It seems like it was only yesterday we were starting Term 3 and it is Week 6 already! This semester, we welcome Miss Laura Barnes to our classroom every Tuesday as a voluntary teacher aide. Laura is completing her Certificate 3 in teacher aide training and has chosen to come to Grantham which is where she attended school as a student. We welcome Laura back to her “old” school and hope that she gains much from her time with us in the Prep/1 class. We are also pleased to have Mr Chris Tapper in our class for three weeks. Mr Tapper is a 3rd Year USQ student. We are sure he will find his time in our dynamic Prep/1 class most rewarding!

Our class had a great time at the movie night at the end of last term and would like you to see some snap (below) of us all having fun together. Occasions such as these are a great opportunity for us to spend time together in a relaxed atmosphere to build our social skills. Thanks to James’s Dad, Corey, for helping in our class with supervision. We really enjoyed the film and look forward to other social events this semester.

We have welcomed two new students into our class, Kasee Olsen, in Year 1 and Zachary Osbourne in Prep. We are sure that Kasee and Zac will have fun learning with all of us in the Prep/1 class. Unfortunately, we also had to say goodbye to Marco who has returned to Germany to live. We miss him a lot and wish him all the best for his future.
Meanwhile, back at the ranch (school), we have been busy little workers in the Prep/1 class learning about all sorts of different things.

In **English** we have been focussing on the difference between fact and fiction. We have read and examined a variety of narratives and information texts about birds, in particular, ducks, groundbirds (lyrebirds, coucal, pitta & nightjar) and peregrine falcons. The narratives included *Make way for ducklings* by Robert McCloskey and two picture books by Brisbane author, Narelle Oliver, *Fox and Fine Feathers* and *Home*. These “story” books also contained information about the birds and students have been discriminating between what is true in these books and what is “fake” … fact or fiction! Ask your child if they can tell you some information about these birds. Students have been learning how texts differ from each other with a special focus on the author’s purpose, namely to entertain or to inform. Year 1 students have been writing informative sentences about the birds, while Preps have been focussing their attention to how illustrations match the text.

In **Maths**, Year 1s have been learning about: numbers (funny about that!) with a special focus on the teens; direction and location (incorporating “mud maps”); informal units of length; fractions (halves); and more recently time (half-past). Here we are with our giant number track which we then converted to a number line.

Here are some pictures of us in our “hands on” learning activities about fractions. We divided mandarins in half and then counted the segments… a nutritious way to learn about fractions don’t you think? We found that most of the mandarins had 10 segments of course: $\frac{1}{2} = 5$. 
Preps have been spending a good deal of their Maths time learning about numbers and combining amounts to ten. They also do outdoor explorations so that they can investigate their environment first hand and use language to talk about position, directions and general spatial concepts. At the same time there is lots of fun to be enjoyed by all!
This term in **Health** we are learning about safety at home, on the road, in the water and in the sun. The students have come up with lots of hazards at home and over the term they will focus on the other areas. Students will make a poster to promote safety issues. These will be displayed in the school early next term. Just look at the ideas the students came up with about hazards in the home!

During the term we also said “Goodbye” to Mrs Bourne who has been a teacher aide at Grantham for the past 15 years. The students made her a beautiful parting gift which was presented at a special retirement dinner last month. Mrs Bourne contributed much to our wonderful little school and will be remembered fondly by staff and students alike.

This term in **Visual Arts** we are exploring Indigenous Art as well as focussing on texture and how this can have an effect upon Art works, For those of you who didn’t get a chance to see our portrait gallery, here is a photograph of some of our work. Some of this was displayed in the Ma Ma Creek exhibition along with other Art Works by our talented Prep/1 artists.
I wonder how many of you saw our fantastic photograph in the Toowoomba Chronicle, “Making the Grade”? For those of you who missed out, here it is! How effective is the fabulous background artwork which was created by our Year 6/7s?

We look forward to continuing learning in our great classroom for the rest of 2012. It was most pleasing to have very positive reports from a relief teacher in the Prep/ class yesterday who replaced Mrs Brain in the final stage of her professional development about grammar. Mrs Brauer left a letter about how well behaved the students were and in her own words said they were “a beautiful class!” I am very proud of you Prep/1. It is great to have a visiting teacher remark on the beautiful nature of our students. I am also proud of how many students have finished their Premier’s Reading Challenge. Well done!!

Until next time,

Libby Brain and the Prep/1 class