

## King Celebrations of Learning In the area of Human/Social Development

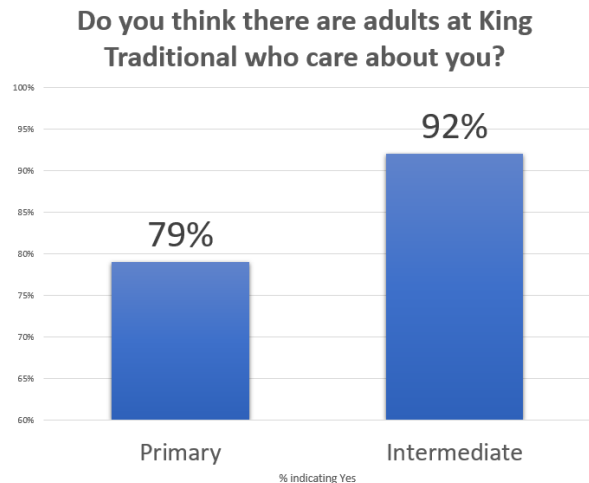
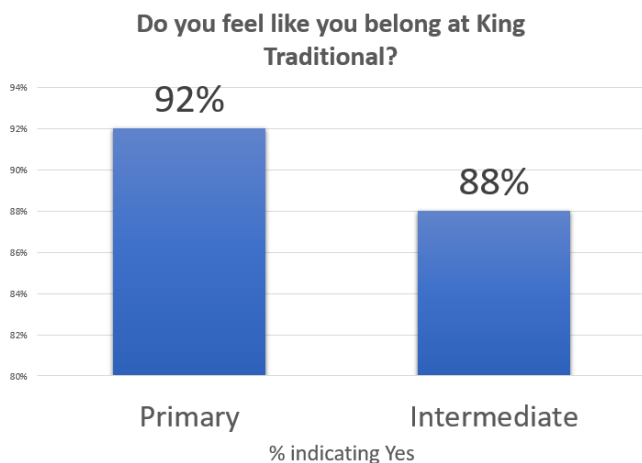
At King Traditional School, the educational model we use seeks to develop academic understanding alongside social responsibility. Because the Traditional model demands a holistic approach to instruction, helping students situate themselves among their peers, the learning community, and greater community is a major priority for us.

King traditional is very intentional about helping students understand how to care about themselves and others and developing some of the skills needed to mediate conflict, navigate social challenges, and develop a toolbox of strategies to use when interacting with others. The development of student understanding in the area of social responsibility is so important to us, that we actually have TWO school plans. The first has an academic focus, and the second is completely devoted to exploring ways to help our students develop the tools they need to get along and navigate their learning in a socially responsible way.

At King Traditional, the Social/emotional inquiry we are focusing on this year is:

“Will our students’ sense of belonging and connection to school increase if we intentionally develop social responsibility programming designed to help give students the tools needed to successfully navigate their peers in a positive way? How will the integration and utilization of the WITS SEL program help to accomplish this goal?”

We chose to focus on this social goal after a review of our student voice data. We came up with the following statistics after seeking student voice through our own school-level survey, the Middle Year Development index and Provincial Learning survey last year:



King Traditional does a lot of intentional work around the development of social responsibility and so we have many celebrations to share. One that comes to mind is our recent collaboration with the University of Victoria (UVIC) to explore and culturally diversity the WITS program. WITS is an acronym that is part of a social responsibility program that every student at King Elementary (Kindergarten to grade 5) participated in. It stands for:



The Wits program helps students develop problem solving strategies and keep them at their finger tips so that should social conflict arise on the playground or elsewhere in their lives, they will have some strategies to start with.

These strategies are then reinforced using....Children's Books! WITS insights are actually central to a huge variety of amazing children's books that can be found in most school libraries. Maybe you even have some of these books at home too! By looking at how storybook characters work their way through social scenarios or successfully solve challenges that come up in the book, our students can observe how the WITS strategies can be utilized in action. Each class at King Elementary look at a variety of books each month to help reinforce the importance of using our WITS and demonstrating the skills needed to get along with others. We are thankful for the help of our Partners at UVIC for teaching our staff how to utilize this amazing program.



For more information about the WITS program and why we love it, take a look at this celebratory news article that was published by our district:

Article: By Karen Van Egmond

“Are you using your WITS?” is a question that many have asked or answered this year at King Traditional Elementary. In partnership with the University of Victoria and the creators of the WITS program ([www.witsprograms.com](http://www.witsprograms.com)), the staff and students are embracing the common language and proactive problem solving strategies to encourage everyone in their community to use their WITS.

WITS is an acronym for “Walk away; Ignore; Talk it out; Seek help” and has been used in schools and communities across Canada since its inception by Dr. Bonnie Leadbeater at the University of Victoria in 1993. King Traditional staff were invited to participate in a pilot project where teachers would try out the lessons and give feedback to the creative team.

“The simplicity of the acronym and the rich “gem” books have been a positive aspect of the project for many of the teachers at the school. Parent lunch supervisors and EA’s on lunch supervision have noticed that there has been a decrease in the number of students needing support with conflict resolution. Students have been taking steps toward solving problems on their own and working toward building relationships across the grades. “It’s an action plan,” says one of the teachers, “an easy-to-remember strategy to solve problems... Coming out of the pandemic, it has given us the opportunity to build relationships with a common vision and goal.”

And the students have responded.

From WITS bracelets in Kindergarten to WITS lanyards worn by the noon hour supervisors, WITS contains a message of social responsibility that has been embraced and utilized by the whole learning community at King. Students have decorated the halls with created posters and can be heard explaining how they used their WITS both inside and outside of the school.

This process has activated the connection between social emotional learning and literacy while fostering a brave, safe space for the students, staff, and parents of King Traditional Elementary.

Students learning about WITS strategies and connecting them to examples from Children's stories.



The kindergarten students even created color coded WITS bracelets to wear outside during recess. These bracelets helped them remember WITS strategies while outside, and even reminded them to practice what they had learned in class!



Remembering to use your

**W** **I** **T** **S**

Helps everyone get along. This keeps  
our school a fun, safe place to learn!



Literacy can be a very powerful tool for helping students understand social interaction and can help them identify and strengthen positive social interaction skills. We use the power of literacy to help guide this work in ways beyond the WITS program as well. Another such example is our focus on monthly virtues and the Social Responsibility Literacy draw!

Each month at King Traditional we focus on a different virtue as a school. The students learn about these virtues by reading books that showcase/model these virtues along side classroom instruction, discussion and activities. We do this as a school (K-5) so that we can encourage one another to grow in these areas and keep one another accountable for our learning. Teachers even choose a 'Student of the Month' from their classrooms to be celebrated at our student of the month assemblies. These students are chosen because they do a very good job at modeling the virtue that is being learned about in the given month.

Here the order of virtues we are celebrating and learning about in class this year:

**September** *Virtue- Respect*

**October** *Virtue- Thankfulness*

**November** *Virtue- Peacefulness*

**December** *Virtue- Generosity*

**January** *Virtue- Determination*

**February** *Virtue- Friendliness*

**March** *Virtue- Joyfulness*

**April** *Virtue- Truthfulness*

**May** *Virtue- Responsibility*

**June** *Virtue- Review of all the virtues learned about this year!*

As an added incentive, students who are caught modeling great examples the virtue of the month are sometimes recognized by staff with a 'Social Responsibility' form which goes into a draw box in the office. At each of our Student of the Month assemblies, 5 names are drawn from the box and called up to the front of the gym to accept a Children's book whose central message connects to the virtue of the month. Often, this book is read to the whole school at these assemblies so that everyone can benefit from the authors powerful words and the message contained within their book.

King students demonstrating the December Virtue of **Generosity** by helping collect donations for our local food bank before Winter Break.

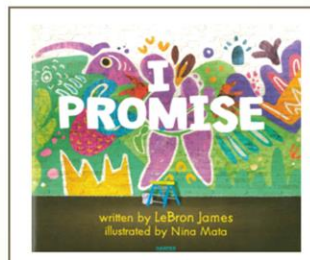


A sample of what our positive social responsibility literacy draw forms look like, a book that was recently given away, and some of the student of the month winners who did a great job at modeling the January virtue (which was 'Determination').

January:  
Determination

*CITIZENSHIP RECOGNITION*

STUDENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
MONTH: \_\_\_\_\_  
POSITIVE CITIZENSHIP OR VIRTUE THAT STUDENT WAS MODELING:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
RECOGNIZED BY: \_\_\_\_\_



A few more of the many ways that we celebrate the development of human/social skills at King Traditional:

Here are some grade 4 students participating in the **Roots of Empathy** program. You can learn more about this amazing program by visiting this link:

<https://rootsofempathy.org/about/>



King Traditional has a strong sports community with many teams such as track and field, basketball, soccer, volleyball, badminton, and more! This year we even won the Tri-Traditional Cup!



Our very own **Bhangra Dance team** trains each week with a dance instructor and showcases their skills at celebrations such as Diwali and Vaisakhi. What a great way to learn to work together while learning in a culturally inclusive way!



King Traditional tries to create many opportunities for students to experience the power of working together. We even have 4 house teams that compete with one another! Here is our principal getting splattered with paint after our school managed to reach its fundraising goal for Cancer Research!

