



GARDEN SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



Richard Marotta, Ph. D., Headmaster

Volume 94 Number: XIV

"Cultivating Success in Every Child"

Friday, December 16, 2016



Thoughts for the Week

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



Thinking about the end of this year and the beginning of the new-year always fills me with the impetus to make plans for the future. I am always moved by the amount of energy flowing through the school during the week before a break, especially this break, since we all return to the beginning of a new year. It is, of course, fashionable to think about resolutions for the upcoming year as ways of changing our behavior and improving our performance. This emerges from our culture which often thinks in terms of renewal, which for many of us seems unrealistic.

As I walked through the school today and listened to the Lower School Show, and right before that bid farewell to the Upper School as it left for a day trip, I felt a bit of nostalgia knowing that for the next two weeks, there will be no children in the school. Somehow, a school takes its life and its energy from its students, whether in a class, in the hallways, even in moderating a disagreement or solving a problem. Schools derive their energy from the presence of students.

This break is welcome as a time to rest, re-energize our spirits and prepare for the return in January. We have lived through a very interesting, tumultuous and controversial year. The cultural climate has, it seems, hardened into factions that have no interest in listening to any other point of view. Rhetoric and slogan have replaced thought and idea. Yet our school remains a center of open-mindedness, our teachers continue to teach based on the universally agreed upon body of knowledge, our students continue to think, discuss and argue their points of view, and our school continues to fulfill its mission.

As we think about what we want for the new-year, we should keep our mission in mind that we are committed to educating young people to think critically, to evaluate information, to reject a culture of imagery, to embrace others and to be authentic. Our school has fought for these ideas since its beginning. We will continue to nurture genuine thinking in the new-year.

Happy New Year to all members of the Garden Family!

Richard Marotta, Ph.D.
Headmaster



DATES TO REMEMBER:

- **Friday, December 16: Winter Show 10:00 AM Gymnasium**
- **Friday, December 16: Noon Dismissal – No Afterschool**
- **Monday, Dec. 19 – Monday, Jan. 2: School Closed for Winter Break**
- **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**

Parents! Please check the Lost and Found rack in the main hallway ASAP! Remaining clothing will be donated over the Winter Break



**Come Support your Griffin Teams!
Next Week's Scheduled Games**

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

Day	Date	Opponent	Location	Time
Mon	12/12	Churchill	AWAY	4:45
WED	12/14	FASNY	HOME	4:00
Thur.	12/15	BRP	HOME	4:15

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

Day	Date	Opponent	Location	Time
Fri	12/9	BFS	HOME	4:00
WED	12/14	FASNY	HOME	5:15

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

Day	Date	Opponent	Location	Time
Mon	12/12	Churchill	Away	3:45

Garden School I.S.A.L Junior Varsity Boys Basketball Schedule

Day	Date	Opponent	Location	Time
Thur	12/8	BRP	Home	4:15





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 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 - Kindergarten Fine Arts - Music

By: Tom Heineman (Music Teacher)

Early Childhood students are focused on preparing for their upcoming performance in this year's 1970s-themed 'That '70s Show' presentation. Nursery did well in their first trip to the performance space, becoming acclimated with the stage and doing their songs in front of an audience.

The 1970s were a decade in which the popular music of the period was deeply draped in emotion. 'Rainbow Connection,' a song being sung by Pre-K and Kindergarten at the show, was originally written to open the Muppet Movie at the decade's close. It taps into feelings of longing, of dreaming of and aspiring to something greater in life, and is quite moving. It is a piece of music that is most certainly emblematic of the era, and one in which the students really enjoy singing.

Grades 1 Mathematics

By: Kristin Alhfeldt (First Grade Teacher)

The first graders have been exploring subtraction. The students are becoming familiar with new vocabulary such as minuend, subtrahend and difference. They are also distinguishing the equal, minus and plus symbols as representations in operations. The class is learning to perform subtraction problems using pictures, number lines and ten frames. The children are becoming more confident as their knowledge of related math facts increases. The students are also learning to solve word problems by visualizing the problem and drawing pictures to solve. One of their favorite smart-board games is "Balloon Pop." The students need to interact with the subtraction problem and pop the correct subtrahend to find the difference.



Grades 2 Mathematics

By: Paula Sirard-James (Second Grade Teacher, Dean of Grades 1-3)

The second grade students recently finished surveying classmates about their favorite winter activity, and building a snowman was on the top of the list. Also last week, the holiday boutique brought in a flurry of activity with counting coins and exchanging money. So, we capitalized on all this enthusiasm and the second graders were very excited to create a Build-Your-Own Snowman shop in the classroom!

Each student was invited to the shop to purchase parts and accessories for their snowman using the play money made available to them. They were first asked to read the price list and calculate how much each item would cost. Next, they worked out the total amount of play money they would need for their purchase. Finally, they constructed their snowman. The children did a fantastic job adding the amounts, paying with the correct coins, and putting together their wonderful winter creations. Stop by our classroom to check them out!





Grades 3 Mathematics

By: Julia Schatten (Third Grade Teacher)

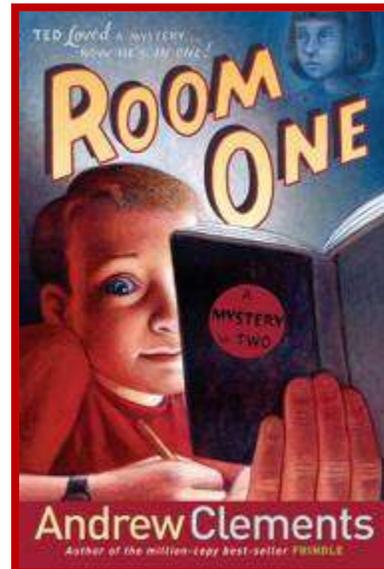
The third grade students have been strengthening their math skills daily! They have been working on double digit addition, rounding to the nearest '10' place value/dime and '100' place value/dollar to estimate the sum. Simultaneously the students have been working on solving word problems. They are advancing their ability to determine what a question is asking, identify the key facts, correctly solve, and appropriately check their final answer. Children have worked individually and in small groups to fortify these skills.

Grade 4 Language Arts

By: Phil D'anna (Language Arts Teacher)

Andrew Clements's mystery novel Room One features Ted Hammond, the sixth-grade detective who discovers a family hiding in an abandoned farmhouse. Through diligent investigation, Ted learns that this family has been traveling to a relative's house in Colorado but is in need of help. He also figures out that helping this family find a home in his town of Plattsford, Nebraska will also allow his one-room school to stay open. This wonderful story encourages its fourth-grade readers to think critically, reason through pertinent information, and understand the benefits to helping those in need.

Over the winter break — upon completing this novel — the fourth graders will complete a "tic-tac-toe" project. In this type of project, students will choose three assignments from a tic-tac-toe board that allow them to reflect on the novel in a creative and artistic way. Some of these projects include writing diary entries from a character's point of view, writing a letter to Andrew Clements about the book, or illustrating their favorite scenes, just to name a few. Projects like these allow students to articulate their understanding of the reading by utilizing their skills and strengths as learners. Though fun and informal, these alternate assessments should be diligently and thoroughly completed so that each student can evidence their learning to their fullest capacity. I look forward to seeing the outstanding works they will create!



Grade 5 Language Arts

By: Phil D'anna (Language Arts Teacher)

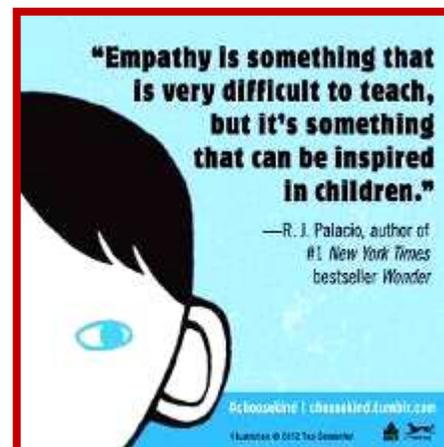
“When given the choice between being right and being kind, choose kind.”

—RJ Palacio, author of *Wonder*

This quote embodies one of the major themes of the class's current novel, Wonder. The story tells of a physically deformed boy, Auggie, and his first year in a real school. Having been homeschooled his whole life, this new fifth grader must acclimate to the realities of life in a school with hundreds of kids. More importantly, the school must acclimate to this new strange-looking child. The story is told through various perspectives – that of Auggie, his friends Jack and Summer, his sister, Via, and others. Though each person tells the same story with their own little twist, they all learn the same lesson: kindness matters.



The fifth grade has been studying this novel for the last few weeks. Most recently, we have read from Auggie's point of view as well as his sister's. The concept of perspective is interesting for fifth graders to understand because it highlights the fact that two (or more) people can experience the same event so differently. We have had many conversations in class about empathy and what it means to put oneself in another's situation. The idea has seemed to resonate with them, and as we continue to read the different perspectives, the students will be able to notice the glaring similarities and differences between each character's experiences. It helps them to focus on each one's character and adopt to further develop their own character.



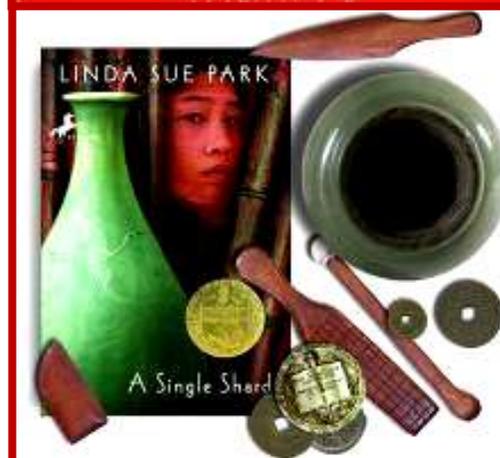
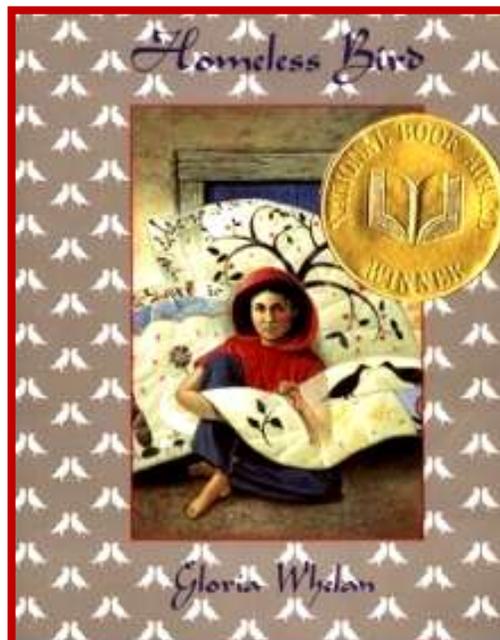
Grade 6 Language Arts

By: Phil D'anna (Language Arts Teacher)

It is important for students to have a voice in deciding what books they'd like to read, and being presented with options empowers students to be responsible for the novel they've chosen to read. Often, though, students are immersed in western stories and culture which can limit their world view. Over the winter break, the sixth grade will choose between two novels situated outside of the United States. Both novels tell the story of a character who struggles to survive in their society.

The first novel, Homeless Bird by Gloria Whelan, tells the story of an arranged marriage gone wrong. Thirteen-year-old Koly is widowed and, consequently, abandoned by her family and society. She must find her way and learn to survive on her own in a place that does not support widowed women. The second story, A Single Shard by Linda Sue Park, takes place in a 12th century potter's village. The orphaned thirteen-year-old, Tree-ear, wishes to be a great potter. When he accidentally breaks a master's vase, he must work to repay his debt. His final job takes him on a dangerous journey where he learns the importance of perseverance.

Both stories teach readers about life in other cultures and the value of overcoming challenges. Hopefully after reading one of these novels, the sixth graders will have gained a deeper understanding and appreciation for the cultures and struggles of their characters, realizing that the habits and routines of our daily lives are not always mirrored around the world.





Grade 7 Math

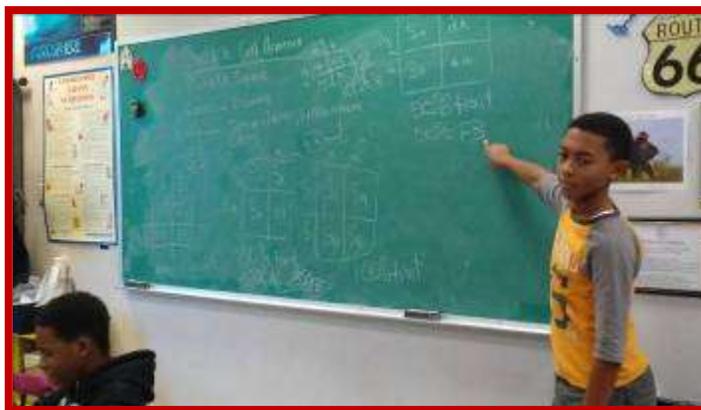
By: Darin Gilstrap (Science Teacher)

Hello students, parents and fellow faculty. I am Mr. Darin Gilstrap, Garden's new science teacher for grades 5, 7 and 9. I am happy to join the Garden family. I wanted to take a hot minute to tell you about myself and then what I have been doing in my first week with our great kids.

I am a native New Yorker from Manhattan. I attended elementary school at the Trinity School on the upper west side and high school at the Bronx High School of Science. Throughout my entire secondary, undergraduate and graduate education I majored in the biological and human sciences. Professionally, I spent over 20 years working at many tri-state NY hospitals performing cardiovascular procedures. By and large, I have been in a school setting for 45 of my 50 years. Thus, I have a lot of teaching experience to share on both sides of the desk.

I am also a dad of a 13 year old son and a 17 year old daughter. So I truly understand what our Garden children are experiencing on a daily basis. Our Garden kids are a true extension of my kids at home.

On to academics. In my first full week of 7th grade science, we learned about the topic of genetics and heredity. We focused on Mendel's classic theory of cross-breeding of tall and short peas to derive offspring that exhibited traits of both or one of the parental generation. We learned about the terms allele, genotype, phenotype, dominant, recessive, homozygous, heterozygous, and Punnett Square. We then learned how to apply these basic theories to human genetic disorders (e.g., sickle cell anemia, cystic fibrosis, and Tay-sachs). During our first few classes, students took turns going to the board to draw Punnett squares of various genetic disorders and calculating probabilities of genotypes and phenotypes of offspring. This turned out to be a great exercise of combining biosciences and statistics.



I look forward to expanding our kid's application of life sciences to real world scenarios. If you want to follow our topics check out my weekly Thinkwave.

Grade 8 Science

By: John Hale (Science Teacher)

The 8th grade finished their investigation of Organic Chemistry. This module was designed to help foster the students understanding of how their life choices can have short term and long term affects. The students have discussed about proper diets and a breakdown of normal diets used by people. The broke down each diet with the pros and cons of each.

Currently the students are begun their investigation into understanding the physics of matter. Through collaborative discussions and minds-on laboratories, the students learned about Frame of References, Velocity, Acceleration, and Forces. Using different they are interacting with the different equations that will help solidify their understanding of these topics.



Grade 9 History - Ancient & Medieval

By: Richard Kruczek (History Teacher)

Necessity is the mother of all invention. Never was this axiom more true than in the case of the Greek language. In order to preserve for posterity the epic poems of Homer, the Iliad and the Odyssey, those around him took what they could from the Phoenician alphabet, added some vowels and created written ancient Greek. From this, the literature of Western Civilization was born - as well as a slew of films and other works chronicling the Trojan War. The Iliad, to which we've devoted the past week, is a tale containing all of the elements of human nature, and makes for a great read - and an incredibly significant one.

Grade 10 History - Modern European History

By: Richard Kruczek (History Teacher)

The lights are on - and the tenth graders are home - and immersed in the Enlightenment. We just covered what I like to call the "bridge" that connects the Scientific Revolution to the Age of Reason: the works and contributions of Sir Isaac Newton. As I told the students, and confirmed with our Science Department, Newton's three Laws of Physics are the basis for any modern physics course. But Ike went far beyond this - in order to describe what he meant, he created a brand new form of math: calculus (cover your eyes, devotees of Leibniz). While these two genres plague the modern student's daily existence, they're vital in describing why things are the way they are. The students will see the light, someday. Newton did, when he reworked the telescope and told us of the properties of light. See what I did there...

Grade 11 and 12 World Languages - Spanish

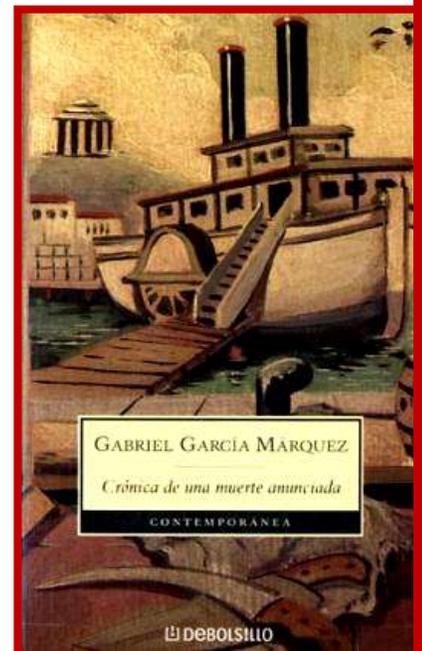
By: Agustín Melara (Chair, World Languages Department)

As we quickly approach the end of the first semester, students in the eleventh and twelfth grades are also approaching the end of the novels they are reading in their respective courses.

In French IV, students are about to complete Saint-Exupéry's, *Le petit prince*. Upon its completion, students have a choice of either preparing a scene from the book (*en français*) or present a project depicting one of the many memorable moments from the novel.

There is also a sense of accomplishment among the Juniors and Seniors in the Spanish IV/AP class as they, too, are about to finish reading, *Crónica de una muerte anunciada*, by Gabriel García Márquez. Students must soon decide who is responsible for the death of the protagonist, Santiago Nasar: the friends who murdered him or an entire society who knew of the assassins' intentions but did nothing to prevent the crime.

After Midterm exams, we will watch the cinematic production of this novel and compare/contrast the novel and the film.





Scenes from the Winter Show 2016

