



GARDEN SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Richard Marotta, Ph. D., Headmaster

Volume 92 Number: VII

"Academic Excellence Since 1923"

Friday, October 31, 2014

Thoughts for the week

By Richard Marotta, Ph.D., Headmaster



Throughout the independent school community there are discussions taking place about the idea of literacy. For centuries and in the most traditional sense, literacy has been defined as our ability to read and write a specific language. Today, that definition has been expanded to include a wider definition of language. We speak of technological literacy, global literacy, emotional literacy, economic literacy, media literacy and so on.

As our world has grown and changed in the way in which it both sees and presents itself, our 'languages' have mirrored that growth in what may be considered to be almost exponential. Each area of our lives has developed a specific language with its own vocabulary, connotative and denotative ranges and with a specific correspondence to a reality. Fifty years ago, economic literacy meant understand savings and interest rates; today it requires us to understand all of the different instruments in our investment or retirement portfolios. Fifty years ago, global literacy mean studying geography; today it means understanding the intense political, economic and cultural links among nations. Fifty years ago, technological literacy meant knowing how to make a long distance call; now it means knowing how to navigate the internet, face time, video conferencing, depositing checks with a cell phone; fifty years ago emotional literacy meant thinking about mental states in almost moralistic ways; today, emotional literacy means understanding how the emotional, non cognitive aspect of our lives can be a force for success or failure; fifty year ago media literacy meant choosing between a FM or an AM radio; today, media literacy means understanding how to live stream a conference that ten thousand miles away on your cell phone.

The list is endless; however, the point is clear. Our world has created various and complex forms of literacy that we, our children and our students need to understand, be able to use, create and, most importantly, to humanize. Especially with technology and media, we must be served by its use and not find ourselves instead at the mercy of our reliance, or worse dependence, on technology. As our 'language' demands become more complex, our need to humanize these 'languages' and to integrate them in a balanced way into our lives grows equally in importance.

For the last two decades, I am gratified that Garden School has grown in relation to these changes as well. Our incorporation of technology has developed into a support and an expansion of curriculum; our celebration of the global community has encompassed both curricular changes as well as an international student program. There is a far greater understanding of the importance of emotional sensitivity and of the emotional intelligence throughout our school.

All of the changes point to the modern school model which, more than ever before, is a model of change and adaptability. When we think that the university curriculum didn't change for a thousand years and now our curriculum has changed in a thousand ways over the past twenty years, our responsibility is to help our children thrive in this new environment. Our educational conversation needs to center on how to make these skills available to our children, how to encourage them to enjoy this new world, how to stimulate them to take ownership of all of the "literacies" required to live a full and successful life in a world in which opportunity is created every hour.

Finally, the greatest literacy of all is for our children to understand their environment and to move the conversation about their world forward in the most humanistic way possible. That is the mission!



DATES TO REMEMBER:

- Friday, October 31 : **TODAY** JH HALLOWEEN PARADE Meet at 4:30 PM at 37th Ave @ 89th Street
- Wednesday, November 5 : College Night for Juniors at 6 :30 PM
- Friday, November 7 : End of First Marking Period
- Thursday, November 13 : Report Cards Distributed
- Friday, November 14 : Report Cards Returned with Conference Request Forms
- Wednesday, November 19 : Grades 1 – 12 Parent/Teacher Conferences, 3 – 8 :30 PM
- Thursday, November 20 : Thanksgiving Feast for Lunch
- Thursday - Friday, November 27 – 28 : School Closed for Thanksgiving Break

IMPORTANT SAVE THE DATES!!

Garden School General Assembly Wednesday, November 12th, 2014

Building on Success Investing in our Future

The Garden School Board of Trustees and Headmaster , Dr. Richard Marotta, invite you to the General Assembly to be held on Wednesday, November 12 at 7:00pm in the Garden School Gymnasium. Wine, cheese and crudités will be served.

The Board's intention is to be accessible and to keep parents informed as we all invest in the future of our school and our students. The General Assembly is your opportunity to hear about the school, our successes and plans moving forward. In effect, this is a "State of The School" address and, as Board President, I look forward to presenting the school's current financial status, plans for long-term building projects, the upcoming re-accreditation process and the focus of the long-range strategic plan. Along with Dr. Marotta, we will then answer any questions that you may have.

Please join me for this very special and important evening in the life of our school as we share information on issues of importance to your school community.

Arthur Gruen, Ph.D.

President, Garden Board of Trustees

- The Garden School Gala will take place on Friday March 27, 2015 at Terrace on the Park

College Visitors Next Week:

Monday 11/3

12:15pm Iona College (NY)



Garden School Key Club - Philadelphia Trip

By: Jim Pigman (Key Club Coordinator)

President Skyler Shipley and Vice-president Eldin Klapija lead a Key Club excursion to Philadelphia on October 25th.



The group toured the unique Barnes Foundation collection of Impressionistic art Friday afternoon. Then the group was off to South Street and some exquisite dining especially for those who went to the famous Oyster House for oysters, lobster, New England clam chowder and sundry other fare. Daniel G. piled up the oyster shells, sampling Wellfleet and other types of oysters. Saturday, the group enjoyed a historic district tour of the Liberty Bell, Independence Hall, and Congressional Hall. By the afternoon, we joined Mark Paraskevas Garden '12, former Key Club president, and Harry Cooperman '11, for a tour of their University of Pennsylvania campus.



There was unexpected joy in the Miracle Garden house on South St. which was constructed by hand by Samuel Zagar over a period of forty years.

Sunday we bid adieu to City of Brotherly Love but not before three hours at the Franklin Institute, an amazing hands-on science museum. "This was an amazing trip that really bought the club together and built morale," opined President Skyler, "and I certainly thank the chaperones Mr. Pigman and Mrs. Elkind, Mrs. Ambarsom, and Mrs. Prio."



Social Studies for Nursery

By: Carmela Knopf (Nursery Teacher)

This week the Nursery finished learning their shapes. To review them, we used foam shapes and glued them on the appropriate spot. We also had some Halloween fun! We made spooky mobiles to take home and hang up. We made pumpkin sandwiches in cooking using hamburger buns, orange frosting, candy corn, M & M's and gummy worms. We read *It's Pumpkin Time!* by Zoe Hall and *Five Little Pumpkins* by HarperCollins Publishers Inc. On the smart board we listened and sang to Halloween songs.





Social Studies for Pre-K and K

By: Eileen Reyes (Pre-K Teacher) and Kristen Ahlfeld (Kindergarten Teacher)

The Pre-K and Kindergarten students have been focusing on the roles of a firefighter in their social studies classes.

They learned that: firefighters are ready to fight a fire the moment they are needed, there are different kinds of firefighters to fight different fires, firefighters use special fire-fighting equipment, and there are special fire-fighting vehicles used to fight fires. Fire safety lessons on ways to prevent fires and what to do if there is a fire were taught and practiced with a school wide fire drill.

To follow up these lessons, a walking trip to the local fire station was taken. Each child got to go inside the fire truck and ask real firefighters questions about fire safety. A firefighter dressed in fire safety clothes explained what makes these clothes safe against fire. Everyone is so thankful to the firefighters for keeping their school community safe.

Books read: *The Fire Station* by Robert Munsch, *Firefighters and Fire Engines* by Lisa Peters, and *Fire! Fire!* by Gail Gibbons.



Physical Education for Grades 1 to 3

By: Amy Ledden (Physical Education Teacher)

1st and 2nd grades are doing exceptionally well in Physical Education! The 1st graders have adjusted very nicely to 1st grade activities, which are very different from Kindergarten activities, and the 2nd graders are setting a wonderful example for them. They are becoming great stretch leaders and are eager to learn new fun games and activities!

On Wednesday, we had a fun Pumpkin Hunt where the 1st and 2nd grade students had to find 20 pumpkins scattered throughout the gym. They enjoyed getting in the spirit of the Fall season while running around and getting some fun exercise!

The 3rd grade is having a great time in Physical Education! They finished their soccer season and have been enjoying the fun new games and activities this year. A favorite warm up game for the 3rd and 4th grades in Line Tag, when the taggers and the runners may not move off of the lines in the gym while they run. Since they have so much fun with the game, we decided to make it into a friendly competition and have created a "Star Chart", giving a star to the last two students who "survived" and were not tagged. If the taggers tag every person within 5 minutes, they are awarded the stars.

We look forward to seeing how well everyone does in the upcoming weeks!





Art for Grades 4 to 6

By: Tiina Prio (Art Teacher)

The Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Grade artists have begun to marvel at the creative genius that is Picasso. Looking at the Cubist painting The Three Musicians, made the students realize how much time it takes to absorb and see all the components of the art work. Looking at, analyzing and creating art takes time and lots of effort.



The students watched a video on Cubism and decided that the images in the paintings were fun to analyze but many students saw different objects. Some said one painting was definitely a landscape filled with mountains and trees while another saw a person. That is the fun of Cubism. Imagination took over and filled the day with creativity.



Chinua Achebe, who was a Nigerian novelist, poet, professor, and critic, said that Art is man's constant effort to create for himself a different order of reality from that which is given to him. Garden School's artists are also creating a different order. This multi-media project will use the same patterns, colors and shapes that Picasso used in his painting to make a collage creation. Each artist will have the choice of what they would like to portray using their imagination, skill and patience. All good qualities to nurture.



Music for Grades 4 to 6

By: Thomas Heineman (Music Teacher)

Over the summer, I had an experience in which I heard various noises and rustling when I turned out the light to go to bed. When I turned on the light, there was relative silence. Each time I turned off the light, the noises and activity increased, but they stopped instantly with the click of the light. Finally, the creature made its presence known with the lights on- a bat! It flew around furiously before landing on the wall above a window and spending the night upside down. I was able to remove the bat the next morning without harm to either of us. It may not have been the most pleasant experience (for me or for the bat), but it definitely sparked my interest in these fascinating animals.



Bats' ability to turn on a dime when flying at speeds up to 50 miles per hour is awe-inspiring. Truly remarkable to me, someone acutely interested in sound, is their ability to emit sound (up to 50 calls per second) and use the echoes to orient themselves and to hunt. The amount of information they must process in order to locate insects moving in the air, distinguish which are desirable, and catch them in flight while avoiding obstacles seems almost inconceivable. Questions concerning bats use of echolocation and why it's such a useful method for them, the size and shape of their ears, and why they greatly increase the amount of sounds they emit right before they catch an insect are some of the ones 4th Grade were tackling this week. Over time, I will be helping lead them to make connections between echolocation, sonar, and ultrasound, how our ears and those of bats are well-suited to receive sound, how bats and human detect which directions sounds come from, and ways in which we can visualize what we hear. Apropos in light of the fact that Halloween is upon us, 4th graders ended their lesson on bats by making their own from construction paper.



Another reflection of the holiday is French composer Camille Saint-Saens' orchestral tone poem *Danse Macabre*. The music represents the release of skeletons, ghosts, witches, and bats on Halloween night. Every one of these creatures has their own musical theme, so 5th graders discussed what type of music and which instruments would be used, and whether the notes would be long or short for each. They took guesses at the themes they were hearing by holding up placards with images depicting each of the above things. We then followed a map depicting the themes and events that are heard in the music. Many pieces of music from the 1800s such as *Danse Macabre* are programmatic, and the music is meant to aurally reflect something visual. Due to their representational nature, they are helpful in guiding students to hear certain melodies, instruments, or other aspects of the music.



Understanding how we analyze Western music and its overall structure has been at the heart of the 6th grade's studies. Students have sought to identify changes in the music, typical construction of pop songs, and deviations from the norm. Along the way, they have had the chance to sing music from the 1960s through today, and artists as diverse as The Who and Sia. This week, 6th graders began studying how European Classical music is constructed through Fugues. Fugues bear similarities to songs constructed as rounds in which the main melody begins anew at various points in the song. Students tried to detect how many times they heard the principal melody recur in different guises in two versions of Bach's Organ Fugue in G Minor, and also listened to a portion of Bach's *Tocatta and Fugue in D minor* and the above-mentioned *Danse Macabre*, which contains a brief fugue.

Math for Grade 7

By: Sonia Ambarsom (Math Teacher)

Seventh Grade students explored th different kinds of numbers, their properties, applications and relationships to each other. They are extending their knowledge of inverse operations. Squaring a number and finding its roots are part of the process while they are exploring, as is determining what is rational and irrational. The irrationals are the non-repeating decimals which never repeat.

Math for Grade 8

By: Lara Leggio (Math Teacher)

The 8R math class has been working very hard developing an understanding of expressions and equations. We recently revisited solving equations, concepts we are already familiar with. However, we have been building on these foundational skills, now solving equations with variables on both sides as well as absolute value equations.



Yesterday we completed a relay race activity. We were split into teams of three, having to work together to solve 3 different multi-step equations. However, each equation depended on the answer found from the problem before it. If a mistake was made in the first question, the questions following would contain a mistake as well. With this, when a mistake was made, we had to work together as a team and find our own mistakes to then correct them. A friendly competition always adds to practicing our math skills!



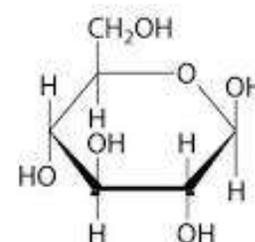
Science for Grade 9

By: Luigi Albano (Science Teacher)

In the wonderful world of ninth grade Biology, strides have been taken to understand the complexity of living things on the cellular and chemical level. We began the course by rediscovering the scientific method and analyzing information in scientific terms. We then proceeded into the study of life and the characteristics that define life. Students were introduced to various tools and laboratory techniques that biologist use. Time was spent on proper and safe laboratory procedures that play a significant role in the study of science.



We ventured into the realm of the chemistry. Students revisited the atom and its components, and the intricacy that chemistry plays in life. Organic chemistry is a topic that usually makes people, who have experienced its intensity, cringe. We have investigated several major categories of organic compounds such as carbohydrates, proteins, lipids, and nucleic acids.



We are regularly discussing topics from the text and analyzing details associated with our investigations. Our labs have coincided with the topics that have been discussed. The intensity of the course has been a challenge for some, but Garden School students are resilient and can master topics that others struggle with. As stated in the Garden mission statement, **“We empower every student in our educationally diverse community to meet responsibly the challenges of everyday life by promoting academic achievement.”** All in all, the ninth graders are diligently working hard in order to meet the requirements of Biology: The Study of Life.

Science for Grade 10

By: Marlene Dapice (Science Department Chair)

Why do you buy a certain brand of shampoo? Toilet paper? Glass cleaner? Most likely because there was something about the advertisements for these products that either visually caught your eye or had spokesperson appeal. Were your choices always the wisest? Probably not. Often the less expensive brands do just as good a job as the name brands, sometimes even better. Are you willing to change your current brands? Most of us would say “no”, we’re pleased with what we are using.

Well, the students in chemistry class will be choosing various products, designing experiments to pit them against one another, hypothesizing outcomes, and presenting results of their tests to the class. Members of the class will be surprised at the outcomes if results of previous years are any indication. I choose to have students do this project to give them an opportunity to think as real scientists would, from inception of an idea to its logical conclusion. It also affords students an opportunity to use their analytical skills in a way they have not before.



English for Grades 11 and 12

By: Marcia Elkind (English Teacher)

Eleventh and twelfth grade Elective English classes are small seminar-style courses. They are designed to encourage student-faculty interaction.

In Drama Survey, there are fewer than a dozen students currently reading Christopher Marlowe's DOCTOR FAUSTUS. They read at home and come to class prepared to re-read, analyze, and discuss the specifics of the drama and the universality of its theme. Their teacher was their history teacher when they were freshman. Discussion frequently focuses on setting the incidents of the play into historical context, thus explaining obscure references and leading to an understanding of the author as a product of his times. Students are encouraged to integrate what they have learned in other disciplines with the work they are doing currently. This cross-year, cross-curriculum approach to studies helps students assimilate information, much as they will do in the "real" world.

In Modern Novel students sit in an informal circle and read and analyze Aldous Huxley's BRAVE NEW WORLD. Their teacher encourages them to draw upon their own experiences in order to understand the characters' reactions to the manipulation of society by the government. Literature becomes the springboard for examining their own lives. They examine their values, their preferences, their sense of purpose.

In the American Novel class students are reading John Steinbeck's GRAPES OF WRATH. One class period was devoted to studying Van Gogh's "The Potato Eaters," and comparing the figures in the painting to the characters in the novel. Another period was spent examining the photographs of Dorothea Lange which documented the faces of the great depression. Another lesson featured "The Ballad of Tom Joad." Students were asked if there are artists today who use their art to comment on the state of society.



The core of the program is aimed at encouraging students to think, integrate what they have learned with current studies, and be able to articulate, both verbally and in writing, an idea, an opinion, an insight. The atmosphere in the classroom is informal, intimate, comfortable. A place where young people can try out new ideas, say what is on their minds, and defend their point of view. By extending the curriculum beyond the pages of the text we are able to encourage students to broaden their view of themselves and their world.

English for Grades 11 and 12

By: James Pigman (English Department Chair)

Every reading of a great book is as if it were the first, fresh reading. So it is with Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* which was published in 1932 and was listed as one of the top 100 books of the 20th Century. How does a book survive for 82 years?

But, as the juniors and seniors are reading it now, it does not simply survive to be read as a relic relevant to another time and place. Discussions now change to include recent developments, some that were dreamt of by Huxley but now



almost commonplace. The futuristic novel offered scientific planning of births via test tubes so that citizens would be more suitable for their jobs. Relevance this year includes students from other countries who engage with the issue of the individual versus society. Why are students protesting in Hong Kong and what should the state, the government, do about them? Who is greater, the government or the individual? In a class with everyone carrying cell phones that connect them to social networks, games, and music at all times, Bernard Marx, Huxley's hero, revels in quiet contemplation and solitude. Huxley elucidates Bernard's individualism: "He stood alone, embattled against the order of things, elated by the intoxicating consciousness of his individual significance and importance." Every society has the tension between the rights of the individual and the needs of society for order and stability.

So, class discussions range from Occupy Wall Street to government surveillance to consumerism to solitude to the contemplative life. These are universal values, universal issues that transcend not only the 82 years since Aldous Huxley wrote but also the thousands of miles that stretch over the background countries of our students.

Professional Development Workshop

By: Stephanie Parker (Grade 2 Teacher)



When I returned to Garden School on Wednesday after a day away at a professional development workshop the students were surprised to discover that I was the student at the workshop rather than the teacher. A wonderful discussion was had about how teachers and adults can continue to learn new things and that learning is an ongoing process. I was able to take a workshop given by NYSAIS, The New York State Association of Independent Schools of which Garden School is a member. The workshop provided forty elementary school teachers from across New York the opportunity to share ideas, exchange methods and learn from one another.

It is our mission at Garden School to foster each students' self-worth. We aim to see each student grow as individuals and to thrive as a members of our community. The workshop "Creating a Caring Classroom through Morning Meeting, Interactive Modeling and the Power of our Words" spoke to the mission we work towards at Garden School. The Responsive Classroom approach introduces ways to build classroom community so that the students feel safe and valued. Morning Meeting is a brief daily meeting where the students greet one another and share their experiences and thoughts in a supportive environment. Interactive modeling is a powerful strategy for teaching important behaviors and routines. It can be as simple as the teaching modeling how to tag a friend gently and safely at recess. The Power of our Words workshop teaches language as a tool for kindness, community and learning. Teacher language should be direct and authentic and should convey belief in the students' abilities.



After attending the workshop I was able to reflect on my own practices and bring fresh and meaningful ideas back to my classroom. It was a wonderful experience for me to learn new methods and collaborate with elementary school teachers from other independent schools.



GARDEN SCHOOL SWEATSHIRTS FOR SALE!

Parents, Family & Friends!

The PTA is selling these terrific hooded sweatshirts that everyone is going to want! Show your Garden School spirit and help support Garden and the PTA in building a strong community. The funds collected go to support school community enrichment activities including movie night for our Lower Division, Senior Prom, and much more. So, share this link with family members, friends and everyone that you know, and consider them as a thoughtful Holiday gift for a current Garden School student, faculty member and/or alum to support and show school spirit.



These sweatshirts are \$35.00 and there are youth – adult sizes available. The campaign will only run until November 26th and then close so get your order in ASAP!

After the campaign closes the shirts will be shipped within 2 weeks. Please go to the link below to order and thank you for enriching Garden School community life!

Order your Sweatshirts here! <http://www.booster.com/gardenschool>

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R. to L.

Julia Silber, Parent '14
Jean Vertefeuille Hall, Parent '14,
Sophia Barberini, Parent '14,
Lorraine Hall, Aunt '14

"We love Garden School so much that even after our kids graduate, we come back to build the Haunted House on the stage for the Lower Division children.

ORDER YOUR GARDEN SCHOOL YEARBOOKS BY NOVEMBER 30 TO SAVE MONEY!