



GARDEN SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



Richard Marotta, Ph. D., Headmaster

Volume 93 Number: XII

"Cultivating Success in Every Child"

Friday, December 11, 2015



Thoughts for the Week

By Richard Marotta, Ph.D., Headmaster



Now that we are midway through the second quarter, our second Character Education Value, *Honesty*, has become the focus of some of our activities. Honesty, as we all know, can be imagined in a variety of ways, from academic integrity to personal self assessment. Throughout this quarter, we will investigate the many sides of this complex value to discover ways in which to further integrate it into our daily lives.

Strong organizations engage in the practice of honesty as well, in their daily work and into practices of management, communication and long range strategic planning.

On January 21 at 7:00PM, Garden School will hold its annual General Assembly. This important event is an opportunity for our community to come together and hear information from the school's administration and board of trustees about our school, its state, and longer term plans for growth and development.

As an exercise in parent communication and trust, there is nothing more effective than a face to face information session with the Board of Trustees. This is a time for all members of the Garden family to learn about our school's current state and its future plans, and to meet those responsible for guiding our school into a strong future. Similar to the education program, when the quality of cooperation between families and the school can have an effect on a student's achievement, the success of our school development work depends on Garden and its families working together in trust, honesty and transparency.

It seems fitting to me that the General Assembly will take place during the *Honesty* phase of our Character Education Program. We all share an appreciation of this value and want to see a high level of honesty in all that we do, including and most importantly in implementing the mission of the school. The powerful idea of a partnership between our families, our teachers, administrators, children, alumni and trustees permeates our philosophy and is something we strive for each day in the life of our community.

My hope for honesty stems from my belief that honest self-assessment propels us into an effective state of mind and an effective mode of conducting our professional lives and following through on our responsibilities. A school needs to do the same as it reflects on its mission and practices. The General Assembly embodies that collective a self assessment in an honest and transparent manner. We have built our community on trust; let us communicate that trust in an honest manner.

Garden School General Assembly, Thursday, January 21st at 7:00 PM



Garden School 2015-2016 Annual Fund Letter

Dear Garden School Parents,

Last year at this time, we held our 2014-15 Annual Fund Campaign, which proved to be a successful event that raised over fifty thousand dollars to support the mission of the Garden School.

As we begin the 2015-2016 Annual Fund Drive, we are pleased and heartened that our Board of Trustees has demonstrated its leadership in this campaign with 100% participation and with gifts and pledges totaling over \$10,000! So, it is in this spirit of recognizing a bright future for Garden School, and choosing to invest in this organization's mission, that I ask you to participate in the Annual Fund Campaign and make a donation.

As evidence of our continued commitment to enhance Garden, our return to school was marked by positive improvements which were guided in part by responses to last year's Parent Survey. In addition to our growth in enrollment, we made significant upgrades to the physical plant with a new kitchen stove, new pre-k and kindergarten bathrooms and new windows in several high school classrooms. We also developed our educational technology program with stronger Wi-Fi, an Engineering Elective in the High School, and a new Character Education Program with constructive effects that are evident throughout the school. We have added a new parent trustee to support additional communication and partnership with our families.

Much of this would not have been possible without the generous support of last year's Annual Fund donors. This year's goal is to achieve 100% participation of our families. As members of an independent school community, all of us assume responsibilities to ensure the ongoing success of our students and our school. These responsibilities include securing the school's financial strength by "bridging the gap" between tuition and actual costs. With everyone's help through the Annual Fund and the Gala, we supplement our tuition revenue and help keep Garden's tuition among the lowest of comparable New York independent schools. The Annual Fund plays a vital role in Garden realizing its mission. Our Board has reached the 100% goal; now we call upon you and all of our families to help reach the goal of 100% participation in the Annual Fund. To be clear, while we ask you to be as generous as possible with your tax deductible donation, it is your participation at any level that helps us to meet our goal.

Please join us in celebrating our school's future and in supporting its mission to educate the children of our community to the highest of academic, social and personal standards. All gifts are tax deductible. Please go to the giving link on our website (<http://www.gardenschool.org/giving/annual-fund/>) and make your donation online or simply submit a check to the school office.

We thank you for your continued trust and support of Garden School and current and future generations of Garden students will also thank you for our generosity.

Sincerely,

Richard Marotta, Ph.D.
Headmaster

Michael Rakosi
President, Board of Trustees



DATES TO REMEMBER:

- Friday, December 18: Lower Division Show at 9am in the gym
- Friday, December 18: Noon Dismissal - No Afterschool
- Monday, December 21 – Friday, Jan 1: School Closed for Winter Break
- Monday, January 4: Classes Resume
- Thursday, January 14 – Thursday, January 21: Upper Division Midterm Exams
- Friday, January 15: Lower Division Pajama Day
- Monday, January 18: School Closed for Martin Luther King Day
- Friday, January 22 : Marking Period 2 Ends
- Thursday, January 28: Report Cards Distributed
- Friday, January 28: Report Cards Returned
- Friday, January 28: Movie Night for Lower Division

Athletic Department Game Schedules

Come and support and cheer on our Garden Griffin athletes!!

Girls Varsity Basketball

Day	Date	Opponent	Location	Time
FRI	12/11	BFS	HOME	3:45
MON	12/14	CHURCHILL	HOME	3:45
WED	12/16	FASNY	HOME	5:00



Girls Middle School Basketball

Day	Date	Opponent	Location	Time
WED	12/16	FASNY	AWAY	3:45



Boys Varsity Basketball

Day	Date	Opponent	Location	Time
FRI	12/11	BFS	HOME	5:00
WED	12/16	FASNY	AWAY	4:15



Boys Middle School Basketball

Day	Date	Opponent	Location	Time
FRI	12/15	LREI	HOME	3:30





Garden School PTA

By: Maria D'Amore (PTA Secretary)

Greetings Garden Parents,

Just a friendly reminder: The deadline for the Annual Holiday Gift Fund for all Faculty & Staff members is quickly approaching!

We need all contributions by Wednesday, December 16th!

Please make checks payable to Garden School PTA and please note "Holiday Gift Fund" with your child's name & grade. You may leave your envelope at the front desk, or please feel free to send in with your child!

It doesn't matter how large or how small... Everything is greatly appreciated!!!

Please feel free to contact Diane Sarro with any questions at:

DBARTONESARRO@aol.com or PTA@gardenschool.org

Garden School PTA wishes you & yours a joyous holiday season! Thank you!



College Counseling

By: Lisa Sohmer, Director of College Counseling & Upper Division Coordinator

While many students and families were busy with the Merit Exam and Open House, 20 of our sophomores and juniors spent Saturday morning in Room 28 taking a practice SAT/ACT exam, provided free of charge by Kaplan Test Prep. The 3 hour test was a hybrid -- half SAT and half ACT -- designed to let tenth and eleventh grade students sample both standardized tests before they begin taking real SATs and ACTs in the spring of the junior year.

The ACT and SAT (which has been redesigned and launches in early 2016) differ in format and content, so this opportunity to try out both without creating a real testing history is valuable.

Garden School Pre-K For All Program

By: Miguel Ortiz (PKFA Teacher)

This week in the Pre-k For All program, we continue to explore the unit on Where We Live.

In fine arts, we are working on creating many different types of homes. In order to facilitate the children's understanding that not all homes look the same, we have used different types of media to create our homes. This includes two-dimensional creations such as drawings, and three-dimensional with gluing of craft sticks, cutting and pasting construction paper, etc. We have also made other three-dimensional creations using cardboard boxes, *Magnatiles*, milk cartons, bristle builders, and more. While they work on these projects, we develop an appreciation for art and the children also develop their fine motor coordination.





Early Childhood

Nursery - Math

By: Carmella Knopf (Nursery Teacher)

Nursery students work on their math skills on a daily basis. We count the days of the week and numbers on our calendar to determine what day it is. On the smart board, we listen and sing along with Ten on the Bed, Five Little Ducks and Five Little Monkeys. After turning our photo cards on our daily attendance chart, we count how many children are in class every day. We all enjoy knowing that math is all around us.



Pre-Kindergarten - Math

By: Eileen Reyes (Pre-Kindergarten Teacher, Dean of Early Childhood)

The Pre-K students have been working on measurement and data in math for the past couple of weeks.

Their favorite activity has been sorting things such as buttons, pompoms, and beans. The children are asked to think creatively about different ways to sort objects. Color, size, type, and shape are some of the ways that have been used. Once sorted, the objects in each category are counted teaching one to one correspondence and number representation skills. New vocabulary is introduced as the students analyze and describe the measurable attributes. With teacher support, they have become experts when reporting data as they identify groups as: more, less, same, greater than, fewer, equal, etc. by using matching and counting strategies. These skills increase awareness and competence not only in math, but in the world around them.

Kindergarten - Math

By: Kristen Ahlfeld (Kindergarten Teacher)

The kindergarten students continue to develop their math skills. We have been working on horizontal and vertical addition and subtraction problems using a variety of manipulatives. The children are also learning to use number lines to jump forward or backwards to complete different math operations. The children are practicing their handwriting skills and learning to form numbers correctly.

Each morning in our circle time routine, the children are teaching each other to count in languages spoken in their homes. We cross disciplines into social studies and locate countries on the world map where their language is also spoken. The children are empowered and proud to demonstrate their own meaningful words that represent numbers. English, Mandarin, Spanish, Serbian, Lebanese, and Polish are just a few of the languages in which the children are learning to count to 10.

The diversity of Garden School students shines each morning during this time as they learn to contribute, recognize and appreciate other cultures.



Elementary

Grade 1 Language Arts

By: Jackie Renner (First Grade Teacher)

In First Grade students are always looking for ways to make their writing more interesting. Throughout the year students have worked to write descriptive super sentences. They brainstormed adjectives to describe the subjects, interesting verbs, and when and where the event happened. The robot moved became the shiny machine packed boxes in the factory all week.

Another way their writing is becoming more exciting is through the use of contractions. This week the focus was on contractions using not. We practiced getting the "o" out of not and rewriting the contraction with the apostrophe. More than one student noticed that we were writing the contractions just like our addition and subtraction facts. We also listened to a contraction song and then got moving. Even though the weather has been quite warm, First Grade is getting ready for winter weather while having a contraction snowball fight. The contraction and the two words that make it up were written on paper snowballs. On a count of three, the students threw the snowballs, chose one and found the student with the match. There was much giggling as students didn't get in trouble for breaking the no throwing rule and darting around looking for the match. After several rounds, students practiced writing sentences with contraction and expanded form.

Students were encouraged to insert these contractions in the written response to this week's story, *Kids Have Fun*. Students observed that children in different places like to create things, learn new things, play games and imagine just like they do. Students authored their own pages to include in the story. Small groups suggested different ways they have fun at school. The lists included running on the playground, drawing in art, playing chess and writing in journals. Students drew a poster of themselves having fun concentrating on adding details for the people they have fun with, action, and what they see. They then used the drawing to write about having fun in school. Many students wrote they couldn't wait to have fun again.



Grade 2 Language Arts

By: Paula James (Second Grade Teacher)

The students in the second grade have been reading *Molly's Pilgrim*, which is a story about a young girl who moves from Russia to a rural area in America. Her family moves here for religious freedom. When Molly is at school, her classmates tease her about her appearance, accent, and lack of knowledge regarding American culture and traditions.

The story sparked conversations about the pilgrims and helped build an understanding and awareness of what pilgrims are. We were able to make connections to pilgrims of 1620 and





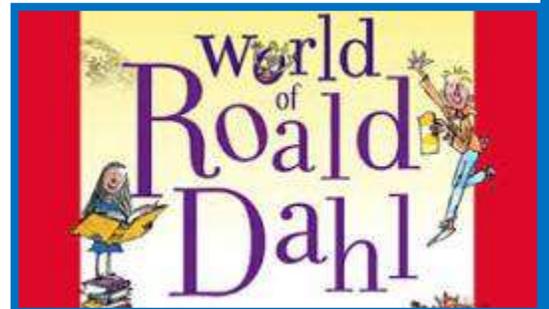
their quest for religious freedom, just like Molly's family. In the story, the students are asked to use a clothespin and make a pilgrim doll. The main character, Molly, brings in a pilgrim doll that looks like her mother, and not a traditional pilgrim associated with Thanksgiving. With help from the teacher, her classmates understand that Molly's doll is a modern day pilgrim and that modern pilgrims are still coming to America. The second grade students enjoyed creating their own version of a pilgrim doll from the story.

The book also presented an opportunity for us to examine the behavior of some of the characters we were reading about. The intolerant and culturally uninformed children in the story learned an important lesson about acceptance, which connects with our school-wide themes of kindness and respect. During one lesson, we imagined ourselves as Emma, a character who was teasing Molly, and took an opportunity to practice writing a letter to apologize for our bad behavior. The book gave us many opportunities to discuss how fortunate we are to live in a community where different cultures and religions are appreciated and celebrated.

Grade 3 Language Arts

By: Nilla Ingravallo (Third Grade Teacher, Dean of Grades 1-3)

The third grade students are participating in a Roald Dahl author study. As a class, last month, we read *The Enormous Crocodile*, a text about a crocodile with clever tricks to catch his lunch. While reading this text, the students analyzed it for the story elements, focusing on the protagonist's goal, the actions the crocodile took to achieve his goal, and how the secondary characters, the jungle animals, stopped him from doing so. The third graders also learned about characterization in reading. Using text evidence, the students made inferences about the characters' traits and personalities. As an extension activity, utilizing the text as a model, the students brainstormed a fifth clever trick for the Enormous Crocodile. They had the Enormous Crocodile disguise himself as various objects and people, such as a zoo statue, a stuffed animal, and a child. They also noted the results of his new trick.



To further this author study last week, the students formed two book clubs; one book club is reading *The Magic Finger*, and the other book club is reading *George's Marvelous Medicine*. Both novels are about protagonists that try to remedy problems by using magical elements. In their groups, the students are discussing story elements, characterization, vocabulary, and literary elements such as flashbacks, cause and effect relationships, and problems and solutions. They are also evaluating themes in the texts and developing their opinions about the character's actions. During this unit, they are also learning how to make text-to-text connections between their books, *The Enormous Crocodile*, and *Matilda*, which has been our read aloud book.

The third graders are eager to read more of Roald Dahl's "scrumdiddlyumptious" stories! Each student will select a Dahl book to read on their own and create a book poster for it.

Over the past couple of weeks, the third graders have been working on writing personal narratives. After learning the elements of this form of writing and reading mentor texts, the students outlined their memorable events using a 5 W's graphic organizer as a prewriting tool. During this unit, the students learned what to include in the beginning, middle, and end of their narratives and how to make stories interesting. They also began to learn how to incorporate dialogue in their writing, utilizing *The Enormous Crocodile* as a model. Using the outlines, the students drafted their stories, applying the lessons and techniques they learned. On their own, they are revising and editing their writing before conferencing with the teacher. Very creative and exciting personal narratives, third graders!



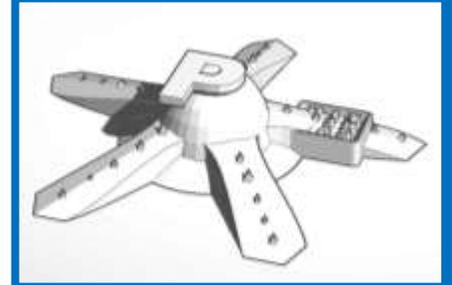
Grade 4 and 6 Science

By: John Hale (Science Teacher)

The 4th & 6th grade computer science classes have been hard at work learning and investigating the properties of Computer Aided Design.

To help students learn and understand the uses of technology, our students have been working in TinkerCAD to design 3D designs for the Bearded Dragon tank and the Turtle Tanks that will be printed on our Makerbot Replicator 2 3D Printer that was donated by a gracious parent 2 years ago.

Over the next quarter and a half they will be working with different CAD systems to hone their skills in 3D designing. We look forward to see all that they will create.



Grade 5 Science

By: (Science Teacher, Science Department, Chair)

The fifth grade's "Turtle Teach" project culminated this week. Each of four student teams went to a different PKFA, Pre-K, or Kindergarten classroom, along with their designated turtle, a Lego turtle of their own design, turtle facts, a fictional turtle story written by them, a turtle themed game, and a turtle coloring page or maze designed by the team members.

The students worked hard and it was a great opportunity for them to not only demonstrate their ability to work together as a team, but also share what they learned with others. I am very proud of what they have accomplished.

Middle School

Grade 7 World Languages

By: Agustín Melara (Chair, World Languages Department)

Earlier in the week, students in Spanish 7 were assessed on their knowledge of numbers 0-30, telling time, the conjugation of verbs ending in -er (e.g., *comer*, *responder*, *vender*, etc.) and the proper agreement of adjectives according to the number and gender of the noun they modify. The day after the test, we began a new unit which introduced the verb *Ser*. This is one of the most important verbs seventh graders will learn in Spanish (not just this year but for years to come) because it allows them to talk about a person's profession, nationality, physical description, and inherent qualities. As part of their vocabulary enrichment, students have now begun studying professions. By combining the verb *Ser* and the vocabulary learned in this new chapter, students are now capable of constructing sentences such as: *mi mamá es dentista* (profession); *mi papá es colombiano* (nationality); *Ana es bonita* (physical description); *los estudiantes son inteligentes* (inherent quality).

Grade 8 World Languages

By: Gabriel Gomis (French Teacher)

French 8 has just completed the "passe composé" with the auxiliary verb "avoir". They also learned the comparatives of superiority, inferiority, and equality. They are capable of comparing people and things using the comparative. They also have been introduced to the vocabulary of the animal world and they are working on projects that will enhance their vocabulary relative to animals. As always, they used their new acquisition through oral practice.



High School

Grade 9 and 10 PE/Health

By: Augustin Melara (Spanish Teacher, Dean of World Languages)

The 9th and 10th graders are in their final week of basketball getting ready for playoffs.

This year, we're handling the playoffs in PE class slightly differently. In past years, playoffs have been structured. If you finished in 1st place during the regular season; your team would have had a BYE for the first round. If you had lost, you would have to sit out for the next class. This year, to increase the daily participation, we're doing same-day playoff tournaments, which is straightforward, competitive and gives every team an opportunity to win playoffs every day. If they lose they have a chance to win next class. Basketball is a team sport and the 9th and 10th graders are doing just that, working together as a team to get as many points as possible in a 7 min game and as many wins as they can during this final week.

Grades 11 Social Studies

By: Sarah Sullivan (Science Teacher, Dean of Grades 4-6)

We have completed our unit on the American War For Independence. The eleventh graders analyzed battle strategies utilized by both the Continental Army and local militias. Many were surprised that an army of untrained soldiers could defeat the powerful, experienced British Army.

Grades 12 Social Studies

By: Richard Grusky (Chair of History and Social Sciences Department)

Seniors at Garden School are involved in two courses: Economics and Political Philosophy. Both groups will sit for a mid-term examination in January.

The Political Philosophy class in the second quarter has dealt with writings describing the removal of a tyrant. Another topic has been the notion of contracts in the establishment of a community and a government. We will end with a reading of Edmund Burke, the father of modern conservatism.

The second semester will include a return to the abstract; Kant, Fichte and Hegel. After that, we will apply the dialectic to Marx, Nietzsche and Hitler. It was been a good year with the promise of an even better second semester.

High School English Department

Grades 10, 11 and 12 Excerpts from Rubin Museum Visit Writing Competition, (Marcia Elkind, James Pigman)

What a wonderful set of essays we received from the 10th, 11th, and 12th graders! There were many more worthy of note, but these represented the best and the freshest approaches to the personal essay.

First Place: Jasmine P. '18 Excerpt...The Rubin Museum is an eye-opener to the cultures of Asia. Every artwork was unique with its own story to tell. ...The symbols within each artwork you were able to see the little hand movements or special items held by different deities you would be able to understand the entire story. It's amazing how such small movements like a flick of the wrist or the twist of the hip can tell an entirely new story itself. These were seen in individual statuettes of deities and that spoke of how powerful they were or what class they were in, like someone with many hands and heads would be seen as being able to do everything with many intelligences. Not only the positioning of the body was important but also what they held like a drum or a lotus which represented what story they were telling. All of this featured mainly in Himalayan art, which I was mostly interested in.



Second Place: Tina X. '16 ...On the Highline, the wind was strong with good sun. At first, there were many trains to the left. On the right, helicopters were flying in. Annie and I walked at the end of the team. Because of our slow pace, Ms. Prio kept poking our backs and urged us to go faster. This made me think back to my life in the village. A flock of ducks was walking in front. I took a long bamboo pole to drive the ducks to run. Now, we were the ducks....

Third Place: Marion C. '17 (At the Rubin) I was enamored with the same room, the room with the shrine. (The first time 4 years ago) I was struck by how much I wanted to believe in eternity, how much I wanted to believe that someone was watching over me, and how much I wanted to believe that, through inner reflection, I would find answers to questions I hadn't even thought to ask yet. I appreciated the shrine for its cultural significance and aesthetic beauty, but that was not why the room stayed with me long past that first visit and brought me back to the museum ...Stepping into that room felt like falling into place, like finding just the right phrase to explain how you feel, like striking a tuning fork and feeling the note reverberate through your body....Chanting, low and baritone, it sounded simultaneously human and other-worldly....

Honorable Mentions:

Shan Shan G. '18 The shiny bowl...grabbed my attention. At first, I thought I was supposed to write down my wishes and throw them into the bowl, normally with water inside. So I decided to read the description. It told us to write down our sacred places on a piece of paper and put them into the bowl. The bowl was just like a silver mirror. This might be symbolic for reflecting your sacred places upwards to the gods.

Merna H. '18 ...The cleaning of the Buddha sculpture was amazing how big the sculpture was and how much fun it looked as people ...threw buckets of paint on it to clean it....The museum was amazing and showed me things that I've never seen before...(about) Tibetan art.

Mirabella C. '18 Humans continually try to change their identity, whether it be through acting, or make-up. ...Masks make it easier for a person to transform in to a character and take on new traits. ...My makeup "mask" is a way for me to express myself and though I may rely on it too much, it helps bring out the person that I want to be.

Charlie W. '16 (The Shrine room) had many statues of Buddha, Thangka, and others. I was very familiar with that room because there is exactly the same room in my uncle's house. Every morning, my uncle sits in that room and it makes him feel calm, and kindness and it is a good place for thinking...

Kyle C. '16 The city is a shrine to the modern world, where one can not only be a part of it but look at it and think about it. New York is a good place to think about the sense of what is modern==a constant confusion and conflict, an unending imbalance...A shrine is a place to go to think about either what is greater than you or to consider the conflict you face, the city is a place to be both part of yourself and part of something much grander than yourself.

Matthew H. '17 One place I remember on the Highline was the amphitheater where we tried to figure out Cheyenne's Nikon camera, perfect for the yearbook. Ms. Trotter was able to restore the auto-focus and she hung on a balcony rail and took an outstanding group photo and immortalize Garden School on the Highline....

What a wonderful set of essays we received from the 10th, 11th, and 12th graders! There were many more worthy of note but these represented the best and the freshest approaches to the personal essay.



Pictures from the Trip to The Rubin Museum, Highline and Chelsea Market



Garden School Open and House and Merit Exam

On Saturday, December 5th, over 125 students in grades 5 to 10 from both Garden and other schools, sat the Merit Scholarship Exam. In addition, many families from other grades came for the Open House to learn about Garden School. We are looking forward to a strong enrollment of new students next year.

We are very grateful to Kathy Anderson-Polhill, Abbey Cebollero, Agustín Melara and eighth grader, Joelle G., for offering their unique perspectives of Garden School.

