



# GARDEN SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Richard Marotta, Ph. D., Headmaster

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"Academic Excellence Since 1923"

Friday, December 5, 2014

## *Thoughts for the week*

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



"The use of social media has made life complicated." This idea was the opening remark made by danah boyd (yes, that how she spells her name) at a conference I attended several weeks ago. Throughout her workshop she presented statistical and anecdotal information to support her thesis that an emerging topic among teenagers is their need for privacy when they engage in various forms of social media. Ms boyd's position is that American teenager use social media as a way of discovering their identities. Her book, *It's Complicated*, will attempt to "shed light on the fascinating practices of contemporary American youth as they try to find themselves in a networked world."

I do agree with boyd's position that there is much more to social media than is apparent at first, and that it does play a significant role in the attempt by teenagers to define their lives within the larger context of a social environment that now includes this electronic space as well as family, friends, community in the more conventional and physical sense.

However, there is a significant difference between sitting in a room at home talking with friends and family, and texting or posting dialogue on a social media site. We know that the manner in which some teenagers use social media has been negative as well as positive. If someone is sitting in front of a keyboard or using the keypad on a cell phone, the words that are released lose the context of a human framework; it is easier to write something mean to a screen than it is to say something mean to a person in front of you. There are no reactions from the screen, except the linguistic ones that may be written by someone else.

Social media has pushed the writer to the edge of civility by removing the immediate presence of the other; social media has created the imperial self. Writing to a screen feels free, without consequences and without impact. It is a monologue that frequently forgets that it is a dialogue, or even more so, a "poly-logue." There is no privacy, no intimacy and no barriers within social media. We know how often postings have been used to bully others, to gossip about friends and acquaintances and to express feelings that have negative effects on others; this failure to remember that there the audience for social connection reaches far beyond the screen or the one person to whom you have addressed your writing had created a kind of social blindness. If you say something to another person in your living room or kitchen, that remark will remain there unless the gossipy part of our minds moves it to another person. On social media, one push of a key can distribute that remark almost effortlessly to numerous readers. There exists a kind of 'mob' mentality within the very heart of social media.

As boyd deepens her investigation into this topic, she begins to refine these ideas in very insightful ways. She writes that "Just because teens can and do manipulate social media to attract attention and increase visibility does not mean that they are equally experienced at doing so or that they automatically have the skills to navigate what unfolds." As an educational institution we begin guiding and instructing our students from the age of two how to establish, maintain and navigate social relationships. In our Nursery program, much of the curriculum is an exercise in socialization; it takes time, patience and insight in order to help even the youngest child to understand the worth of the self and the worth of the other. Social media negates this process; it is frequently instant, thoughtless and mean. It is antisocial in the deepest sense. Let's take back our right to true social interactions, based on kindness, honesty and humanity. Let's live in the world of human media.



## DATES TO REMEMBER:

- Saturday, December 6 : Merit Exam at 9 AM for Grades 5 to 10
- Monday, December 8 – Wednesday, December 10 : Holiday Boutique Sale
- Friday, December 12 : Pasta Night (5 :15 – 7 PM or 7 :30 – 9PM)
- Friday, December 19 : Noon Dismissal / Lower Division Show at 9 AM / Upper Division Winter Trip
- Monday, December 22 – Friday, January 2 : School Closed for Winter Break
- Monday, January 5 : Classes Resume

**IMPORTANT SAVE THE DATES!!**

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



**March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

Dear Garden Families,

The 2015 Garden School Gala will be held on March 27<sup>th</sup> at Terrace on the Park. Please join us as we celebrate the Garden School Community. We will also be recognizing the 2015 Griffin Circle.

We are beginning work on the gala journal and we have a very special discounted offer on journal ads. We are **offering 10% off, yes 10% off** on all journal ads purchased by Jan 1. See the attached journal ad form at the end of this newsletter for the very special prices. And remember you can buy an ad and you **also can also use the form to sell an ad to your favorite local business.**

Tell your favorite local business that an ad in the journal will reach more than 400 families from the Garden school community. If you have any question please email us at [gala@gardenschool.org](mailto:gala@gardenschool.org)

Thank you,

Gala committee

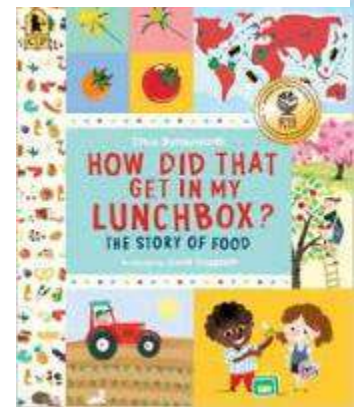




## Math for Nursery

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

The ELA students visited the nursery this week. They came to read us *How Did That Get in my Lunchbox?: The Story of Food* by Chris Butterworth. We learned about nutrition, where food comes from and what a healthy lunch looks like. They also taught us about food in a really fun and easy to understand way. It was a perfect picture book!



## Math for Pre-K

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

The Pre-K class has been learning to measure objects using various things such as buttons, coins, and paper clips. New vocabulary was introduced as the students compared the objects measured. Big/small, more/less, tall/short, long/short were some of the comparisons that were made. Small, medium, and large was another way measured objects were compared.

We also read various versions of *The Three Bears* this week to help reinforce these concepts. Pictures of various sizes were colored, cut, and glued as a follow up.

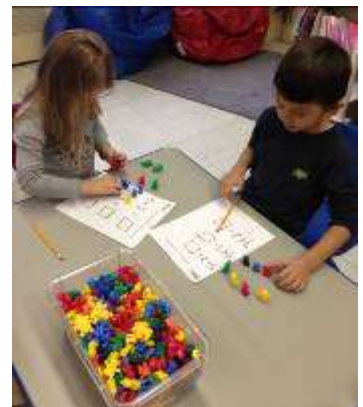


## Math for Kindergarten

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

The students in kindergarten continue to expand their knowledge in math. The children are learning the connection between numbers and quantity. We are working on addition in a variety of ways. They are understanding adding as putting together. The children use concrete manipulatives to count and perform addition equations. The children enjoy using counting bears to set up addition problems to solve.

This week the class began focusing on the more abstract skill of counting on. They are learning to retain a number mentally and add on to it. It is exciting to see the children so eager to work on math problems.





## English for Grade 1

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

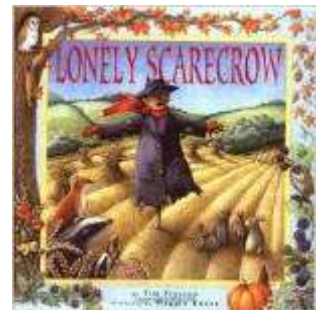
Our study of verbs began with a game of "Ms. Renner Says". After we hooped, sang, crawled, clapped, and waved, we learned that all of the actions we had just done were called verbs.

The class created a chart of all the verbs we could think of. Each student bent a chenille stem into a person and created a scene to illustrate one of the verbs. Then they wrote a sentence using that verb. There were people running up a hill, singing on stage, and sleeping in bed.

Later in the week, we read a short story about Victor Verb and students highlighted the verbs in the story on the SmartBoard. Independently, students read a story about Vicky Verb and identified the verbs in her story. During reading, we went on a verb hunt after reading *Kids Have Fun*. Students found over twenty verbs!



This week we also read *The Lonely Scarecrow* by Tim Preston. None of the animals wanted to play with the scarecrow until the snowfall transformed him into a jolly snowman. Students wrote their opinion of the story with a supporting sentence. They also compared and contrasted the lonely scarecrow and the jolly snowman. We discussed how the scarecrow's feelings changed throughout the story. On Friday we participated in a class favorite, Mystery Word. The students were given a group of letters and challenged to find the word formed with all of the letters and as many other words as they can. They are encouraged to look for spelling words and word families to help build their lists. This week's mystery word is scarecrow.



## English for Grade 2

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

Why do turtles have shells? Why do porcupines have quills?

The Second Graders learned that many cultures tell folktales to provide explanations or to teach important lessons. The Second Grade read many folktales from all over the world including *Doña Flor* from Central America about a giantess who helps her village and *One Grain of Rice* from India which included a math lesson in doubling.



After reading many folktales and looking at a variety of examples, the Second Graders chose a favorite animal to write about. In their folktales they explained how their animal came to have a certain characteristic. The students went through the writing process of brainstorming, drafting, editing and publishing. They worked in partners to support each other through the proofreading process. They designed covers for their folktales in the computer lab. They enjoyed sharing their folktales with their classmates and creating a class book of folktales to keep in our classroom library. This unit was a great way to begin thinking about storytelling and why people tell stories. It was also a great way to begin looking at different cultures and to compare their folktales to the stories we are familiar with.





## English for Grade 3

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

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 juicy children for 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.

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, such as a museum exhibit, Santa, and an ice cream cart. To further this author study, this 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, and literary elements such as flashbacks and cause and effect relationships. 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.



During this reading unit, the third graders began a cross-curricular world study unit. They have begun to learn about the continent of Africa, which is the setting of *The Enormous Crocodile*. On Thursday, Mr. Gomis, a member of our foreign language department, spoke to the third graders about this continent. He discussed African countries, geography, languages, and culture with the students. Mr. Gomis also brought in masks, utensils, and trinkets for the class to see and explore; he explained their purposes and meanings. They enjoyed hearing about his village in Senegal! Mr. Gomis's lesson enhanced the students' knowledge of Africa! Thank you, Mr. Gomis!

## Science for Grade 4

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

The 4th Grade Science Class has embarked on journey to understand the weather. Where does it come from? When will it leave? Can we predict it? These are questions the students are investigating. In an effort to help them understand the weather they have created a Weather Board found near the Lower Division entrance. Each day at the

### Weather

Weather is hot,  
Weather is cold,  
Weather is changing  
As the weeks unfold.

Skies are cloudy,  
Skies are fair,  
Skies are changing  
In the air.  
It is raining,  
It is snowing,  
It is windy  
With breezes blowing.

Days are foggy,  
Days are clear,  
Weather is changing  
Throughout the year!



beginning of science class, the students take their measuring equipment and go all around the school collecting the temperature, the humidity, the pressure, and the light intensity. They use this information to predict the weather for the day and for the rest of the week. They will continue this project for the rest of the year. Keep an eye out for the board and you can get a better understanding of the upcoming weather.

## ***Science for Grade 5***

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

Congratulations to the fifth grade science class! They did a stupendous job teaching about red-eared slider turtles to the Pre-K, K, second, and fourth grades. Each group put a great deal of effort into their project. Their presentations included questions and answers about the turtles, a Lego turtle built by the group, a short story (fiction) written and read by a student, plus the main attraction—one of the actual turtles. Proper handling technique was demonstrated and the students of the classroom visited got an up close and personal look at the turtle. The fifth grade had a great time working on this project together and sharing what they learned with others.



## ***Science for Grade 6***

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

The energetic sixth graders have forged forward into the discussion of body systems. We have discussed how the cells work together to form tissues, how tissues work together to form organs, how organs work together to form organ systems, and how organ systems work together to form organisms. Digestive, circulatory, respiratory, muscular, skeletal, endocrine, and immune systems were part of our discussions. We investigated how body systems work together to perform essential functions that are required of living things. Students discussed how body systems control the body. The biofeedback loop was explained in detail and related to the control of normal blood glucose levels by the proper levels of insulin and glucagon. Students were familiarized with “staying-healthy” habits. They were impressed on how good habits will promote good health.



We will be investigating plants and plant structures in the coming days. The goal for the class is to appreciate our complex bodies and how our actions or habits impact our health. All in all, the sixth graders are working hard in their study of science.



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

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

Students in Spanish 8 have been learning useful vocabulary related to family members. The concept of the extended family, commonly found among traditional families in Latin America, has been introduced. It is not unusual, for example, to have *los abuelos* (grandparents) or a *primo* (cousin) living in the same household. To better express this idea, the verb *vivir* (to live) has been presented. For example, “Yo vivo con mis abuelos”, allows students to say that they live with their grandparents. The newly-acquired vocabulary and verb allows the students to talk about family and relationships.

The cultural emphasis for this unit has been on the beautiful island of Puerto Rico. We watched a documentary that explores the history of Puerto Rico, from colonial times following the arrival of Christopher Columbus in 1493, to its present status as a Commonwealth of the United States since 1952. Students who have traveled to Puerto Rico shared their personal experiences while vacationing there. Incidentally, the students were informed about the passing of Herman Badillo earlier this week. This influential Bronx politician was the first person born in Puerto Rico to become a U.S. Congressman.

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

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

The 9th and 10th grade are in their third week of basketball unit. Before the kids get into their regular season games they must warm up for 7 min with different drills such as high knees, jogs, trunk twists, basketball suicides, and 17s. After their warm ups they have a 3-5 min stretch to loosen their muscles.

There are 7 teams competing and everyone is very eager about landing the #1 spot for the playoffs which start next week. If you finish 1st in the regular season then your team will have a BYE the first round of the playoffs. Basketball is a team sport and the 9th and 10th grades are doing just that, working together to get as many points in an 8 min game. We give the kids a real game experience in PE class. We are all looking forward to next week's playoffs, everyone is excited.

## ***Asian Studies for Grade 10***

***By: Sarah Smith (History Teacher)***

Asian Studies is a mini course designed to expose students to the history, geography, religions and governments that impact this region.

Recently, tenth graders discussed the effects minority groups have on a nation as well the political movements that have evolved so that groups may acquire either popular sovereignty and equality. Students worked collaboratively and



investigated groups such as the Kurds, Uighurs, and the Rohungya. They learned the history of each group as well as the movements and organizations that were created to gain equality.

This information was then presented and followed by a class discussion. Many students tried to find solutions that would help these minority groups. All realized how valuable minorities are for a diverse society.

## ***Asian Studies for Grade 10***

***By: Sarah Smith (History Teacher)***

History is filled with numerous mysteries. One of the most pressing one is the disappearance of Roanoke Colony which is located off the Coast of North Carolina.

Today, the fifth grade and the English Language Academy students collaboratively analyzed the facts associated with this colony. They then discussed theories as to what happened to the people of this colony. The students then formulated their ideas into an essay. This was an important exercise in communication and comprehension. The fifth graders realized they had to change their manner of communication so as to facilitate comprehension by the students who are developing their English Language Skills. In addition, they were able to discuss and formulate theories about this profound mystery.

This allows the individual learner to thrive amongst the diversity that enriches Garden School.



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

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

The eleventh grade is engaged in the study of United States History. Well into the nineteenth century, with many interesting side discussion, we look forward to the twentieth century and the modernity of the times in which we live.

The twelfth grade is busy raising funds for their prom. After the successful food sale and raffle, they are preparing for Pasta Night on December 12<sup>th</sup>.

Seniors are working hard in Economics, Revolution and Political Philosophy. Time is rapidly passing. College acceptances are arriving. Graduation and the future are getting closer on the horizon.



**EARLY BIRD SPECIAL**

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**Garden Gala**

**March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015**



**Journal Ad Order Form**

The 2015 Garden School Gala will be held on March 27<sup>th</sup> at Terrace on the Park. Please join us as we celebrate the Garden School Community. We will also be recognizing the 2015 Griffin Circle.

Journal Ads and Message pages will be printed in color and are available in all of the following sizes:

|                            |                     |          |                       |                               |
|----------------------------|---------------------|----------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| __ Young Alum 2004-2014 Ad | <del>\$35.00</del>  | \$31.50  |                       |                               |
| __ Third of a Page         | <del>\$60.00</del>  | \$54.00  | __ Full Page (gold)   | <del>\$500.00</del> \$450.00  |
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| __ Full Page (white)       | <del>\$250.00</del> | \$225.00 | __ Inside Cover Back  | <del>\$750.00</del> \$675.00  |
| __ Full Page (silver)      | <del>\$300.00</del> | \$270.00 | __ Back Cover         | <del>\$1000.00</del> \$900.00 |
| __ Class Page:             | Grade: ____         | \$ ____  |                       |                               |

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\_\_ Copy Attached    \_\_ Copy to Follow    \_\_ Repeat Last Year's Ad

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\_\_ I have enclosed my employer's Matching Gift Form.

**Please return this form by March 10th, along with payment and any enclosures to the address below.**

For more information or questions, please go to the Gala page at [gardenschool.org/gala](http://gardenschool.org/gala), email us at [gala@gardenschool.org](mailto:gala@gardenschool.org) or call us at 718 335-6363. Garden School is a Not for Profit 501(c)3 organization, Tax ID #111631783. Your contribution is tax deductible as allowed by law.

Each gift to the project – through journal ads, tickets purchased, contributions to the auction or through an employer's matching gift program – is important.

We hope that families, students, alumni and friends will all be partners in the success of the 2015 Garden School Gala.

**33-16 79<sup>th</sup> Street, Jackson Heights 11372    •    718 335-6363    •    [gala@gardenschool.org](mailto:gala@gardenschool.org)**