

## A Celebration of Literacy at King Traditional School

At King Traditional school, developing academic excellence and social responsibility alongside one another are central to the educational model through which we approach our work. Academic excellence is something that we take great pride in. In literacy, for example, data is collected each year to determine what aspects of development grade-specific groups should be focusing on in order to support the needs of the students we have in our classrooms. If you take a quick look at our school plan, you will see that each grade group focuses on a different, specific area of literacy to develop which is connected to that grade's need. The grade one students, for example, have the following grade-specific literacy inquiry this year:

**Grade One:** *How will the explicit teaching of phonetics, sight words, and vocabulary impact students' decoding, fluency, and reading comprehension?*

There are many ways that our school strives to strengthen our students' academic understandings in the area of literacy. Teachers use programming such as Heggerty, UFLI, Phonics, Daily 5 and many more. At King Traditional, the learning of our Educational staff is also embedded in the school plan, and teachers are encouraged to learn more about early literacy to better support their students, and model life long learning alongside them.

Developing foundational skills alongside the fostering of a life-long **love** of reading is one approach that we are particularly proud of, and something we were recently able to celebrate alongside our friends at the Abbotsford School of Integrated Arts. ASIA Sumas Mountain is a grade 6-12 school that, like King Traditional School, is one of the district's programs dedicated to supporting students through a special educational lens. In a recent collaboration project, the students at King Traditional and ASIA Sumas had an opportunity to work together to really **bring reading to life** in special way.

The grade 1 students at King Traditional created drawings of imaginative creatures which reflected vocabulary and literacy elements they were learning about. These were then passed along to the creative writing class at ASIA Sumas, and high school students created a children's story based on each grade 1 drawing. The art class at ASIA then illustrated these children's stories, and the textiles class turned these drawings into real-life stuffies! Check out the photos below. To bring all the amazing work together, the grade 1 students at King took a trip to ASIA Sumas to sit with our reading buddies, cuddle the stuffies, and share some time reading the books over juice and cookies. What a great way to show the power of language and help cement new understandings in early literacy! By working together, elementary and high school students were able to transform their learning through a community connection rooted in the mutual exploration of creative writing.

Take a look at this news article (below) that showcased the amazing work the students and staff did together!

## Connecting Schools Through Story

"In a heartwarming collaboration that brought together the love of reading and creativity, King Traditional Elementary and Abbotsford School of Integrated Arts (ASIA) - Sumas Mountain joined forces to promote literacy-focused goals, spark creativity and foster a passion for books among young students. This initiative showcased the power of collaboration and sparked the imaginations of grade one and secondary students in a remarkable way.

At the beginning of the school year, grade one students at King Traditional were encouraged to explore descriptive language by creating imaginative creature drawings. These drawings, which reflected the **language concepts** they had been learning, were passed on to ASIA Sumas Mountain students.

The secondary students in the creative writing classes in grades 10 to 12 embraced the challenge of crafting unique and captivating stories inspired by the grade one drawings. They poured their creativity onto the pages, bringing the characters and settings to life through engaging narratives. To further enhance the project, the drawings were shared with the talented students of the visual arts class. These budding artists skillfully illustrated the stories, using watercolour, pen and ink to create colourful illustrations to complement the written stories. In the final stage of the project, the grade 10 to 12 textiles classes at ASIA Sumas Mountain transformed the original grade one drawings into delightful stuffed creatures. These talented students used their expertise in sewing to bring the imaginative creatures from the paper into the three-dimensional world.

"It is a special time when our secondary students can connect with elementary students," said Karen Bennett, Principal of ASIA Sumas Mountain. "Opportunities like this one remind these older students about where they once were. It is also exciting to see the smiles on their faces when they see the joy they have brought to the younger students."

To celebrate the culmination of this collaborative endeavour, the grade one students from King Traditional embarked on a special field trip to ASIA Sumas Mountain at the end of May. There, they were greeted by the secondary students who participated in this project, presented with their stuffed creatures, and read aloud the captivating stories their drawings inspired. The experience was exciting, as the grade one students saw their artwork transform into tangible companions and heard their stories brought to life.

"We are incredibly proud of the collaborative effort between King Traditional and ASIA Sumas Mountain in promoting a love of reading and literacy among our students," said Tyler Horner, Principal of King Traditional. "This project showcases the power of the arts to ignite creativity, imagination and bring literacy to life. Seeing the grade one students' drawings transformed into personalized stuffed creatures and stories was truly magical. Through collaborations like these, we can foster a lifelong passion for learning and

inspire our students to explore their limitless potential. We are so thankful for the creativity and hard work of the Abbotsford School of Integrated Arts and their willingness to use their talents to promote a love of literacy for our students. It is our hope that while working together, this powerful experience was just as rewarding for the high school students that made it all happen."

This project served as a reminder that the impact can be truly magical when schools, teachers, and students collaborate with a shared purpose. By nurturing the love of reading and fostering collaboration, King Traditional and ASIA Sumas Mountain have created a lasting legacy of inspiration and imagination that will continue to shape the lives of these young learners for years to come.

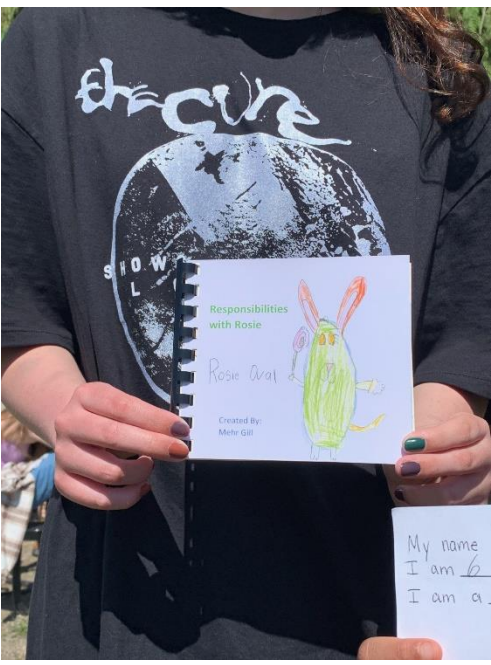
You can read the original News article that recently came out about the literacy collaboration project below, or follow the link below to see additional photos:

<https://www.abbyschools.ca/news/connecting-schools-through-story>

Grade 1 students at King Traditional started by creating drawings based on subject-specific vocabulary and character traits (Literacy unit)



The creative-writing class at ASIA Sumas took these drawings, and created children's stories based on the image and character traits contained in the drawings. Visual arts students then illustrated these books (but the original drawing was on the cover!

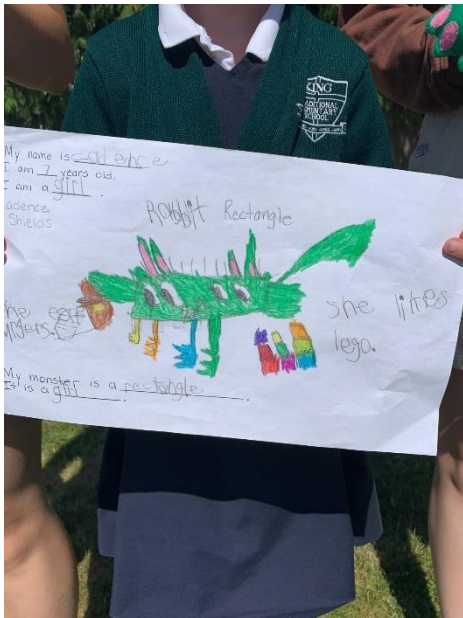


The textiles class at ASIA then took the grade 1 drawings and made them **come to life** by creating custom stuffies, again based on the original character traits and vocabulary shared by the grade 1 students in their pictures.





Here is another wonderful example of how what started as a grade 1 drawing rooted in early literacy vocabulary and character traits transformed into an illustrated children's book and stuffy with the help of some community connection. Reinforcing a love of learning and making literacy experiential is important, but so are all the skills practiced when learning to work as a team and connect with the greater community. We hope our friends at ASIA found the collaboration just as rewarding and meaningful as the grade one students did!







Students had the opportunity to explore their own children's books in small reading buddy groups, but curiosity soon had other groups sharing their books with one another as well. Storytime outside was a very rewarding way to model the enjoyment of reading with others. We are sure the high school students were transported back to a time when story time was a part of their daily literacy instruction. It was interesting to see how the primary and high school students each contributed to making this story time special for one another through their learning communities connecting.

What better way to show our appreciation to the authors and artists at ASIA Sumas than to bring juice and cookies to share while reading books together!



Flowers and a GIANT thank you card were given to two teachers at ASIA Sumas who were involved with the process. Their willingness to connect literacy learning between campuses and primary and high school students helped foster a love of reading that will last a lifetime.

