



# GARDEN SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Richard Marotta, Ph. D., Headmaster

Volume 92 Number: V

"Academic Excellence Since 1923"

Friday, October 17, 2014

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

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



In the [Fall issue of \*Independent School\*](#), the journal published by NAIS, Elizabeth Duffy explores what she believes to be the three most current trends in independent school education which schools must focus on in order to equip students for the twenty-first century world.

The three areas Ms Duffy identifies are a lifelong and creative understanding of technology, a complex and not trendy global perspective and the skill of adaptation to the rapidly changing conditions of our experience. She believes that independent schools should consider these three areas when shaping curriculum, activities, community awareness and problem solving models.

In reality, while Ms. Duffy's point of view applies to all areas of education, in the independent school world these trends can be addressed without the interference of the political and educational establishment. So, when independent school educators and families think of these areas, our first response might very well be, of course, we *all* have and use technology, we *all* talk about the global perspective and we *all* react to situations that require adaptability skills. Indeed, she writes, "many of these trends play to independent schools current strengths." I agree that independent schools, including Garden, are aware of these ideas and implement them throughout the curriculum.

Having said that, my sense is that identifying these trends is only the beginning of the process of developing curriculum for the future. Of the three areas she highlights, I believe the most important is adaptability. Adaptability is key to our ability to engage with and make the most of both the technological imperative and the global concept of being world citizens. We know from our experiences over the past twenty-five years that technology is an ever-changing construct. What was "cutting edge" technologically five years ago has yielded to further advancements, and so all of us including our students must be able to adapt with the new necessary skills. Similarly, the concept of global citizenship has evolved in the past twenty-five years with the ever-shifting landscape of world economics, power and developing global technologies. Again, our students will be well-served by their Garden school experience and their acquired ability to both broaden and refine their points of view while including the perspective of others.

Until recently, the school model hadn't changed significantly in almost two hundred years. The school was seen as the preserver of a tradition and not the creator of future traditions. Yet within the past twenty-five years, the idea of adapting the school to the conditions of the modern world has become a given. As our environment changes at a faster pace than ever before in human history, Garden School must serve the needs of its students in direct and practical ways. While it is extraordinary to think that what we do at Garden today may not be what we need to do in five years, it is critical for the adaptability factor to be cultivated into our programming.

The Garden School Mission Statement states that "we empower students... to meet the challenges of everyday life". As independent school educators, our responsibility continues to be to identify those quickly changing challenges and adapt to their reality.



## **DATES TO REMEMBER:**

- **Tuesday, October 21 : International Club Bake Sale**
- **Thursday, October 23 : Halloween Parties for Grades Pre-K to 6, In the Gym (see next page...)**
  - 2-3:30 PM - Nursery, Pre-K 3/4 and K**
  - 4-6 PM - Grades 1 to 6**
- **Friday, October 24 : School Closed for Faculty Workshop Day**
- **Wednesday, October 29 : Senior Bake Sale**
- **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 : Grade 1 - 12 Parent/Teacher Conferences, 3 - 8:30 PM**

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

- **Garden School General Assembly: November 12, 2014 at 7:00pm in the Gym.**

**Members of the Garden School Board of Trustees will discuss the state of the school. A more detailed explanation of this event will follow.**

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

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### ***College Visitors Next Week:***

#### **Wednesday 10/22**

11am Hofstra University (NY)

2 pm CUNY - required for all seniors

#### **Thursday 10/23**

9:30am Sweetbriar College – women only (VA)



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## Garden PTA

By: PTA Officers



## Garden School "Spooktacular" Halloween Party!

Thursday, October 23rd, 2014



Greetings Garden Families,

Next week, on Thursday, October 23rd, 2014 we will be having the Garden School "Spooktacular" Halloween Party! Below find some important information regarding the event:

1. The Nursery, Pre-K 3/4 & Kindergarten party will begin at 2:00 and end at 3:30.
2. The party for grades 1-6 will begin at 4:00 and end at 6:00.
3. All children MUST be accompanied by at least 1 adult. Your child will not be able to attend if there is no guardian.
4. All children/adults wearing a mask must remove their mask at the door. This is to ensure the safety of our children.
5. We need volunteers to assist throughout the events - so please join in on the fun! Signup sheets are on the bulletin board!!!
6. This year's party will be different and full of fun surprises! If you can, we would sincerely appreciate it if you can help by donating some goodies for the children. Anything such as water, juice boxes, cookies, chips, brownies would be great! Again, signup sheets are on the bulletin board!
7. If you are interested in volunteering/donating - you can also contact me (Maria D'Amore) directly via e-mail at [DiAmore533@aol.com](mailto:DiAmore533@aol.com) or call/text at 718-593-2867

So come in costume, dance, socialize! It's going to be **frightful** and oh so **delightful**!

\*Maria D'Amore (Ariana 4th) - 2014 Halloween Coordinator

\*Victoria Zunitch Fraust (Mimi 4th) - 2014 Halloween Co-Chair



Halloween Goodie Bag Preparation!



## ***Math for Nursery***

***By: Carmela Knopf (Nursery Teacher)***

Nursery has been having a good time learning about shapes. We have learned about circles, squares, triangles, rectangles and ovals until now. We will also learn about hearts, stars and diamonds in the next two weeks. Every day we read an engaging book with kid-friendly images and easy-to-read text of the shape being taught. To reinforce the lesson, we colored our shape pages. We also practiced making shapes with our fingers.

## ***Math for Pre-K***

***By: Eileen Reyes (Pre-K Teacher)***

Shapes have been the focus in the Pre-Kindergarten's math class for the past couple of weeks. Since the world is built of shapes, it is very easy to notice shapes in our surroundings. The children have been shown many examples of shapes and are now learning to count the sides of a shape. They have also noticed how shapes come in all different sizes. A new skill was taught when the students learned to combine shapes to create new shapes.

The block corner has been the perfect place to boost shape recognition. Building with blocks teaches skills such as: how to combine some geometric shapes to make others, how to count, and how to compare lengths and widths of different shapes. Some are even learning addition as they discover that two short blocks will be the same length as the next size block.



To further explore shapes, the students have been using tangrams, a dissection puzzle which when put together form new shapes. We read *The Shape of Things* by Dayle Ann Dodds and *Shapes, Shapes, Shapes* by Tana Hoban to help build vocabulary.

## ***Math for K***

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

The kindergarteners have been exploring a variety of math concepts, such as counting, number recognition, ordering, greater than, and simple and complex patterns.



Not only are the children learning to count in English, they are also able to count to 10 in Mandarin, Arabic, French, German, Polish and Spanish. In class, we aim to incorporate languages spoken at home into our daily curriculum. The students are also enjoying finding and creating patterns in our daily experiences. The children use manipulatives such as counting bears to build simple patterns. Once they have mastered simple patterns, they are encouraged to build more complex patterns using shapes and colors as attributes.



## English for Grade 1

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

Nouns can be found everywhere. First graders have learned that nouns are words that stand for people, places, and things. They have sorted nouns into those categories and listed nouns for specific locations such as nouns at home and nouns at school. After achieving a strong understanding of what a noun is, First Graders began writing plural nouns. Students were able to change a singular noun to a plural noun on the board along with explaining why they chose to add an s, es, or use a special spelling like mice or feet. Now, the students are working on remembering to use a capital letter for proper nouns. The students made a flip book to illustrate both a common and proper noun for a person, place, and thing.



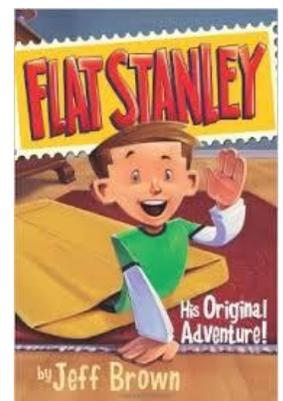
Everyone was eager to use proper nouns in their writing this week. First the students brainstormed words and phrases about Fall. Next they worked with their teacher to write an example main idea about her favorite thing about Fall. Then the students wrote their rough drafts of their favorite thing about the season. The awesome authors remembered to capitalize October, Halloween, and Thanksgiving.

## English for Grade 2

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

The Second Graders have been busy composing sentences and paragraphs in Language Arts. They learned the terms "subject" and "predicate" and have been identifying and labeling the parts of a sentence. They enjoyed an activity where they wrote their own sentences on large sentence strips and had to cut their sentence into a subject piece and predicate piece. The whole class mixed their sentence strips together and we put them back together in silly ways. The class enjoyed this cooperative game and they worked together to sort the subjects and predicates and then to create funny sentences. The Second Graders also worked on identifying three types of sentences: commands, exclamations and questions. They enjoyed working together to label and sort the sentences and to add the appropriate punctuation mark.

In a connection to Reading class, the students wrote a question that they would ask the main character of our chapter book *Flat Stanley*. Then they worked together to infer how the character would answer and composed the answer in sentence form.



The Second Graders also are beginning to learn the structure for composing a paragraph: Topic Sentence, Three Details and Conclusion. This same format will be reviewed and built upon at the higher grade levels. They are currently working as a whole class, with teacher guidance, to create a topic sentence with a related conclusion sentence. They then brainstorm the related details as a class but then compose them independently. As the school year advances, the Second Graders will begin to create their own topic sentences with less teacher modeling. The process is "scaffolded" to support the student's development and understanding of the paragraph structure. The Second Graders have composed paragraphs with the topic sentences, "There are many changes in the Fall" and "Trees give people many things they need". They worked well together as a class to work within the paragraph structure.



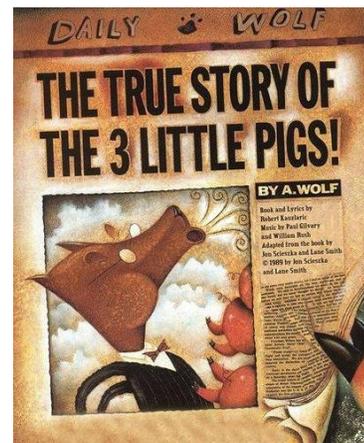
## English for Grade 3

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

Why is learning important? The third graders have been exploring this essential question through their first reading unit, "Let's Learn." To activate prior knowledge, the students discussed places where learning occurs and ways that people learn. They were able to identify what type of learning takes place in different environments. After this initial discussion, the students embarked on furthering their understanding of this concept through narrative and expository texts.



During the first week of this unit, the third graders read and discussed the role of teachers both inside and outside of the classroom. Stories such as *The Homework Lesson* and *First Day Jitters* allowed the students to recognize what they learn from teachers in school, while *Tina's Tryout Day* and *Be a Good Citizen* showed how people in our communities serve as educators. The students made connections while reading these texts. For the second week of the unit, the third graders investigated the power of books. The realistic fiction text, *Amazing Grace*, and the legend, *The Storytelling Stone*, expressed how books and stories can influence and change people. During the following week, the third graders examined different types of schools and analyzed the underlying similarities of these institutions by reading articles from *Time for Kids*. This week, the students began investigating how stories can teach about animals, with a focus on wolves. The fantasy stories, *Wolf!* and *The Three Little Pigs*, as well as the fractured fairytales, *The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs* and *The Three Ninja Pigs*, allowed them to examine how this animal is portrayed in stories. The expository texts, *The Truth about Wolves* and *Return of the Gray Wolf*, provided the students with factual information about wolves, which they compared to the fictional view. To complete the unit, the third graders will study special places and the learning that happens there.



Through personal experiences and literature, the third graders have been able to identify ways of learning and why learning is important. They have observed how learning helps people find out about the world around them and how it can help people become who they want to be.

## Science for Grade 4

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

At the beginning of the week the 4th grade science class worked on learning how to properly measure matter. They learned how to use and got the chance to work with the triple-beam balance and the graduated cylinder. They then started their investigation of plants and what plants need to survive and reproduce.

Also in an effort to help with the transition to the 4th grade they have been working on how to take notes and how to organize their notebooks. All in all it has been a very busy and productive week.!





## Science for Grade 5

**By: Marlene Dapice (Science Department Chair)**

Welcome to Turtle Downs! The 5<sup>th</sup> grade students have been working with the turtles currently in residence in the main hall tank. Last week they had a trial run for an upcoming turtle race. Before the details of that run, you should know a little about the turtles.

They are all female. The largest one is Sunny. She can be found basking on the rocks, enjoying the view, and providing a platform for the other turtles to climb upon. The smallest one is Shelley. Despite trauma to her shell and limbs early in life, she has proven herself to be a real trooper. The midsize turtle is Savannah Skye. She's the prima donna of the group. She likes nothing better than striking poses for her admirers.

Now to the stats. You may think that the larger turtle would be the fastest, but the total opposite is true. Sunny preferred to remain in one spot and be scratched, (yes...scratched), on her shell. Shelley was turbo charged. She's going to be the one to watch.

The 5<sup>th</sup> graders enjoy handling the turtles and can't wait for their next opportunity to do so.

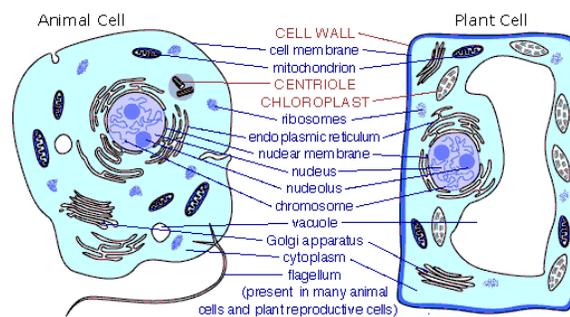
## Science for Grade 6

**By: Luigi Albano (Science Teacher)**

The energetic sixth graders have enhanced their knowledge of science by revisiting the topic of classification of living things or taxonomy. They have reacquainted themselves with the importance of the biosphere and they have intensified their knowledge even though several of its areas do not have human life, such as the deep oceans, polar areas, barren deserts, and dense rain forests. They have been able to comprehend the importance of classification of living things, and how the classification method developed by the Swedish botanist Carolus Linnaeus (1701 – 1778) has been used and adapted over time.



We have investigated the cells, which are the smallest unit of living things. The historical past of cell has been marked by the phenomenal contributions of Robert Hooke, Anton van Leeuwenhoek, Matthais Schleiden, Theodor Schwann, and Rudolf Virchow. The work of these men has led to the development of the cell theory, which is still used today. We have navigated through the discussion of the microscopic cells, both plant and animal, and its parts known collectively as organelles. As stated in our mission statement, **"Garden School, in the independent tradition, affirms the primacy of learning."** Garden school sixth graders have undoubtedly succeeded in their study of science as a result of an inherent part of our mission statement.





## ***Foreign Language for Grade 7 and 8***

***By: Agustín Melara (Foreign Language Department Chair)***

After having learned basic vocabulary related to places around the city and family members, the students in seventh grade Spanish were introduced to the concept of verbs. The vast majority of verbs in Spanish, which help us to express actions, end in –AR. This is a significant step in their language acquisition process because now they can formulate sentences about what people are doing. For example, they can express daily activities such as, “Yo miro la televisión,” (*I watch television*) or where a family member works: “Mi padre trabaja en una oficina,” (*My father works in an office*).

Students in eighth grade Spanish have been learning about definite articles, nouns, and adjectives. Unlike English, the definite article “*The*” remains the same, whether it refers to a singular noun or a plural noun (e.g., *the friend*-->*the friends*). Adjectives in English do not change either, whether they refer to masculine or feminine nouns. In Spanish, however, the definite articles vary according to the gender and the number of the noun it refers to. Thus, “*el amigo*” becomes “*los amigos*” in the plural and “*la amiga*” becomes “*las amigas*.” This concept also applies to adjectives: “*el carro rojo*” (*the red car*) but “*las casa rojas*” (*the red houses*). Next week we will be learning about expressing feelings and emotions by using the verb “*Estar*” (*to be*).

## ***Physical Education for Grades 9 and 10***

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

The 9th and 10th grades are having a blast in Physical Education! Their first unit for the year was soccer and the competition got fiercely exciting. After further developing basic skills and playing “soccer: steal the bacon”, we made teams and started tallying goals. Last week was playoffs and the championship, which was a thrilling and an excellent start to the year.

We look forward to beginning European Handball next week!



## ***History for Grades 11 and 12***

***By: Richard Grusky (History Department Chair)***

Junior and Senior history is moving at a good clip. Classes have been made interesting and serious by good reading and active participation.

The Juniors have completed their study of the U.S. Constitution and are actively investigating the colonial period.

The Seniors in Political Philosophy have completed their study of the ancient world, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Polybius, Marcus Aurelius and Seneca. They are entering the Medieval World.

The Seniors in Revolution and Terror are completing Crane Brinton’s *Anatomy of a Revolution*. The next text will be Hannah Arendt’s *On Revolution*. It has been a good year so far.



## PSATs

**By: Lisa Sohmer (Director of College Counseling)**

On Wednesday morning, Garden's sophomores and juniors sat for the PSAT, an early step in preparing to apply to college.

While PSAT results are never reported to colleges, they are an important study and guidance tool, with results available in early December.

Last night, several seniors and their parents joined me for a brief meeting to discuss the ongoing college process. This "where are we now?" update included a discussion of various financial aid forms including the College Scholarship Search (CSS) PROFILE, Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the FAFSA4CASTER.

So far, 21 colleges and universities have sent representatives to meet with our seniors and there are 11 still to come, including next week's visits from Hofstra, CUNY and Sweet Briar.

The seniors are busy working on their applications and essays, especially those who will file Early Action or Early Decision applications in just a few weeks.

And then the next cycle begins again as all juniors, along with their parents and guardians will participate in the annual **College Night for Juniors at 6:30pm on November 5.**



**Seniors (and Nakia Letang from Fairfield University) celebrating Deshawn's 17th birthday before beginning a college info session.**

**OPEN**  
your heart

**FIFTH ANNUAL PJ DRIVE**  
to benefit The Pajama Program

Hosted by  
CAVO Lounge,  
Maria L. Delgado (MoonWellness) &  
Assemblywoman Aravella Simotas

PLEASE RSVP: 917.647.7407 by 10/22/14

When: Tuesday, October 28, 2014  
Time: 6:00PM - 9:00PM  
Where: CAVO  
42-18 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Astoria, NY

**FOOD DONATED BY CAVO/CASH BAR**

Join us - Kindly Donate NEW Pajamas and/or books & RSVP.  
Our Goal for the evening is 3,000 PJ's and/or Books

Help Us Make a Difference  
• Donate new pajamas  
• Donate new books  
• Make a financial donation

For More Info: Maria (917)-647-7407  
[www.moonwellness.net](http://www.moonwellness.net)

CAVO Lounge  
[www.cavoastoria.com](http://www.cavoastoria.com)

**Pajama Program**  
[www.pajamaprogram.org](http://www.pajamaprogram.org)



## What's on Your Bucket List?

1. See the Northern Lights from Iceland.
2. Stonehenge.
3. Salisbury Cathedral.
4. Churchill War Rooms.
5. Swim in the geothermal pools and hot tubs in the Blue Lagoon, Reykjavik, Iceland.
6. The London Eye
7. Blood Pudding.
8. Westminster Abbey.
9. St. Paul's Cathedral and the Brass Rubbing Centre in the Crypt.
10. Shakespeare's Globe Theater.
11. Charles Dickens' Museum.
12. Picadilly Circus.
13. The Tate Museum.
14. Harrod's Department Store.
15. Tower of London and the Crown Jewels.

Join us on the Upper School trip to England and Iceland,  
February 12th, Thursday 7:30 PM to 21st, Saturday, 4:30 PM.

Marcia Elkind    James Pigman    Sarah Smith    Tiina Prio  
O'Sullivan



Any questions? Contact either Mr. Pigman or Mrs. Elkind at Garden School by phone (718) 335-6363  
or by email: [pianoman203@gmail.com](mailto:pianoman203@gmail.com) or [melkind@gardenschool.org](mailto:melkind@gardenschool.org).