



# GARDEN SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



Richard Marotta, Ph. D., Headmaster

Volume 94 Number: XV

"Cultivating Success in Every Child"

Friday, January 6, 2017



## ***Thoughts for the Week***

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

Welcome back to school and a happy new year to all members of our community. The advent of a new year makes us reflective of what took place in the 'old' year and anxious about what will occur in the 'new' year. It is really a matter of an agreed upon moment in which we see ourselves ending and beginning. The sense of beginning forces us to reflect on what has transpired and think about ways of moving our own lives and the lives of those around us forward more positively and productively.

For us in school, the new year call for a degree of self-reflection about the past several month and then acting upon those intentions to envision the next several month in ways that continue to fulfill our mission. My interpretation of 2016 focuses on the transformations that took place in our culture, our politics and our language. We witnessed an almost paradigmatic shift in our public discourse and the relationship between discourse and reality.

In a school such as Garden, we try to concentrate on the use of language. For all of our classes, the language used reflects the 'reality' of the subject matter. In math, we strive to understand the abstract nature of representation; in science, we use language to describe the conditions of nature; in history, language organizes the past; in English, we study and use language as an expression of our thoughts; in music, we examine the language of sound; in art, we examine the language of shape, lines, color and design; in physical education, we look at the connection between language and action.

For each one of us, teachers and students, our firm belief is that the words we use will enhance our minds, our social interactions, our understanding of the different aspects of our world and that our inner life will be expanded by our growing self understanding. However, more and more, the media, our political leaders and misleaders and our consumer-driven economy move us away from the correspondence between language and reality.

In a stimulating, balanced and important book, *What the Internet is Doing to our Brains: The Shallows*, Nicholas Carr explores in detail the impact of the internet on our intellectual, social and inner lives. He begins with Marshall McLuhan groundbreaking study, *Understanding Media*, in which McLuhan made the now famous point that the medium is the message Carr writes:

What's been forgotten in our repetition of this enigmatic aphorism is that McLuhan was not just acknowledging, and celebrating the transformative power of new communications technologies. He was also sounding a warning about the threat the power poses---and the risk of being oblivious to that threat.

Carr's point clearly makes sense in our world today in which the media, from TV to Tweet, seems to have become the center of information, opinion and reality. Throughout Carr's book he attempts to balance the positive and negative aspects of the media and the internet, but he also realizes that individuals now have a greater responsibility than ever to control and interpret the world on far more significant terms than that of the 'showman' media: "The showman exaggerates to make his point, but the point stands. Media work their magic, or their mischief, on the nervous system itself."



## Thoughts for the Week (cont.)

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

This has become our reality. Garden School and other independent schools have an obligation to teach critical thinking which means, in addition to the traditional academic areas, we need to guide our students to an understanding of the strength, the weakness and the 'danger' of information and of media. We need to help our students and ourselves to manage life in a world which is now driven by the electronic impulses of technology. We need to humanize learning and make it authentic.

Richard Marotta, Ph.D.  
Headmaster

### DATES TO REMEMBER:

- Tuesday, January 3: Classes Resume
- Thursday, January 12-Thursday, January 19: Upper Division Midterm Exams
- Friday, January, 13: Lower Division Pajama Day!
- Monday, January 16: School Closed for Martin Luther King Day
- Friday, January 20: Marking Period 2 Ends
- **Thursday, January 26th, Garden School Annual Meeting, All Parents Invited**
- Thursday, January 26: Report Cards Distributed
- Friday, January 27: Report Cards Returned

### Garden School I.S.A.L Varsity Girls Basketball Schedule 2016

Day	Date	Opponent	Location	Time
MON	1/9	MMD	HOME	3:45
WED	1/11	LREI	HOME	4:00

### Garden School I.S.A.L Varsity Boys Basketball Schedule 2016

Day	Date	Opponent	Location	Time
Fri	1/6	BWL	Barclays Center	10:15pm
MON	1/9	MMD	HOME	5:00
Fri	1/13	Churchill	Home	3:30



### Garden School I.S.A.L Middle School Girls Basketball Schedule

Day	Date	Opponent	Location	Time
Mon	1/9	MMD	AWAY	3:45
Thur	1/12	BWL	Away Sokol (NL)	4:00

### Garden School I.S.A.L Middle School Boys Basketball Schedule

Day	Date	Opponent	Location	Time
Mon	1/9	MMD	AWAY	4:45
Thur	1/12	BWL (NL)	HOME	4:00
Fri	1/13	Churchill	HOME	5:00



## GARDEN SCHOOL ANNUAL FUND APPEAL LETTER 2016-'17

September 21, 2016

Dear Garden School Parents,

Welcome back! With school now in session, your family is back in the busy and productive Garden community routine of planned field trips, rekindled friendships, creative projects and homework, and afterschool clubs and sports teams. Perhaps, you as a parent are being reminded about why you chose to enroll your child at Garden School in the first place. I trust that you are inspired again at how Garden School takes seriously the trust you have placed in us, and follows through on its commitment by investing itself fully in the education of your child.

Just as Garden School is investing in your child and family, we need you to invest in the school and right now, the Annual Fund needs your help. As you know, like all independent schools, Garden's tuition does not cover the entire cost of educating your child. Every year, it is standard for a "fundraising" line item to be included in an independent school's budgeted income. Therefore, the school depends on this annual fundraising, and especially the Annual Fund, to support the successful implementation of Garden School's mission.

Last year, this community raised over \$50,000 towards the Annual Fund and we thank you for your support in achieving that milestone. With your help, Garden has continued to improve its educational offerings and its physical plant in ways seen and unseen:

- With the assistance and support of the PTA and the Library Committee, we completed a much-needed renovation of the Library;
- 40 new computers were purchased for the computer room and classrooms;
- A cashless, electronic payment system was installed in the cafeteria;
- Two new commercial refrigerators were purchased for the kitchen;
- Much needed new and more efficient heating boilers were purchased for the main building.

Naturally, we have plans for more program and facility improvements, which is why your participation in the Annual Fund is so critical.

While the size of your donation is important and we encourage you to be generous, our goal is 100% participation within the Garden Community, and we need your help to achieve that goal. Our Board of Trustees has demonstrated its leadership by already achieving that goal with gifts totaling over \$10,000 to the Library renovation, and has set its goals higher for the Annual Fund. In support of Garden School's Mission, and in recognition of the investment and trust you have placed in your child's school, we ask you make a donation now 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.

Please go to [www.gardenschool.org/giving](http://www.gardenschool.org/giving) for information and to make your donation online. On behalf of all alumni, current and future generations of Garden students, we thank you for your generosity.

Sincerely,

Richard Marotta, Ph.D.  
Headmaster  
Alumni Parent '00  
Current Grandparent '31

Michael Rakosi, '64  
President, Board of Trustees

Jean Kinn, Alumni Parent '06  
Chair, Annual Fund  
Member, Board of Trustees



## ***Nursery Language Arts***

**By: Carmella Knopf (Music Teacher)**

The nursery is excitedly learning the alphabet! We are up to letter Hh. These letters help lead the children into the wondrous world of reading-favorite picture books, street signs, cereal boxes and more.

We use different concepts to help us along the way. Some include: letter story books, letter picture books, paper puppets, crowns, letter painting with stencils and our Smartboard. To reinforce each letter, we color pages with corresponding pictures, color crowns to wear home and make puppets. We also use the letter book series by Jane Belk Moncure in which each story is about a letter and we have a box that holds items that begin with that letter. On the Smartboard, we use a program where children pick corresponding pictures and listen to a chant for every letter. We listen to letter songs from our friends *StoryBots*, *Sesame Street* and *ABC Mouse*. The exposure to each letter is a key step on the road to reading success!



## ***Pre-K Language Arts***

**By: Eileen Reyes (Pre-K Teacher, Early Childhood, Dean)**

Children have always been fascinated by traditional fairy tales. These tales have been written with especially chosen detail to appeal to the very young. The repetition of situations and phrases soon become familiar, making joining in fun and adding to the pleasure of hearing them again and again. The Pre-K students have been enjoying reading various fairy tales this first week back from our long holiday break. Just one fairy tale can be told in so many ways: reading several versions of a story written by different authors, retelling a story using flannel board illustrations, watching a story on the Smart board, and listening to a story being told on a listening sound track are just some of the ways tales have been introduced to the Pre-K students.



This fairy tale unit of study has been chosen to develop listening skills and improve attention spans. Oral expression skills have been promoted through children retelling the story. The ability to remember story sequence has been practiced and the opportunity for creative expression has been provided.

Various version of *The Gingerbread Boy*, *Cinderella*, and *The Little Red Hen* are some of the fairy tales that have been read. We will be reading more next week as we continue with this unit of study.



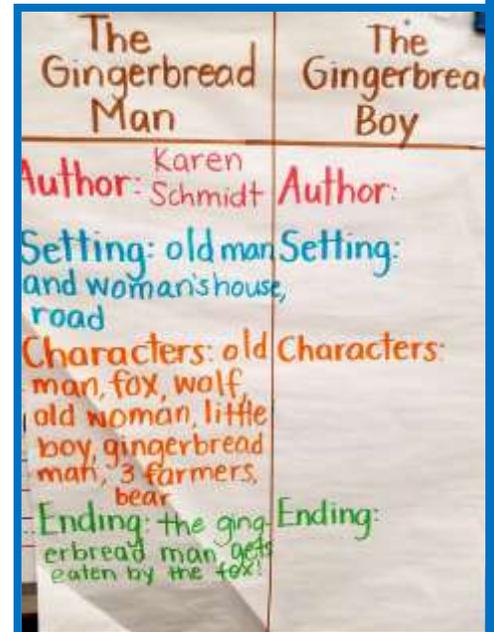
## Kindergarten Language Arts

**By: Lauren Yandow (Kindergarten Teacher)**

This week in Kindergarten we began learning about a new letter, Jj, and were exposed to new sight words: not, out, our, on, and no! Through our phonics lessons and reading time, students are able to use these new words in context and truly understand their meaning in written language. We also connected our letter Jj to our new month, January! Every morning during our morning meeting we review the month we are in and practice writing this letter as a whole group. We also discussed why the word January has an uppercase J rather than a lowercase j like other words we have learned such as jam, jacket, jet, and even judge!

We also began a new story unit this week: The Gingerbread man series! We began this unit by reading the original Gingerbread Man story and learning about the different story elements such as the title, author, setting, characters, and plot of the story. Throughout this unit we will be reading different versions of the Gingerbread man including The Gingerbread Boy, The Gingerbread Baby, and the Gingerbread Girl! We will compare and contrast these stories to one another and find the similarities and differences between the characters, plot, and settings.

During this process, students will learn how to use a Venn diagram to compare two or three books at the same time and how to properly complete this diagram using pictures and words. At the end of the unit, students will also have the opportunity to bake their own gingerbread men and decorate them creatively! We are excited to learn more about books and their many elements as well as literature tools to help us better understand and analyze books that we read.

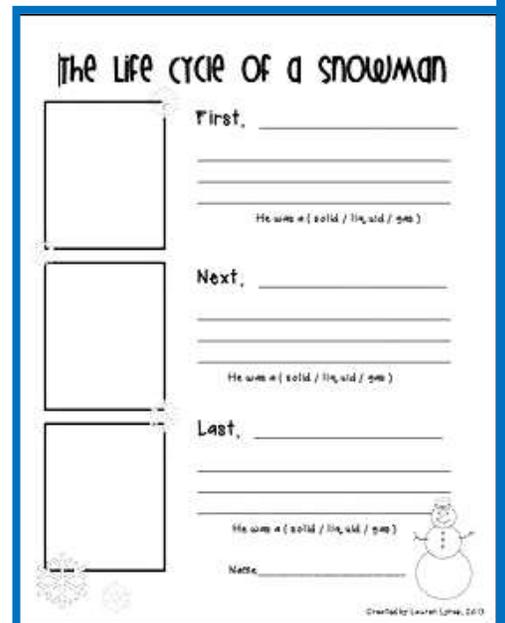


## Grade 1-3 Science

**By: Michelle Sclafani (Science Teacher)**

First, Second and Third grades wrapped up before the Winter break learning about Solids, Liquids, and Gases. Tying the holidays together to our phases of water, first grade focused on the life cycle of a snowman, breaking it down into a solid, liquid or gas. The first graders were able to see how water changes phases by connecting it to something fun. Second and Third grade then focused on how you can make a candy cane disappear, or dissolve and what method was the fastest. We paid close attention to the difference between warm water and cold water and the effects both had on the candy cane.

Going forward, first grade will be focusing more on properties of matter as second grade will begin measuring matter and third grade will tie both together and identify all ways of how matter can be classified. Identifying matter by its mass, volume, length, color, and texture are important building blocks that will allow the students to go further on their studies in Science by tying together other aspects with these fundamentals.





## ***Grade 6 World Languages French***

**By: Gabriel Gomis (French Teacher)**

We reviewed the adjectives, the weather, and the vocabulary related to clothing. Students did a physical and personality description of their friends, parents, and various celebrities. We also talked about the seasons and the weather and they related to different activities they like to do in summer, winter, spring, and fall.

Next week, on Thursday and Friday, we will assess their understanding of both topics in a written test.

## ***Grade 7 Social Studies***

**By: Sarah Smith (Social Studies Teacher)**

The job of the American President is quite awesome in terms of domestic responsibility and its global impact. This is an idea that seventh graders have been discussing over the past week. We have been analyzing the actions that president elect Donald Trump is taking as he transitions into the executive branch. Students have listed the cabinet members he selected as well as his views on foreign affairs and the domestic job market. Some are questioning his actions as they have just finished examining the structure, beliefs, and responsibilities outlined in the Constitution.

It is critical for students to realize that what they are studying in class does in fact have relevance when they enter the outside world. Consequently, we compared Trump's transition to the unfathomable task of George Washington's transition to become the first president. We looked at our first cabinet and the important choices these founding fathers had to make. Many were surprised that there were Americans who wanted to have a good relationship with Great Britain when we were adversaries just a few years prior. They are learning the delicate dance of geopolitics through the workings of George Washington who always put nation and duty before personal interests. Imagine if there were more great leaders like Washington today, what turn would our country take.

## ***Grade 8 Social Studies***

**By: Sarah Smith (Social Studies Teacher)**

The eighth graders have recently completed a unit on Japan. They learned how cultural diffusion from China to Japan led to the creation of this vibrant culture. Language, religion, and the imperial system was brought to Ancient Japan through the works of early Japanese leaders. In addition, many discussed the incredible genres of Art such as block art pieces, Noh plays and Kabuki performances as well as classic poetry and literature.

Students then questioned the fairness of the feudal system that was supported by such shoguns as Tokugawa Ieyasu. Was it acceptable that people were born into a position without the possibility of social mobility? They then examined how the introduction of Christianity, as well as European and American trade agreements could transform this nation of isolation to one of modernization. Students discussed the positive and negative impact that western nations had on Japan. Ultimately, we wondered whether cultural diffusion had a positive or negative impact on a nation such as Japan.

## ***Grade 9 English Writing***

**By: Jim Pigman (English Teacher, English Department, Chair)**

"Orrpaaj Sirka lay stretched on his back, visualizing his skydive. Light gray eyes. Wind burned skin. Stinky gym socks. Clean soap in his ears. High up in a geodesic dome, he rested on an I-beam and squinted through the glass and looked at Alaska's winter sky. Forty meters above the concrete, one leg dangling free, his body made small twitches as he practiced the moves in his mind. Twenty-two years old..."



Thus began the day for the ninth graders in writing this week. Their assignment was to take the story into the next stage. Either in pairs or singly, the composers had to figure out the dome, the references to the Aleutians, the stratospheric dimensions, and what was the motivation for this hero. The stories would take many turns from the futuristic 2068 setting of THE GRAVITY PILOT by M.M. Buckner. Sometimes writers just need a little kick start to release the imagination and for the next and final session we will be pushing onward with Buckner's story.

## **Grade 10 Fine Art - Chinese Art**

**By: Tiina Prio (Art Teacher, Fine Arts Department, Chair)**

The Tenth Grade Chinese Art class has finished working on the Terracotta Warriors project. The class found it challenging to begin the Warrior as each student wanted their creation to be realistic. Limbs, torsos and a head needed to be in proportion to each other to be convincingly lifelike. Many students amazed themselves with their ability to work with clay creating armor, weapons and clothes. After the clay dried thoroughly, they were bisque fired and ready for glaze. After the glazing process, the Warriors again needed to be fired. Finally, the Warriors were ready to go home.



Creating the Warriors is always so much fun as each takes a life of their own, similar to the real Warriors which were also fashioned after individuals. Some students were very creative as their Warriors turned into modern day superheroes. Everyone enjoyed this portion of the class and I'm sure will keep their Warrior for a long time.

## **Grade 11 and 12 Physical Education**

**By: Flance Dervishi (Chair, Athletics Department)**

Happy New Year and welcome back!

Juniors and Seniors have started off the New Year with European Handball! This game has been in the Olympics since 1936 and now Garden students get a chance to play every year. Two teams of five play on basketball size court with two soccer goals. Students can dribble up to three steps or hold on to the ball up to three seconds at a time. Students may throw and bounce pass to each other. However, only bounce pass into the goal are allowed.

Students will learn the fundamentals of European handball then, once students are comfortable playing the new sport, we will start our Handball Tournament. In two weeks, we will crown a champion! Next, we start our new exciting badminton tournament.



*Scenes from the Winter Show 2016*

