

A PRIMARY TEACHER

By Bill Pugh

The January sales are slowing down, back to school ads are up and the book and stationery list comes out. Action is required from someone, probably Mum. Also uniforms, shoes and sports gear, are needed. The costs mount, and for a student going to a new school, are multiplied.

Schools levy charges for various needs, and there will be school camps and excursions to be paid for later on. All of the above will enrich the school experience and are important, but the first encounter between the child and a primary teacher forms a basis on which education begins, and is priceless. So spare a thought for the primary teacher at this time.

Ahead, there will be lessons to prepare. Another class, names to learn, new kids to welcome. And energy to harness.

Happy memories of teachers linger. The teacher who late every afternoon sat us on a piece of carpet and made stories live. She had no family, each grade was hers.

Old "pop", in the grey dust coat, who insisted on correct spelling and

memorising tables. And he opened up the Grade 6 Reader for us. Snippets of poetry and extracts from wonderful writers were introduced. The reader was a special possession, and we looked forward to the next, up to Grade 8. We still have a set.

I shall always be grateful to Ron, who gave me "stickability". To give it a go. A life skill which works for me.

A teacher gets to know each child personally and by written reports and parent/teacher interviews, is well able to provide honest, helpful and encouraging assessments of progress, both academic and social. There is a partnership between home and school.

The best report I ever read is written in Luke of The Great Teacher: *"And the child grew and became strong, he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him."*

An important stage of the child's early development rests with a primary teacher. The sticker on the rear window of a family car reads: *"Thank God for a Primary Teacher"*.

And we should.

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