

jellybean JOURNAL



Environmental class is now virtual

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THE Class in the Clouds programme can now be enjoyed by pupils from areas far from Cape Town and other provinces.

Since 2001, the Table Mountain Aerial Cableway Company (TMACC) has been hosting the programme with the aim of providing more opportunities for pupils to experience the mountain.

This allows pupils and teachers to exchange their classroom for a fun day of interactive learning at the top of the mountain.

This year, the TMACC has introduced the programme online. TMACC managing director, Wahida Parker, said the Class in the Clouds programme was started with the goal to give back, educate, and inspire school children from communities across the province.

"We want people to know about the programme even those from other provinces because we have a virtual tour of the mountain where they can participate," she said.

"We aim to empower and upskill youngsters to improve their access to tertiary education and possible job



Pupils attend Class in the Clouds and this year, the Table Mountain Aerial Cableway Company has introduced the programme online. | SUPPLIED

opportunities," said Parker.

Parker said, as part of the lockdown regulations, TMACC has made innovative additions to the programme;

they have found new ways for pupils to engage with the New7Wonder of nature which includes the development of a 360° virtual tour of the top

of the mountain.

"This brings a whole new dimension to our Class in the Clouds programme, pupils and educators now

have the chance to explore the mountain virtually.

"The tool allows them to navigate the pathways and experience our beautiful scenery online," said Parker.

Parker explains that the tour is available on the website, and there are further plans to incorporate storytelling and voice-activated narration as part of the experience.

The programme includes grade-specific and curriculum-aligned educational worksheets for primary and high school pupils, incorporating subjects such as life and social sciences.

She said educational materials for the programme can be downloaded from their website and provides teachers and educational assistants with unique resources for their lesson plans.

Project 90by2030, an environmental justice organisation coordinator Athenkosi Baba said, it is important to teach children about the environment at a young age.

He said most children, especially from the townships, do not know the importance of the environment in their lives.

"We teach them how to take care of nature, simple things like not littering to always take care of animals, whether they are wild or pets," he said.

Baba said children need to know that a lot of the things they use in their daily lives come from nature.

Welcome to our newest Jellybean Club members!



LOGAN Davids, aka Logie Bear, is a five-year-old from Rondebosch. She loves singing, dancing, colouring, baking and sending videos and voice notes to her friends.

MICHAEL Jordan Du Plessis, is 4 years old and from Eerste River.

Have a great day, Birthday Bean!



HAPPY 2nd birthday darling Isabelle. Lots of love, Mom, Dad and grandparents.

Friends of the deep have cool communication skills

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COMMUNICATING with other people may come easily to us, but with our underwater friends, it works differently.

According to National Geographic, 76% of ocean creatures produce their own light in order to communicate with other creatures in the sea.

Biodiversity and conservation biology senior lecturer Dr Adriaan Engelbrecht said marine creatures like some fish, squid and algae produce bioluminescence to either confuse predators, attract food or to attract a potential mate.

"Bioluminescence is a chemical reaction which allows animals to produce light. Very little heat is produced by this reaction because the reaction converts virtually 100% of the chemical energy to radiant energy.

"The main use of this ability is to communicate, for instance, in some fish species they use this ability to show maturity to mate with others and sometimes confuse their enemies. Others use it to trick, by mimicking the light displays of other species to attract unsuspecting victims to score a nice meal," said Engelbrecht.

Along with the fascinating characteristics, marine species like the jelly-



The light proteins produced by jellyfish are used to diagnose cancer.



fish are regarded as one of the most important bioluminescent organisms because of their purpose in scientific studies that uses their light proteins in cancer diagnosis. "Jellyfish bioluminescent genes have been used in cancer research to help visualise cancer tissue. The

jellyfish 'light' locates cancer cells even in deep tissue, and this helps to develop proper treatment plans," said Engelbrecht.

Despite these cool characteristics, marine creatures are under danger because climate change is forcing the planet to warm, which has an effect on the ocean environment.

Two Oceans Aquarium spokesper-

son, Renée Leeuwener, said that climate change has the potential to change the ecosystems of marine life.

"The increase in greenhouse gases will mean that the ocean will become more acidic (since it absorbs a lot of the gases such as CO₂). The knock-on effect of this is that oxygen becomes a lot less available to fish species that can only live in the upper layers where oxygen is still available in high abundance," she said.

Engelbrecht added that animals usually grow to live in specific conditions, but when those conditions change (like the water warming up), they have to adapt very quickly or find an alternative place to survive.

"Adaptation takes thousands, if not millions of years and with the ocean warming up at a fast rate, animals and plants cannot cope with it. So, they will either move away from the areas that they would normally be found in, or they die out."

"Human activity is speeding up temperature of the planet. We are no longer experiencing climate change, we are in a climate crisis. That is why we must all make an effort to put an end to climate change before it is too late," said Engelbrecht.

Wear a cloak of confidence

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TEACH your little one to wear their cloak of confidence with pride. In the book *My Family Of Superheroes* by Zinhlé Matthews, children will be taught to rise above it all and be confident.

The book aims to introduce the concept of positive affirmations as a tool to boost self-confidence in children. The book takes you on a journey of a little girl, named Precious, where she faces a challenge at school which tests her self-confidence. Her mother witnessing this, sees that as an opportunity to teach her a mantra, which she has been using since she was a little girl to encourage herself. The mantra says: I am strong, I am capable, I am enough, I can do anything with the power inside of me.

"The greatest gift we can give our children is the ability to be their own superhero," said Matthews.

Activities from waste for kids

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SINCE the start of the pandemic, schools have not opened fully.

This means children spend more time at home compared to normal schooling years.

As much as children learn at school, they also learn through play. They learn about shapes, colours, size and numbers, including all basic concepts necessary for learning and many other important emergent skills like problem-solving, memory, concentration, attention span, thinking skills as well as fine and gross motor skills.

"Many parents and caregivers think that in order to learn, one needs expensive games and equipment," explained Sandy Immelman from Masikhule, an organisation that trains Early Childhood Development educators in marginalised communities in Helderberg.

"Quite the opposite is the case," she said. "For true learning to take place, children need to be actively involved, using all areas of their brain including their creativity and imagination."

She said that waste material can be used to create toys. "Creating and having fun using waste material such as toilet rolls, egg boxes, empty boxes, milk bottle tops, etc



Choo-choo train

is a perfect way to stimulate brain development at minimal costs."

The activities are done under the supervision of an adult. She provided three examples of toys to create.

Choo-choo train – use empty boxes (milk cartons, toothpaste boxes), toilet rolls and bottle tops to make a choo-choo train. Let your child help you to glue all the pieces together. If you have paint or crayons, decorate the train with bright colours. Have fun talking about trains, counting wheels and making train sounds.

Fun with colours – colour the underneath of an egg box. Make a slit to fit matching coloured ice cream/cardboard sticks

Puzzle – Use different pictures of animals, cars or objects that your child can identify. Paste it on a carton and cut it horizontally, vertically or diagonally and ask your child to complete the puzzles.

ELSA MAJIMBO
Comedian, actor, potato chip muncher and chess champion – GQ chats to Africa's newest global star

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