



# GARDEN SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



Richard Marotta, Ph. D., Headmaster

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"Academic Excellence Since 1923"

Friday, November 21, 2014



## ***Thoughts for the week***

***By Richard Marotta, Ph.D., Headmaster***



In one of those many conversations that we have about education and learning, the question 'why' came up this morning about writing. Why do we write? What is the purpose of writing? Has it added to our lives in ways that have encouraged thinking and exploration?

What is interesting about this question is that a number of major thinkers, including Einstein, have expressed the belief that writing was not an advancement in human thinking but a setback. Their reasons for this view focused on what they perceived to be the loss of the personal power of the oral tradition. Communication in the oral tradition was far more personal, communal and expressive. And much to everyone's delight, there were no misspellings in the oral tradition!

This view raises many questions. Our current thinking about writing is that while it may have lessened the personal attachment, it has also increased the intensity of linear thinking. The oral tradition depended on formula to allow for memorization and to facilitate the ease of repetition. There were circular patterns in the oral recitation that enhanced the pedagogy of recitation as well as the ability of the speaker to reinforce his or her points through the power of repetition.

Modern writing has moved this process in somewhat of a different direction. Writing depends far less on the circular pattern of recitation and much more on the linear exploration of an idea. In writing a long article, the writer can move through layers of thought in depth and with the ability to hold certain ideas in suspension while pursuing the pathway of an idea. Writing allows for a more controlled sense of exploration, since it can probe deeper and deeper into an idea without depending on formula and without depending on the ability of the audience to follow the story. Of course, the reader of a written text has the advantage of 'instant replay' which the listener to an oral 'text' does not.

John Silber, former President of Boston University, once referred to teaching as 'oral publications,' believing very strongly in the power and the importance of the oral presentation in the university environment. Don McQuade in a book on writing, which he titled, *Thinking in Writing*, made the argument that the more effective way of a sustained exploration of an idea was through the process of exploring it in writing. Since there are no overt gestures, tones of voice (these exist in writing but usually without the dramatic power they have in the oral tradition) and facial expressions, writing depends more on moving through the semantic architecture of the idea. From a visual perspective, writing moves forward across the page; we see the movement, which imitates the unfolding of the idea.

In my own classes, I always stress the importance of writing not as a mechanical exercise, but as a dynamic and organic way to pursue the truth of an idea. My advice to my students is to be bold in their writing, take chances, and push an idea in ways that they didn't recognize when they started. When students push writing in such a liberating way, they re-create some of the boldness of the oral performance with the angularity of writing. As the great poet William Blake said 'write without fetters,' and you will find the truth.



## **DATES TO REMEMBER:**

- **Monday - Tuesday, November 24-25: FOOD DRIVE!** Bring canned goods/non-perishables to main Hall
- **Wednesday, November 26 : Bake Sale for Fitness Club**
- **Thursday - Friday, November 27 – 28 : School Closed for Thanksgiving Break**
- **Saturday, December 6 : Merit Exam at 9 AM for Grades 5 to 10**
- **Monday, December 8 – Wednesday, December 10 : Holiday Boutique Sale**
- **Friday, December 12 : Pasta Night (5 :15 – 7 PM or 7 :30 – 9PM)**
- **Friday, December 19 : Noon Dismissal / Lower Division Show at 9 AM / Upper Division Winter Trip**
- **Monday, December 22 – Friday, January 2 : School Closed for Winter Break**
- **Monday, January 5 : Classes Resume**

### **IMPORTANT SAVE THE DATES!!**

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



**March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

### ***LIU BROOKLYN AT GARDEN SCHOOL***



On Tuesday morning, Nিকেisha Thomas from LIU Brooklyn held an on-site admissions event for members of Garden's senior class and seven students were admitted. Congratulations to Nabeel A., Gaetano G., Dylan K., Deshawn M., Andrew N., Stephanie P. and Taha R.!



## ***Mandarin for Early Childhood***

**By: Kelly Yang (Mandarin Teacher)**

In this multi-day unit, early childhood children gained the ability to identify different fruits and colors in Chinese. The children can name apple, strawberry, banana, pineapple, grape etc. in Chinese; also they can name 5-8 colors in Chinese.

In Kindergarten class, we are learning to ask and respond to simple questions about fruits and colors. Students also can express whether they like or dislike specific fruits and colors. Students will practice sorting according to colors in addition to recording data of class likes and dislikes of colors and fruits.

Finally, students will learn culturally appropriate times to serve fruit (e.g., at the end of formal meals, family gatherings, restaurant meal, parties) and the cultural relevance of certain fruit (e.g., peaches represent longevity).

## ***Social Studies for Nursery, Pre-K and Kindergarten***

**By: Kristen Afeldt (Kindergarten Teacher)**

This week, the highlights in The Early Childhood Department consisted of a variety of activities that prepared the students for our annual Thanksgiving feast. The children learned about the origins of this special holiday through literature, crafts and interactive games on the Smartboard. The kindergarteners presented wampum necklaces to the pre- k and nursery students as gifts.



The children dressed as Pilgrims and Native Americans for the celebration and gathered at long tables to feast on traditional Thanksgiving foods. Dr. Marotta carved the turkey and the children also feasted on corn, mashed and sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce, stuffing, and popcorn. The E L Academy graciously helped us serve the students and they made delicious traditional pies for dessert.



## ***Social Studies for Grade 1***

**By: Jacquelyn Renner (Grade 1 Teacher)**

The first grade social studies curriculum explores communities and learning about the past. November is a great time to incorporate both. Our *Scholastic News* this week introduced the past for us with an article on the voyage of the Mayflower. The class was asked if the pictures showed people in the past. After a debate, it was decided even though the clothing and ship were old, they couldn't be old pictures because cameras had not been invented for the Pilgrims.

The students will be writing sentences describing things they can do and things pilgrim children could not. McGraw-hill, the publisher of our reading series, has an online resource where we could view pictures of New York City in the United States from different times in the past. We talked to our neighbors about what clues told us it was the past before sharing with the class. The class completed past and present picture sorts on the Smartboard and independently. Next we will be comparing and contrasting schools in different parts of the world.



## ***Social Studies for Grade 2***

***By: Stephanie Parker (Grade 2 Teacher)***

Over the past few weeks the Second Graders have read, compared and designed maps. We began by analyzing a variety of maps including maps of the Bronx Zoo, the Coney Island Aquarium, Nantucket Island and a NYC Subway map. The students identified the title, key and compass rose on each map. We discussed why maps include these tools and how to use them.



The Second Graders designed their own maps of fictional places including a Candy Land, Animal Island and Hermit Crab Land. Their maps included a title, key and compass rose. The Second Graders also used a Venn Diagram to help them compare maps to globes. They identified the similarities and differences.

As a part of their Geography unit, the Second Graders explored the seven continents and five oceans. They learned and practiced a song to help them memorize the names. To reinforce their understanding, the students used interactive software on the Smartboard to click and drag the continents and oceans. They colored and labeled their own maps of the Earth. The Second Graders discussed the flag of the United States as well as the New York flag. They discussed the colors, symbols and their meanings. They learned the state symbols for New York including the state animal, bird, tree and insect. The students designed their own flags that incorporated the symbols. The Second Graders also looked at maps of New York City's five boroughs. They colored and labeled their own maps. They used symbols to identify the borough they live in and boroughs they have visited.

Understanding that you live on Earth, on a continent, in a country, in a state and in a city can be confusing for a Second Grader. The variety of tools we used: maps, globes, Smartboard and art supplies, help the students grasp these abstract concepts. Using different mediums can help reach students who learn visually, through touch or through creating. This unit helps students understand their world and community. We will continue to use maps and look at state symbols as our Flat Stanley projects return to school after visits in many of the fifty states.

## ***Social Studies for Grade 3***

***By: Nilla Ingravallo (Grade 3 Teacher)***

Communities are important and special. They are places where people live, work, and have fun together. Over the last couple of weeks, the third graders have been learning about communities across our country and around the world. They studied the different types of communities, urban, suburban, and rural, and the characteristics of each. They have seen how these places have similarities and differences and how communities can change. Through this unit, they also explored the responsibilities of citizens in a community. Lastly, the third graders investigated the role of culture in developing these places.







After this examination of communities, the third graders applied their knowledge. They created and built their own communities using Lego products. As a class, the students brainstormed and selected a name for each of their communities (urban, suburban, and rural). They also decided what they wanted to include in each community. In the urban community, they incorporated businesses, stores, homes, and skyscrapers. The suburban community had a school, a hospital, a veterinarian, a park, and homes. The rural community had vast farmland and open plains. They also included roads and forms of transportation, such as cars, trucks, and airplanes, in each community. Citizens inhabited, worked, and socialized in these places. Once they finished planning their communities, the third graders worked together to build these places. During this project, they utilized cooperative learning skills such as teamwork and compromising to successfully produce the communities.



This communities unit and the previous globe and map skills unit are a good foundation for future in depth learning of communities in the United States, other countries, and in other historical periods.

## ***Physical Education for Grades 4 to 6***

***By: Amy Ledden (Physical Education Teacher)***

The 4<sup>th</sup> grade has been having a fantastic time in Physical Education. They have been working on new project adventure games that build social skills and increase team participation. These missions encourage students to think "outside the box", building creative thinking skills and work together as a team to complete the task or challenge. For example, one activity that we did this week was Trash Transfer. Two teams are selected (divide the class in half) and the object of the game is for the team to pick up their designated colored trash and get it into the bucket before the other team. The rules are:

- \*they can only touch their own trash
- \*they cannot move when they are in possession of trash
- \*students may hand a teammate trash or pass it (throw it in the air).
- \*If there is a player who is not involved at all in handling the trash, then that team is disqualified.
- \*students may not throw back and forth between the same 2 players more than once.

After each round, the teams will huddle and discuss ways to make their system more efficient and faster. The students will eventually set up the other team's trash before the game starts (must be within the perimeter of the gym).

We are excited to see the progress every class and can't wait to introduce new activities!

In 5th and 6th grades, we just started our Basketball unit in Physical Education, and the students cannot wait to get on the court!

Last week, we reviewed rules and skills of the game, focusing on passing, dribbling and shooting. We discussed, demonstrated and practiced chest passes, bounce passes, baseball passes, outlet passes and no-look passes. For dribbling, we reviewed high bounce, change of pace, and crossover. For shooting, we continue to practice, lay-ups and jump shots. This week, we made teams and began our unit, keeping track of baskets scored and encouraging passing and sportsmanship. We are very excited and the competition is heating up already!





## **Art for Grades 7 and 8**

**By: Tiina Prio (Art Teacher)**

The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade art students are beginning to work on the ceramics portion of their art instruction. Ceramics is one of the most ancient industries on the planet. The American Ceramic Society states that "Once humans discovered that clay could be dug up and formed into objects by first mixing with water and then firing, the industry was born. As early as 24,000 BC, animal and human figurines were made from clay and other materials, then fired in kilns partially dug into the ground."

Learning about the Native Americans who made coil pots will also give the students an insight as to how the Pueblo respected the earth and its resources. The Internet Public Library says that, "The pottery of the Pueblo Indians of the Southwestern United States embodies the highest artistic achievement of a race of quiet, peaceful, and tenacious people who have even to the present day successfully kept their culture intact for over a thousand years." The Pueblo showed respect to the planet by only taking enough clay for one pot at a time as to not waste the earth's resources. The lesson about respecting the earth is an important one for all to learn.

Watching the video about how to make a Coil Pot on KaransPotsAndGlass, is an eye opening experience to the many creative ways that clay can be coiled. The class will practice making the coils and applying them to their pot, making it their own work of art using the methods they learned from the video.

## **Music for Grades 7 and 8**

**By: Thomas Heineman (Music Teacher)**

One of the fundamental notions for the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> students in music this year is empathy- making a true attempt to break away from our own cultural perspective and appreciate each culture we encounter from a new viewpoint. Despite the pervasive influence of West African culture on our own culture, many aspects of it are fundamentally different from ours. It almost requires a change in thought, when born into this culture, to attempt to understand many of the concepts underlying traditional music from West Africa. Most of the languages in the region are tonal, so words have a pitch associated with them that communicates their meaning. It is fascinating, and almost unimaginable to our way of thinking, that variable pitch drums in West African music are often 'speaking' and expressing complex thoughts, understood by those that understand the native language.



Students also encountered large xylophones from Ghana, called Dzil and Chohun, that have gourd resonators beneath each key outfitted with spider webs! The webs help create a more complex timbre that speaks toward a different aesthetic of beauty in West Africa as compared to our culture. In the liner notes to an album, it describes a particular



piece of West African music as akin to the calls of birds or insects: lacking a strict beginning or end. It's another idea that aids in our understanding of this music and how dissimilar an approach it is when compared to Western pieces and their notion of progression and development. Students had an opportunity to play instruments and recreate a traditional piece of music to discover the independent, interlocking parts upon which the music is based.

Today the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Graders will begin examining the integration of West African concepts into popular music by artists such as James Brown, as well as West African popular styles, such as Juju from Nigeria, that built upon traditional African and American ideas.

## ***History for Grade 9***

***By: Marcia Elkind (History and English Teacher)***

Teenagers love to eat. They consider "Lunch" a major subject. It is one of the reasons I use lots of food imagery in my history lessons.

Right now, the ninth graders are "chewing" their way through Mesopotamia, the "land between the rivers," which is today's Iraq. We view it as a seven layer cake, each layer a different civilization that held sway in the area for a length of time. I believe this is a good visual (I draw the cake on the board every day, labeling each successive layer as we study it). It also establishes an important principle: every event or accomplishment people have made through the millennia is predicated on what came before. The Sumerians (layer one) invented the wheeled cart. Three layers later the Assyrians will take that invention and produce war chariots. It is important to see the continuity of human development.

Yesterday I accompanied the ninth and tenth grade on a trip to the Morgan Library. We went specifically to look at a magnificent medieval illuminated Bible, called the Crusaders' Bible. The docent who gave us the tour, talked about the invention of writing, cuneiform and hieroglyphics, and then the development of our phonetic alphabet. Books were handwritten until trade brought the idea of movable type from China to Europe and Guttenberg developed the printing press. That represents a monumental change in technology and therefore our lives. Books could be printed in multiple copies at a speed unheard or dreamed of before.



Today we are witnessing another revolution in information transmission: the internet. We write on our computers and instantly our words and ideas are transmitted to any place on the globe. The accomplishments of today are standing firmly on the advancements of yesterday, much as each layer of the layer cake supports the one above it. On a trip to Italy several years ago, our guide pointed out to the students that we were standing on the sidewalk several meters above the entrance to the church we were about to enter. He explained that civilization is layered, like a lasagna! All the students understood; some said, "Like the layer cake!" Yup, back to food. It always grabs their attention.



## ***Morgan Library Trip for Grades 9 and 10***

***By: James Pigman (English Department Chair)***

Forty Gardenites set out for an “only in New York” experience on November 20. Armed with crayons and huge sheets of art paper, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade English classes descended onto 41<sup>st</sup> St. at Fifth Avenue, formally known as “Library Way.” Two sheets, four crayons, assigned quotation in hand, the students bent down to “rub” their special plaque so that the words and figures would show up on the paper.



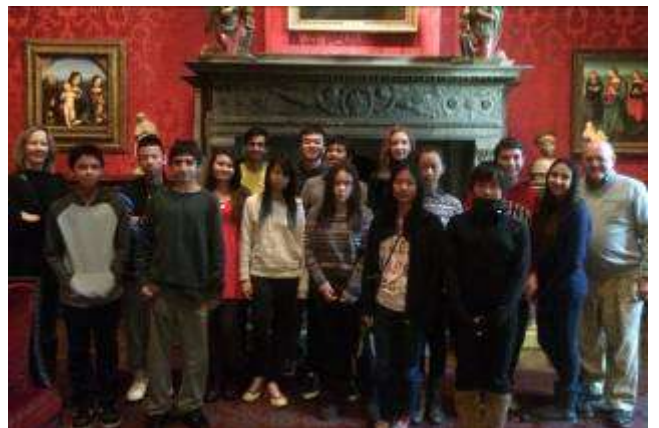
“Nice job!” said an elderly gentleman to Jasmine P. ‘18 as she put the finishing touches on her Ernest Hemingway quotation. Scratch, scratch, scratch and Shan Shan G.’18’s paper began to show “The bird that would soar above the level plain of tradition and prejudice must have strong winds,” from Kate Chopin. “When you are old and grey and full of sleep...” magically appeared on Mirabella C. ‘18’s page. And so on down the line until all of the students had their rubbings using the techniques developed in Ms. Prio's art classes.

Then....how New York-y to face the 42<sup>nd</sup> St. Library and enter between Patience and Prudence, the lion statues guarding the steps. The vaulted ceiling, the grand staircases, the towering holiday tree in the lobby. But on to our task---climb the stairs to the third floor reading rooms. To the tables, pens out, brain on full throttle. Each student wrote an essay on the particular quotation, its relationship to the artwork on Gregg Levevre’s bronze plaque, and their personal insight into the significance of the lines. Essays were due Friday and they will be judged along with the rubbing.

“You know, I couldn’t believe that there could be so much meaning in just 13 little words,” mused Daniel G. ‘17, after he had wrestled with Jose Marti’s “The knowledge of different literatures frees one from the tyranny of a few.”

“Ms. Ledden was grateful for such a wonderful experience of poetry and Manhattan. “The kids were so good and the Morgan Library in the afternoon was my first time there. I will definitely go back. “ “My quotation was pithy, but some of the letters were recessed and some were raised and backward. I had the most difficult one to copy! But I liked it; I hope my essay captured the meaning,” stated Alyssa H. ‘17.

The Morgan Library docents were wonderful and Garden’s relationship with the library goes back ten years. We are on their preferred list because our students participate intensely. We will return to the Morgan for the second class which will focus on creating illuminated scripts from raw materials and using original techniques.







## ***Math for Grades 11 and 12***

***By: Lara Leggio (Math Teacher)***

As we enter the second quarter, the pre calculus class has been excited to be utilizing a graphing calculator. At first, looking at the graphing calculator we were intimidated by it. However, we have become more and more comfortable as we infuse the graphing calculator into each lesson. Recently we have been learning about different functions on the calculator, such as graphing equations, finding the intersections of graphs, determining the intercepts on graphs and creating a table of values for an equation. These various functions have helped us to solve complex algebraic equations. We have also been using the graphing calculator to check our algebra work. The graphing calculator is an extremely valuable tool only if we know how to use it!



## ***NYPD Crime Lab Trip for Grades 11 and 12***

***By: John Hale (Science Teacher)***

The 16 juniors and seniors in the Forensics Class spent the morning at the New York City Police Department Police Laboratory seeing the role of forensic science in a real-world setting.

The trip was arranged by Philip M., the father of William M. '16, a former NYPD Detective. This was a unique and rare opportunity for high school students to have access to the facility, including its trace evidence unit, document analysis unit, chemistry unit, narcotics unit, and the DNA unit.



The visit began in the library with an extensive overview by Detective Curry where students learned the role of the forensic science unit. They were taught about fingerprint analysis, ballistics, and evidence collection. They were then taken to on a tour of the Crime Scene Unit mobile vans and the equipment they use. Next they were given an excellent review of how to identify bullets and the marking on the cartridges.



To finish the day, the students were able to talk to experts from the Chemistry Unit, DNA Unit, Narcotics Unit, Document Analysis Unit, and Trace Evidence Unit. These experts discussed their roles in helping to process evidence and how their work helps to solve crimes. The students had the chance to see Mass-Spectrometers and Short Tandem Repeat (STR) DNA machines in action.

The trip was an excellent example of how Garden School teachers use New York as an extension of their classrooms and an exciting and educational one that the students truly enjoyed.

**LESS THAN ONE  
WEEK TO ORDER!**



**MAKE GREAT  
HOLIDAY GIFTS!**

## **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. 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 only \$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>

## **GARDEN SCHOOL YEARBOOK**

Dear Parents and Students,

Just a friendly reminder to get your Garden School 2014/15 Yearbook order in! Also, did you know that you can have your very own dedication pages? Please open the attachments to see examples of dedications and friendship pages. Your pages will be printed in every yearbook!



Students can also design pages and share the costs with the friends, teammates etc.!

To order by the November 30th deadline click [http://www.iostens.com/apps/store/productDetail/1054215/Garden-School/Yearbook/2014082404164079370/CATALOG\\_SHOP/YB\\_BOOKS/All-Color-Yearbook/2014082404164082370/](http://www.iostens.com/apps/store/productDetail/1054215/Garden-School/Yearbook/2014082404164079370/CATALOG_SHOP/YB_BOOKS/All-Color-Yearbook/2014082404164082370/)

## **GARDEN GALA 2015 INFORMATION**



Dear Garden Families,

The 2015 Garden School Gala will be held on March 27<sup>th</sup> at Terrace on the Park. Please join us as we celebrate the Garden School Community. We will also be recognizing the 2015 Griffin Circle.

We are beginning work on the gala journal and we have a very special discounted offer on journal ads. We are **offering 10% off, (yes 10% off!)**, on all journal ads purchased by Jan 1. See **the journal ad form** for the very special prices by [following this link](#). And remember you can buy an ad and you **also can sell an ad** to your favorite local business.

Tell your favorite local business that an ad in the journal will reach more than 400 families from the Garden school community. If you have any question please email us at [gala@gardenschool.org](mailto:gala@gardenschool.org)

Thank you, Gala Committee

**DONATE TO THE FOOD DRIVE NEXT MONDAY AND TUESDAY!**



## 2014 Annual Fund



### Support Garden School's Mission Make a gift to the Annual Fund today.

(Please participate to the best of your ability. No gift too big or too small.)

As you know, similar to all independent schools, Garden's tuition does not cover the entire cost of educating your child. Every year, the school depends on fundraising, and in particular every current parent's participation in the Annual Fund, to support the successful implementation of Garden School's mission.

### [Donate Now](#)

#### Parent participation in last year's Annual Fund helped Garden School to:

- Hire a Director of Outreach/Marketing, Jim Gaines, to support sustainable enrollment goals.
- Install a security gate in front, fully enclosing the campus.
- Renovate the main hall bathrooms.
- Rebuild PK and K rooms creating an Early Childhood Center.
- Offer UPK to the Jackson Heights Community by enlarging our campus with a Universal PK Center located on 78th Street and Northern Boulevard.

Our goal is 100% participation within the Garden Community. Our Board of Trustees has demonstrated its leadership by already achieving that goal with gifts and pledges totaling over \$10,000. It is in the spirit of 100% participation in support of the promise of Garden School's Mission that we ask you to follow the example of the Trustees and to make a donation to the Annual Fund and help us reach this goal.

Please join me in celebrating our school and in supporting its mission to educate our students to the highest of academic, social and personal standards.

Sincerely,

Richard Marotta, Ph.D.  
Headmaster  
Parent, Current Grandparent

Arthur Gruen, Ph.D. '66  
President, Board of Trustees

### [Donate Now](#)





## SCENES FROM EARLY CHILDHOOD THANKSGIVING FEAST

