Larissa Schoomans

Clash of Priorities
One of the first students whom Larissa tutored at Homework Club was a boy who clearly needed help with reading and writing but whose mother was more keen on him doing more work on maths, which was his strength and which she seemed to value more.

This presented Larissa with a real problem – to balance the need to help the student’s weakness in literacy but to value his strength in maths and to respect the mother’s values in education.

What have I come to know? asks Larissa of this experience
“I have to understand that people will value different areas, and these may not necessarily be the areas which the students need to focus on the most.”

The first of many parental communications
As a student teacher, Larissa knows there will be years ahead of balancing parents’ ideas with teaching focus.

“This was my first time with communicating with a parent about their child’s academic progress, and I am sure that this prioritizing of strengths will come up again and again. “ says Larissa.

Dealing with Disruption
A Grade 4 girl whom Larissa was tutoring did not want to do her homework sheet but to play a game Larissa played with her a game based on the 12 faces of different emotion below.

Another girl joined in but was disruptive and obnoxious, swearing and threatening to punch Larissa, who was pleased that she managed to retain her composure and "pull the girl back into line.”

What have I come to know? asks Larissa of dealing with anger and disruptive behaviour
Larissa says she sometimes feels she responds too quickly or not quickly enough and concludes that: -
“Thinking about what I am going to say is an effective approach.”

“I will continue to address unwanted behaviour or comments made by children in an attempt to be able to respond effectively and professionally,” agrees Larissa.

Faces in Larissa’s Grade 4 game mirror faces at homework club
The emotions on the clip art used in the homework game by Larissa, show surprise, anger and happiness – just some of the range of feelings the future teachers come across at homework club – a good preparation for classrooms ahead.