segregation at a cinema in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia. She refused to leave a "white-only" area at the Roseland Theatre. In 2018, she became the second woman to appear on a Canadian bill!

Class 5 - Read the poem, 'Rosa's Ride' to honour Rosa Parks and her part in the civil rights movement. They then painted buses in her honour.

Arts Program with Mrs, T - All classes studied the beautiful artwork of Alma Thomas and created open-ended, colourful, abstract painting inspired by her work.



Literacy Intervention



In alignment with the Right to Read report and Science of Reading, JMSA has implemented several reading programs throughout our school community to support reading instruction for our students. The literacy programs that we have chosen to focus on this year are: Reading and Literacy Intervention, Heggerty, TELL Me AAC in the Classroom, the Oelwein approach, Lexia, and sensory stories. To prioritize literacy intervention, all classes have systematically included whole group and small group literacy and language blocks in their programs. We have also hired an occasional teacher to work as a literacy learning support teacher to ensure that some students are getting additional one-on-one literacy support. If you would like to learn more about what literacy programming looks like in your child's classroom, please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher.

School News

Holiday Assembly



The staff, students, and families of JMSA had the opportunity to come together as a school community this past December to participate in some winter fun! This year's assembly included a musical light show performed by our students, and a video created by Ms. Nadine that highlighted all our students performing the song "A Hat for my Snowman." Students also participated in a variety of winter-based activity centres which included a light room, snowman games, crafts, a selfie station, and sensory based experiences. Many thanks to Mrs. T and Class 1 for putting this fun winter assembly together. Be sure to check out photos from this event featured on our school Twitter and Instagram pages.

Pink Shirt Day



In support of anti-bullying, JMSA participated in Pink Shirt Day on Friday, February 24th. This is an annual event held in Canada and around the world to take a stand against bullying. Here at JMSA, we show kindness and friendship in many ways. One of the first things you'll see and hear when you enter our school is the many smiles, giggles, and waves our students greet each other with at the start of the day. A big thank you to the Cricut Committee for designing pink shirts for our staff and students.



Rotary Arts with Mrs. T

The Rotary Arts program encourages students to achieve education in the arts. Each day, all classes at JMSA receive 50 minutes of music, dance, drama and/or visual arts education.

The Arts are proven to be essential for children's intellectual, social, physical, and emotional growth. This program inspires students to participate in music, dance and art from different cultures and provides opportunities to learn about their world near and far. Mrs. T also uses the Arts program to expand on what students are learning throughout their day by making connections to the TELL reading program, sensory stories, communication goals, and through the use of robotics.

Brain Computer Interface

JMCC and JMSA had the opportunity to travel to Holland Bloorview Children's Hospital to learn about an exciting piece of technology now available that JMSA is piloting. The Brain Computer Interface is a headset worn by students that acts as a control for various pieces of technology such as computer programs and switch toys. Students think of a physical movement and the BCI senses the neurological impulse and triggers the computer to activate the chosen activity. Several students at JMSA have been working on using only their thoughts to control switch-enabled toys, YouTube, HelpKidzLearn, and even a pitching machine! Take a look at the JMSA Twitter and Instagram feeds to see the BCI in action!



