



GARDEN SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



Richard Marotta, Ph. D., Headmaster

Volume 93 Number: XI

"Cultivating Success in Every Child"

Friday, December 4, 2015



Thoughts for the Week

By Richard Marotta, Ph.D., Headmaster



Over the past several months, I have attended a number of conferences for Heads of School; some of these conferences were at meetings and others were part of online streaming sessions. I thought that it might be helpful for me to share with you some of the books that were being discussed by conference leaders, who in the regular course of their professional lives keep abreast with the most recent educational developments.

Beyond the University by Michael Roth, President of Wesleyan University, explores the idea of the importance of liberal education in the lives of students. Roth takes issues with our society's preoccupation with education for jobs and focuses on education for life. In fact, Roth argues that liberal education may in fact be the most effective way to prepare for life in the modern world, in which job skills change quickly and dramatically, necessitating more of an ability to learn and adapt than a predetermined set of skills. He writes that "liberal education, as I use the term, refers to the combination of the philosophical and rhetorical traditions of how one learns as a

whole person." Learning as a whole person creates the foundation for success in our new world.

Another book, *Hope is an Imperative*, by David Orr, distinguished Professor of Environmental Studies and Politics at Oberlin College, raises many question about environmental issues and how our schools and universities should begin to build curriculum that goes beyond the traditional ecologically based courses. Orr thinks that our educational models should really include the idea of the human future and that curriculum should explore what the very nature of the human is, will or should be for our students. Interestingly, the first section of his book focuses on the role of language in developing an understanding of the environment and of the future. All human undertakings begin with language and the way in which language defines the world around us.

The final book that I would recommend to you is *How to Raise an Adult*, by Julie Lythcott-Haims, former dean of freshman at Stanford University. Lythcott-Haims' books emerges from the every-developing trend of 'over-parenting' that is beginning to affect colleges and universities. Her anecdotal style, including her confession of her own moments of 'over-parenting,' offers a series of examples of how to develop independence and initiative in our children. Some of her ideas include avoiding over-praising, allowing children to make mistakes and encouraging children to stand up for their own beliefs as a first step in raising self-sufficient adults. She writes, that "raising a kid to independent adulthood ...is a biological imperative and an awareness of the self in one's surroundings is an important life skill for a kid to develop."

All three of these books offer challenging viewpoints. While we may not agree with each and every point, we will certainly benefit intellectually and personally from engaging these ideas in active and lively debate. Our world changes every day, introducing us to challenges that we couldn't conceive of last month or last year. The skill we need to face and manage these challenges lies in our intellect and our ability to gather information, ideas and viewpoints that advance our own encounter with the future.



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:

TONIGHT!!

- Friday, December 4 : Pasta Night – 2 Sittings (5:00 & 7:30)
- Saturday, December 5: Merit Exam & Open House (9am – 12pm)
- Friday, December 18: Lower Division Show at 9am
- Friday, December 18: Noon Dismissal
- Monday, December 21 – Friday, Jan 1: School Closed for Winter Break
- Monday, January 4: Classes Resume

Athletic Department Game Schedules

Did you know that Garden School offers seven different sports teams that students can join? The training and playing on a team teaches great skills that go beyond physical and coordination. Teamwork, communication, competitiveness, sportsmanship, leadership, discipline, and grace are just a few of the character benefits associated with playing team and competitive sports!

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

Girls Varsity Basketball

Day	Date	Opponent	Location	Time
MON	12/7	BWL	92 YMCA	4:45
TUE	12/8	STEINER	HOME	4:15
FRI	12/11	BFS	HOME	3:45
MON	12/14	CHURCHILL	HOME	3:45
WED	12/16	FASNY	HOME	5:00



Boys Varsity Basketball

Day	Date	Opponent	Location	Time
MON	12/7	YORK PREP	HOME	3:45
FRI	12/11	BFS	HOME	5:00
WED	12/16	FASNY	AWAY	4:15



Boys JV Basketball

Day	Date	Opponent	Location	Time
THUR	12/10	CHURCHILL	HOME	4:00





Garden School PTA

By: Victoria Zunitich (PTA Recording Secretary)

The PTA would like to thank everyone for their outstanding cooperation with the Holiday Boutique. The teachers were helpful, the children were kind and the adults were generous with their time and money. We can't thank you enough! So please watch your email for our full formal thank yous to all concerned.



Garden School Pre-K For All Program

By: Ann Marie Vida (PKFA Teacher)

For the month of December, students will be beginning a new thematic unit on "Where we live." This week the students examined different homes that people live in. They learned that there are many types of homes. Some people live in apartment buildings, castles, mobile homes and boathouses. The students learned about some of the materials that are used to build homes and that homes keep us safe from bad weather.

The class read the books *Home* and *Where We Live*. The students discussed how their home was similar and different to the homes in the stories. The students then created a collage of what their own homes look like using available collage material. The students were excited to share their creations with their classmates. Our unit study is off to a great start!



Pre-K For All Program NYC DoE Professional Development Workshop

By: Maria Victora (PKFA Coordinator)

On Thursday, December 3, 2015, Bank Street College of Education visited with Garden School Early Childhood staff members as part of this month's New York City Department of Education Professional Development workshop. Throughout the day, Early Childhood Educators shared personal experiences and strategies on the idea that "children's learning is integrated and occurs simultaneously across all domains, which are interrelated and interactive with one another". Through discussions they shared strategies for using intentional language with children around their emotions and social interactions, and ways that they could help families connect early literacy with social emotional development at home.

As parents or guardians read or tell stories to children, their facial expressions and intonation create a visual and auditory connection to the emotions being represented. It is crucial to a child's early learning skills that adults read constantly at home and at school to them and share conversations throughout the day about their experiences. This can be in the English language or the child's native language. When children hear, learn, and retell a story; it becomes their story and thus they gain a sense of confidence and competence. As educators one of our goals should be to help families create a literacy rich home environment that supports social emotional development for young learners.



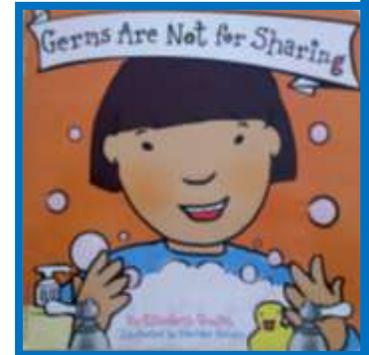


Early Childhood

Nursery - Health/P.E.

By: Carmella Knopf (Nursery Teacher)

Nursery's health lesson this week was about germs. We read *Germs Are Not for Sharing* by Elizabeth Verdick to help reinforce how important it is to cover your mouth while coughing and sneezing. We practiced coughing and sneezing inside our elbows instead of our hands. On the smart board, we listened to the "top and bottom" song we sing while washing our hands. We also colored a hand washing page to take home and share.



Pre-Kindergarten - Health/P.E.

By: Vonetta Trotter (P.E. Teacher)

Pre-K and Kindergarten are enjoying many of the new activities in PE.

At the beginning of class, we perform warm-ups consisting of tag games and cool down stretches at each student's floor spot. Warm ups have consisted of various animal association movements and stationary exercises. We have played games similar to musical chairs using floor dots; the remaining students will run around the gym and jump from one hula hoop to another to encourage consistent movement from all students throughout the activity. Our weekly 'Wacky Wednesdays' consists of dancing to music and singing along to fun children's tunes. 'Parachute Fridays' have also been a huge success. We have introduced parachute 'washer' and 'dryer', in which a rotation of a few students sit under the parachute while the rest of the class waves the parachute quickly to 'wash' and then creates big slow waves to 'dry' the parachute. On occasion, we have included music with 'Parachute Fridays', students enjoy the rhythmic addition to the parachute activities very much. Overall, Pre-K and Kindergarten have been participating attentively and energetically.

Enjoy this video of the Early Childhood Thanksgiving Feast:

<https://youtu.be/-jT9hHTgLiU>

Elementary

Grade 1, 2 and 3 Fine Arts

Art

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

The first, second and third grade art students created posters for today's Basketball Pep Rally. Working in groups encourages students to become active rather than passive learners by developing collaborative and co-operative skills. Sydney.edu, states that working in a group, "provides a structured learning experience that can prepare students for the realities and diversities of the workplace, working with people with different skills, cultures, approaches and from different places."



First students chose a slogan. Writing it on large paper utilizes math and English skills as the words have to fit into the space and be spelled correctly. Some posters have graphics, helping to illustrate the slogan. Linking words and pictures together is a good way to use both hemispheres of the brain.



The students were free to choose how they colored the poster so that their message is most effective when shown. Even though their poster may seem large as they are creating it, once it's on the wall of the gym, the size seems to magically shrink.



The first, second and third grade students love to get involved in the Pep Rally as it begins one of the most exciting phases of the sports curriculum. Many of the students enjoy playing basketball and it is important to promote it. So many people at Garden get involved in the basketball season either playing, coaching or cheering on their team. Go Garden Griffins!

Music

By: Tom Heineman (Music Teacher)

Students in 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade are busy rehearsing their numbers for the upcoming Winter Show. The theme for this year's show is 'Character' (how we think and conduct ourselves), and all of the songs they are singing have some bearing on this theme. The First Grade is singing the Jimmy Webb song 'Up, Up and Away.' One aspect of character that is expressed within the song is inclusiveness, the trait in which Garden School will be focused during the 3rd quarter. Kindness and love are also central to the song; while the song may not have been written for a younger audience, its ideas about floating across the clouds and sky seem to speak to children's imagination.



Sly Stone wrote many songs that are meditations on character. One such song, 'You Can Make It If You Try,' focuses on perseverance. Second Grade is tackling the song and working on motions and dance steps to accompany it, as well. Another good example is 'Sing a Simple Song,' which addresses optimism and kindness in its lyrics:

I'm livin' livin' livin' life with all its ups and downs
I'm givin' givin' givin' love and smilin' at the frowns

Third Grade considered some of the aspects of character that were captured within the song. They have been working diligently to create hand movements that reflect the song's words along with dance moves. I'm looking forward to their performance!

Math for Grade 4

By: Natalie Sangiovanni (Math Teacher)

The phenomenal fourth graders have been focused on using addition and subtraction strategies in solving real life word problems involving money. They added amounts and "made change" using a variety of methods. They were challenged with the concept of estimating in two different ways. They enhanced their multiplication skills by playing a game called "I'm 45, who has 9 x 3?" and "Minute Math." Over the next week, the students will master subtraction that involves regrouping and apply these skills to solving real life situations. Next, the students will work on multiplication and division concepts.

Grade 5 Mathematics

By: Sonia Ambarsom (Math Teacher)

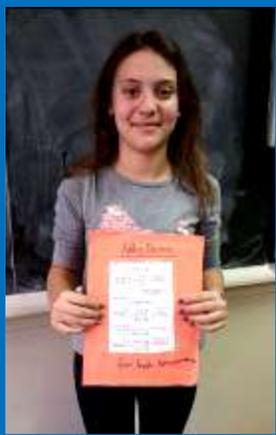
The fifth grade math class has finished studying basic operations as applied to decimals. They will now be taking that information and understanding the correlation between the two then applying it to fraction operations. They have used prime factorization in order to find least common multiples and greatest common factor in order to find equivalent fractions. This is an important step needed in order to add and subtract fractions. Multiplication and division of fractions will soon follow.



Math for Grade 6

By: *Natalie Sangiovanni (Math Teacher)*

The stupendous sixth graders were given a spontaneous assignment: create a project using any media which explains any topic that we have covered in math. WOW! The sixth graders wrote and performed songs, produced videos, created posters, created games, wrote poems, parodies, skits, books and essays. They worked individually, with a partner or in a group. I was ecstatic to see the students take this opportunity to make a math concept come alive in their eyes! I have never seen such creativity in all of my teaching years! I am proud of all of their hard work!



Middle School

Grade 7 Tom Sawyer Scenes - The Movie

By *Nancy Massand (English Teacher, Dean of Middle School)*

Here is the movie of the Tom Sawyer Scenes as performed by the seventh grade. Subscribe to the Garden School YouTube channel while you are there for lots more videos... <https://youtu.be/AyU-2xSIFFc>

Grade 7 Language Arts

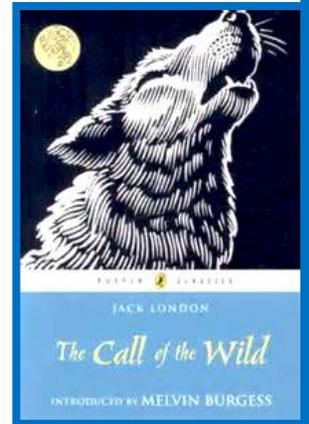
By: *Nancy Massand (English Teacher, Dean of Middle School)*

English 7 is reading Jack London's classic, *The Call of the Wild*.

Supported by discussions of adaptation and heredity in their science classes, students trace the canine protagonist's devolution from a pampered pet to a "demon dog" that terrorizes a native tribe and becomes a legend in his own time. We discuss "nature vs. nurture" as regards character traits, and we also look at human behavior in light of the survival of the fittest theme that dominates the story.



In addition, groups of students are investigating life in the Yukon territory during the Klondike Gold Strike in the late 1890's. Each group has chosen a different facet of the topic: the discovery of gold, gold mining, travel to the Yukon, and daily life on the trail. They will dress up as characters from the era to tell their tales, summarize the content of their topics, prepare handouts for their classmates, and generate "hard-copy" projects like gold mining how-to booklets or travel brochures. In this way, history becomes relevant to our study of literature, as we look into the ways an era can shape a novel's plot, characters and theme .



Grade 8 Language Arts

By: Nancy Massand (English Teacher, Dean of Middle School)

English 8 is currently reading a long excerpt from *The Secret Piano*, an autobiography by pianist Zhu Xiao-Mei, who was a young teen during the Cultural Revolution in China. It is a chilling story of a very different kind of adolescence from what we experience in the West today.

With the historical and cultural foundation of the Cultural Revolution covered in their Area Studies course, students get both a historical and a personal approach to a very important era in our history. They are challenged by a point of view that is not western-centric and are learning to examine culture and ideology aside from their preconceived mindsets of "what's right." Although Zhu eventually emigrated to the West to pursue her concert career, she gives a clear and honest portrayal of her younger self as a Maoist revolutionary and of her life journey to the woman she is today. *The Secret Piano* excerpt is the first of a series of three autobiographical works we will read, the second being that of an American NASA engineer and the third of the recent teenage Pakistani winner of the Nobel Peace Prize.

In keeping with Garden's commitment to diversity, we strive to present an array of literature that reflects a global community. You can watch a clip of Zhu Xiao-Mei performing by following the link below:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2v6u-gNkQfE&feature=player_embedded

High School

Grade 9 World Languages

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

Earlier in the week, students in Spanish II were assessed on their knowledge of reflexive verbs (frequently used to talk about daily routine), demonstrative adjectives (used to point out the proximity of people or objects), and parts of the body (to help express pain or discomfort in a particular part of the body).

The day after the test, we began a new unit which introduces the *Imperative*. Although not a tense, the *Imperative* is an important grammatical structure that allows the speaker to give an advice, make a suggestion, or make a request. As part of their vocabulary enrichment, students have now begun studying words and expressions related to their neighborhood. Next week, we will look at the difference between the verbs *Saber* and *Conocer*. By combining the *Imperative*, *Saber* and *Conocer*, plus the vocabulary learned in this chapter, students will be able to ask their peers if they are familiar with a specific place in their neighborhood and suggest visiting such places as a group.



Grade 10 World Languages

By: Gabriel Gomis (French Teacher)

Last week during our oral practice, French III discussed the current events that happened in Paris. They have also learned the "passé simple" (preterit or simple past in English), a tense used predominantly in history and French literature. The acquisition of this new knowledge will enable them to better understand their upcoming study of novels like *L'Enfant Noir*, *L'Etranger*, *La Symphonie Pastorale*...

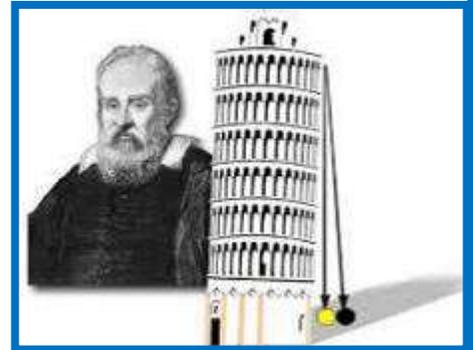
We are also testing our skills in translation and interpretation. We have been translating extracts from the *Le Monde Diplomatique*, an internationally recognized French paper. Beyond the translations and interpretations, we worked with the students in understanding current affairs in French-speaking countries through the reading of French papers. Our focus this week is the Summit on Climate Change being held in Paris. Students expressed their views on how the industrialized countries can help reduce the emission of carbon monoxide, the role of developing and third role countries vis à vis climate change.

Grades 11 and 12 Physical Education

By: Lou Albano (Science Teacher, Dean of Grades 4-6)

Physics class for the eleventh and twelfth grade students has encompassed topics such as Velocity, Acceleration, Speed, and Gravitational Acceleration.

Our everyday lives are influenced by the topics that are being discussed. Experimentation using "hands-on" lab activities reinforced the scope of study by the Physic's class. Galileo Galilei's experiment where he [dropped balls](#) of the same material, but different [masses](#), from the [Leaning Tower of Pisa](#) to demonstrate that their time of descent was independent of their mass have been a part of our discussions. Galileo proposed that a falling body would fall with a uniform acceleration, as long as the air resistance negligible. His experiments were brought to life in our discussions.



The eleventh and twelfth grade students are working diligently, but at the same time enjoying the experience that come with the study of Physics.



GARDEN SCHOOL SPIRIT DAY 2015

