



Garden School Newsletter



Richard Marotta, Ph. D., Headmaster

Volume 96: Number: XXIII

“Cultivating Success in Every Child”

Friday, March 15, 2019

Thoughts for the Week

By: [Richard Marotta, Ph.D., Headmaster](#)



Second Graders complete a service learning day at North Brooklyn Angels - a soup kitchen in Williamsburg.

I am sure that all of you have heard about or have been reading about the scandal that has been uncovered about the college admissions process. It seems that wealthy and famous Americans have been using illegal methods to secure places for their children in some of our finest colleges and universities. Practices such as bribing coaches to push for acceptance of a non-athlete, who is pretending to be an athlete, donations to certain college funds, hiring agents and test-taking experts to sit for SATs and ACTs and many more immoral and illegal practices have been uncovered. These illegal acts have resulted in the arrest of some famous and prominent figures in our culture.

As disgusting as these practices are they point to a growing and perhaps inherent flaw in our culture of success, i.e. that success at any cost is worth it, no matter what you do or who gets hurt or cheated in the process. There have always been frauds and cheats in our culture, from the snake oil salesman to the massive deception of marketing advertising. We know and accept the fact that believing that a perfume or a car will have an impact on your social and personal life and identity is not true but we are willing to accept that illusion for the sake of comfort and (con't next page)

Thoughts for the week continued . . .

The economy. The major fraud of consumerism, that is that a product, an object, will bring happiness has been a part of human culture for centuries. We see this in billion dollar industries, such as cosmetics, children's products, automobiles, and so on. The illusion created is that by having the product, our lives will be better, richer, and more satisfying. Yes, a car is important for transportation; it is not an extension of the interior world of the driver. A car does not make you masculine, feminine, sexy, intelligent, free-spirited, mysterious, or insightful. It is a car. Yet the advertising fraud, created by the association of a product with a desirable image, passes like a fathom in our daily lives, almost unnoticed but powerful and effective.

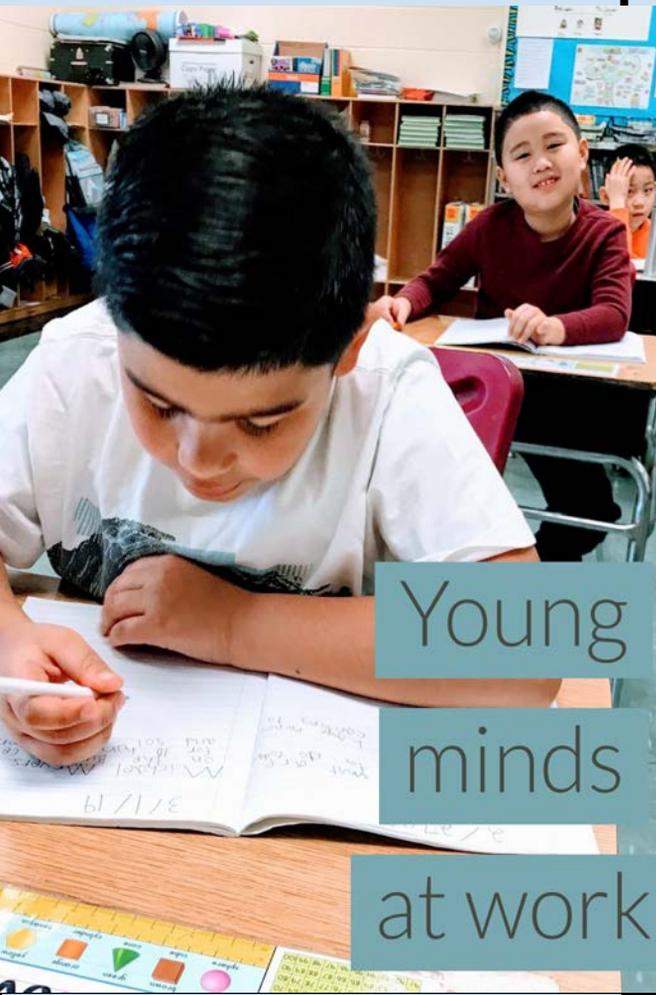
We should not be surprised that famous and rich Americans have used wealth and power to get what they want, even if they are not entitled to it. Our growing culture of entitlement sustains the belief and the practices that getting what you want is the most important thing in the world. We, as a culture, have lost sight of the idea that being a good and moral person, elevates our moral status in ways that objects and the 'pride' of objects can't. What difference does it make if your child goes to Yale or Harvard if that child is a hollow, empty, and materialistic person without a moral center, without compassion for others, and without a genuine sense of responsibility.

Garden School commits itself to educating decent, moral and successful young people. We want and crave excellent college acceptance, and we get them every year, from

Princeton to Columbia. However, we want our students to earn those places, to recognize the value of achievement and to value living a moral and successful life. We believe and endorse success; we want that success to be authentic, compassionate, and complete. Our goal as a school is to educate a complete human being. It is the humanist tradition - the idea that education must be a total experience, dominates all other ideas: knowledge and goodness are twins. They contribute to the richness of a life that transcends the fraudulent. When Vince Lombardi said that "winning isn't everything; it is the only thing," he touched upon a fundamental paradox in our character: the desire to win, because it is a good thing, and the willingness to win at any cost, which I consider to be a bad thing. We have seen cheating in major sports, such as baseball and football; we have seen cheating in our politics; and now we see massive cheating in our educational process.

Our resolve as a school is to be assert our counter-cultural strength against these negative and destructive elements in our culture. Our resolve is to educate our students to understand the value of learning, the importance of honesty and the true meaning of success. Like T.S. Eliot, our resolve is not to produce the "hollow man" but brilliant, moral and truly successful human beings. Despite what our culture practices, we will practice education in such a way that our students develop into authentic and decent human beings. We will 'win' this struggle, because it is indeed "the only thing."

Dates to Remember:



Young
minds
at work

- Friday, March 15: **Faculty Workshop (school closed)**
- Thursday, March 21: **Math Museum Trip (5th Grade)**
- Friday, March 22: **Talent Show**
- Monday, March 31: **Q4 begins**
- Friday, April 5:
 - **7th and 8th Trip to See *A Midsummer Night's Dream***
 - **[Garden Gala](#) at Terrace in the Park**
- **May 7 and 8: PTA Book Fair in the Library**

National Honor Society Report by Ethan W. (12th Grade) On March 9th, our National Honor Society member volunteered their time at St. Mark's Church in Jackson Heights to help with the Lion's Share Food Pantry. The kids ranging from eighth to twelfth grade helped set up the pantry and distributed goods like, pasta, beans, soap, baby food, clothes and so much more to the 100+ families who came to the pantry. All twelve of the students and the two teachers worked hard and helped the community.

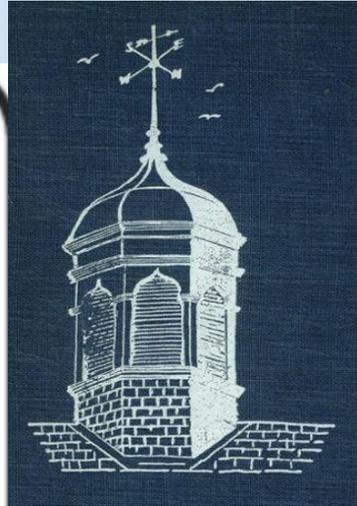
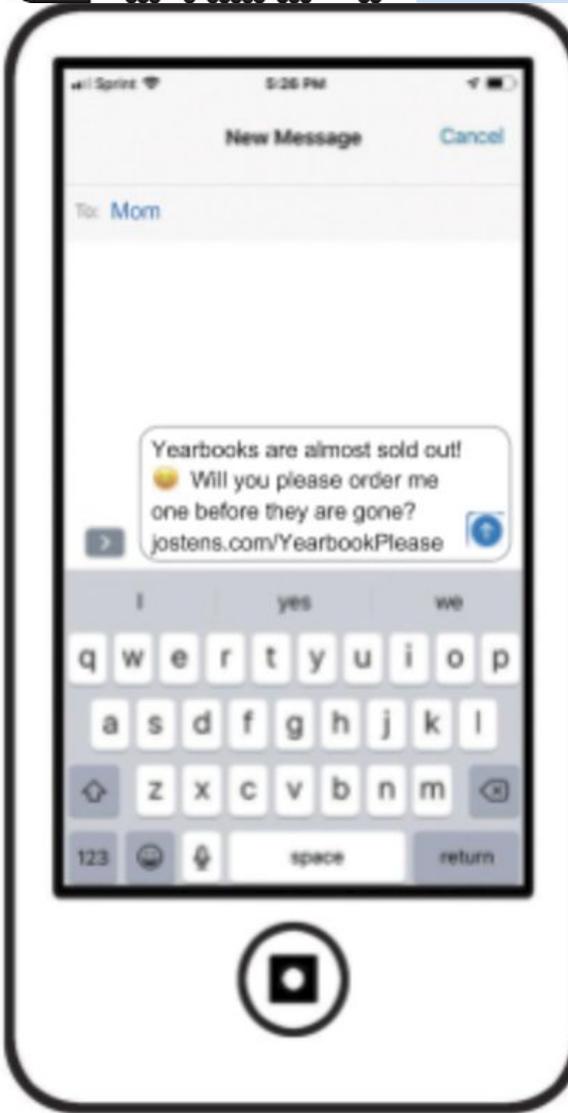
Garden School National Honor Society students volunteer at the Lion's Share Food Pantry at Saint Mark's Church #jacksonheights



DON'T BE LEFT OUT ON YEARBOOK DAY!



The theme of the yearbook this year is “Our Fable”. Buy your copy [online](#). Get it in May!



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The Last Waltz: A Farewell To Team "Cog"

By [Richard Kruczek](#) And [Phil D'Anna](#)

Eighth Graders Asia C., Michael O., and Josefina G. at the Garden Invitational Middle School Debate Tournament



On Saturday March 8, the Daniel Webster Society hosted the Garden Invitational middle school debate tournament. For three of our debaters, Asia C., Michael O. and Josefina G. (hence, team "COG"), it was their final tournament as Society members. They went out with a flourish, nearly placing in the top ten. However, Asia C. took home a Top 5 speaker award, an incredible achievement in

such a talented field of over 100 debaters! But it's what we've come to expect.

Asia C. had the gift from Day One. Her eloquence and grace were well noted, and her awards are many. Michael O. showed us all what perseverance looks - and, more to the point, sounds - like. His final season was brilliant. Josefina G. was the ultimate "3 Speaker" - she hammered home our points with succinctness and flair combined. In short, these three are why there is a Daniel Webster Society. They were a joy to coach, and represented Garden School with dignity and honor. We will miss them incredibly - in fact, we already do. Thank you for three years of hard work, dedication and putting up with Mr. K. We love you.

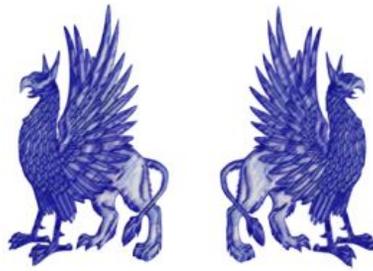
Pi Day Celebration by [Sarah Blakeley](#)

March 14 of each year is often celebrated by number enthusiasts as "Pi Day," since the day can be written as 3/14, which is the commonly used decimal approximation for π (3.14). Pi is the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter. Pi is known as an "irrational number," meaning its exact value is inherently unknowable. Pi appears everywhere, even among topics where you'd least expect it, such as the double helix of DNA or the length of your forearm from the elbow to the tip of your middle finger.

To get students hyped up for this incredibly cool number, grades 4-12 held a Pi-bee. In their math classes on Wednesday, March 13th, students in grades 4-12 competed against each other to see who can memorize the most digits of pi. There was an assembly for Grades 4-12 on Thursday to see the grade winners duke it out.

Tsering S. (6th Grade) won the Pi-bee and Jonathan S. (10th Grade) won the pie-eating contest





GARDEN GALA

2019

JOURNAL DEADLINE EXTENSION

If you didn't get a chance to take out an ad in the 2019 Garden Gala Journal Book, don't worry! There's still time to congratulate Mr. Grusky, a loved one or advertise your business. A Congratulatory Message Line is only \$25! The final hard deadline [to submit an ad](#) is this Friday.

Thank you to our more than **70** Journal Sponsors and to Garden School's Nursery, Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, Grade 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 12 for your Class Ads!

Garden Alums Gather at Garden with Mr. Grusky and Dr. Marotta



Garden Alums gather together for a photo at the Wine Kickoff last Friday night in the library. Left to Right: Nancy Hart '75; Roy White '59; Margaret Batiuchok '69; Agnes Reichert '06; Kristina Pino '06; Sarah Kinn '06; Linda Orhun '84; Lale Kiziltug '85; Emily Tricarico Wilkinson '04; Richard Grusky; Emily Bienstock Belmonte '04; Lauren Murray '04; Andrew Ramsaran '00; **Bottom seated:** Richard Marotta; Mark Paraskevas '13; Abbey Cebollero '14; Sophie Cebollero '11; Matthew Helsing '17



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Garden Academic Pages:



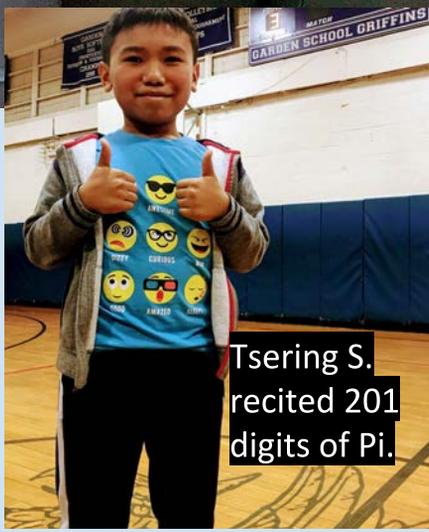
Read about what teachers and students are doing in their classrooms together.



Upper School Teachers Mr. Vallario, Mrs. Little, and Ms. Soifer at the Pi Day Celebration this week.



Pi Day Assembly



Tsering S. recited 201 digits of Pi.



Raise a glass!

Middle School French pupils get serious with interrogative sentences.

By François Gomis (World Languages Teacher)

The Fourth Grade French Class:

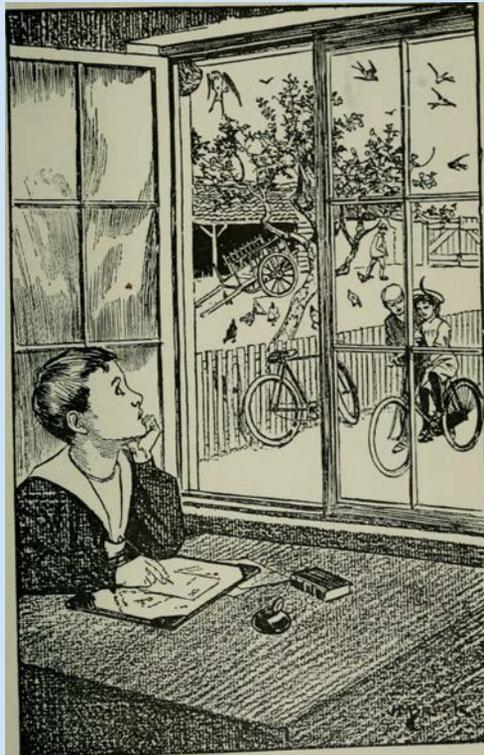
We covered the interrogative questions using the expression "est-ce que". We also completed a lesson of the present tense of -er verbs. Students are in a position to conjugate the first group verbs.

The Fifth Grade French Class:

We delved into the Francophone world trying to understand the countries that have in common the French language. We also worked on nationalities and the countries and their capital cities. They took a test on the countries.

The Sixth Grade French Class:

We covered the vocabulary related to housing furniture this week. They described their house and the different places such as kitchen, living room, bathroom, stairs...



Quel est le
sens de la
vie?

In our Early Childhood Mandarin classrooms, kids are learning to name their favorite pets, barnyard animals, and what to see at the zoo.

by [Kelly Yang](#)
(World Languages Teacher)



Kids learn a new language through repetition, singing songs, and hands-on activities.



Kids in our Early Childhood program are beginning to learn about pets and animals in Mandarin Chinese this week. In this unit, students will gain the ability to use age-appropriate expressions to express their likes and dislikes regarding common pets and animals. Initially, students interpreted and reacted to pictures, stories, illustrations, and songs. Then, students will interact with their teachers and classmates by asking and talking about their pets, and identify pictures about the animals. At the conclusion of this unit, students will be ready to perform an animal song for a school or community event.



Mrs. Yang interacts in Mandarin Chinese with our Nursery students.

The First Graders Celebrate Women's Herstory with several engaging activities

by [Kristen Ahfeld](#) (First Grade Teacher)

The month of March is dedicated to celebrating and recognizing famous women in history. Our goal is to deepen the students' understanding of contributions women have made and how it has impacted our world. The first graders have been learning about the lives of many famous and brave women in our nation's history. We have met the courage of Rosa Parks who with great determination stood up and fought for equal rights for African-Americans. In our studies we learned of the bravery of Harriet Tubman who who led hundreds of slaves to freedom on the Underground Railroad. We recognized Mary Sherman Morgan, America's first female



Mr. Zelles and Mrs. Ahfeld's students created a poster for herstory.

rocket scientist and inventor of rocket fuel. Most recently we explored the life of Helen Keller and her teacher Anne Sullivan. Helen Keller lost her sight and hearing when she was a baby and grew up to become a political activist and lecturer. Helen taught the world all people can learn and communicate in a hearing world. Though the first graders have been learning simple sign language throughout the year, it was this figure in history that made a strong connection to the importance of being able to communicate with others. The students were fascinated with Helen's life story. The depth of questions the class asked about her life were unending. The students learned how Helen read through Braille, and the class practiced feeling what reading would be like for Helen. In the playground many students role played Helen and Anne by leading each other around and finger spelling into each other's hands. It is my hope the students absorbed that with great determination one can accomplish anything.

"I can't think of any better representation of beauty than someone who is unafraid to be herself."
Emma Stone

The Second Graders get involved in service learning at the North Brooklyn Angels soup kitchen.

by [Paula James](#) (Second Grade Lead

Teacher)

In Social Studies, the Second Grade students have been studying goods and services and wants and needs. This week, we were able to apply what we have learned by participating in a community service program. Crosby's parents invited our class to take a field trip to work with the North Brooklyn Angels. They are a group of volunteers that run a mobile soup kitchen out of the parish hall of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church, in Williamsburg. Crosby's parents talked with the students about the needs of the community and those struggling with food insecurity. We learned that some people in the community don't always have enough money for food, and that the North Brooklyn Angels provide a valuable service to their neighbors by offering up to 1,200 hot meals in several locations throughout the week. We were enthusiastic to volunteer and help prepare a macaroni and cheese dish for the people that participate in the food outreach program. Once our work was finished, we walked back to Jimmy's Diner for a yummy lunch. On the way there, we stopped by a piano that was on the street, and George played a few songs for us. When we returned to school, we talked about how great it felt knowing that the food we prepared would be helping people in the neighborhood. The students wrote thank you notes to Crosby's family for hosting such a wonderful trip and delicious lunch with milkshakes. Our conversations will continue over the next week about the importance of helping our neighbors and how the wants and needs of the community are met.



“I was so impressed with the day for our kids and how awesome the Cohen’s (Crosby’s parents) were in organizing the day for us.”

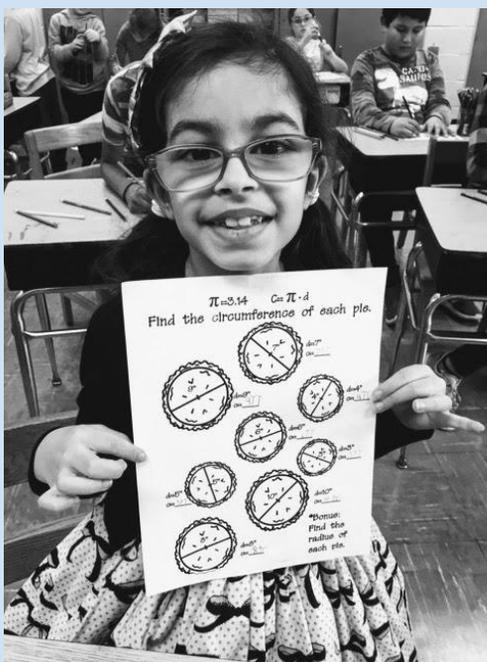
- Paul James

The Third Graders Learn All about the magical mathematical number Pi. Also, they won the Pi Day poster contest.

by Rachel Vidal
(Third Grade Lead Teacher)

The third graders enjoyed participating in Pi Day. We began the week preparing for the door decorating contest. The children voted on their ideas for the contest. Arafat's idea of a pie (pi) man throwing a pie (pi) at someone was the winning idea. Each child took part in creating our door decoration, following the contest rules using 3 colors and 14 pieces of paper (3.14!). The children have learned about the number pi and about its origins. They also have learned about how pi is used. The third graders measured their own circles, learning about the radius, diameter and circumference. They used the formula $\text{circumference} = \text{diameter} \times \pi$ to find the circumference for each of their circles. The children greatly enjoyed the Pi Day Assembly at the end of the day, as well.

Understanding pi is a necessary part of education. Pi isn't just a fun number whose numbers after the decimal continue infinitely. It also appears in our natural world. It appears everywhere there's a circle, such as the disk of the sun, the spiral of the DNA double helix, the pupil of the eye, the concentric rings that travel outward from splashes in ponds. Pi also appears in the physics that describes waves, such as ripples of light and sound. It even enters into the equation that defines how precisely we can know the state of the universe, known as Heisenberg's uncertainty principle. Of course, it will be a while before the third graders begin to investigate Heisenberg's uncertainty principle. But until then, having fun with pi is a good start.



Safeeya learns about Pi.



Arafat with his idea-winning door decoration

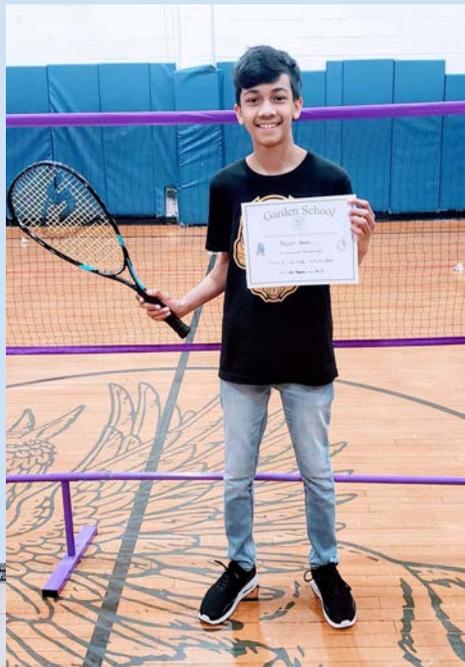
Middle School students in physical education are rewarded for organizing a badminton tournament.

by [Michelle Ferreira](#)
(Physical Education Teacher)

We have just finished our badminton unit and the students loved it. Down below are pictures of the Sixth Graders that won singles and the doubles tournament. As for the next unit we are doing in class its Alaskan Kickball which is very similar to Wiffle ball like in the rules, but we are kicking a ball instead of striking with a bat and you can also peg people to get them out. There are no bases in this game instead ways to get points by running to the black line is one point, touching the stage mat is two points, three points is passing the same black line as before and then four points if you make it to home. Usually the games are played until 21 but at times we do play more than one game, or we continue the game to finish at a higher score. It's a fun game especially when we as teachers get to participate with them to make it more interesting for them. Also, we do give points to the team that catches the ball when they are getting pegged. The students will play for about 2 weeks and then start play offs, and then into the championship round. The picture below is of the 4 and 5th graders playing a game of Alaskan Kickball.



Luigi and Raiyan earn their certificate for winning the badminton doubles tourney.



Raiyan wins the Sixth Grade Singles tournament.



7th Graders Learn and Listen to the Music of Chuck Berry; while, 8th Graders learn the music of India.

by [Tom Heineman](#)

Chuck Berry's outsize contributions to the creation of Rock and Roll have been the focus for 7th Graders in recent classes. His originality and facility as a guitar player helped make the electric guitar the focal point of the new style, and he was instrumental in creating the rhythmic feel of Rock and Roll. Berry's impact as a songwriter was also incalculable. He simultaneously tapped into and helped direct the burgeoning generation of teenagers in the 1950s borne out of the nation's post-war prosperity. Berry's songs spoke to their tastes in music, feelings about race, experiences in school, and overall interests, all different from their depression-era parents. The output of the greatest musical innovators is representational of the time it was written yet is utterly timeless.

One of the most unique sounds in the musical universe is that of the tambura, an Indian instrument. It carries the all-important drone in Indian music and sounds vaguely electric- almost like the sound of a cicada. Fascinatingly, its unbroken tone is created by strumming strings. The 8th graders have been experiencing the distinctive sounds of the Classical music of India and some Western music, by The Beatles and Led Zeppelin, that it influenced. Students also attempted to follow the structure of a Raga after learning about some of its fundamental aspects. 8th graders will conclude the unit by attempting to maintain the Raga's rhythmic cycle, the Tala, on drums; they can play whatever they wish provided they land on the Sum, the first beat of the cycle.



In our Ninth Grade English curriculum, students get existential with *The Stranger*.

by [Christopher Vallario](#) (*Ethics Instructor*)

At the start of the week, Ninth Graders handed in their auto-ethnographies, which consisted of their personal geographies, a study of themselves in a place. The title of the assignment is “How I got to New York.” We examined one contemporary writer’s memoir, an excerpt from Darnell Moore’s *No Ashes In The Fire*, where he reveals his upbringing in Camden, New Jersey and traces his lineage through his grandmother and mother. The students had the option of using their family in order to get to themselves, or in Liza Solorzano’s experience, she writes from her perspective as she came from Guatemala one and a half years ago. All students are getting more comfortable writing about themselves and by introducing the terminology “auto-ethnography” and reading a contemporary memoir, they are becoming more accustomed to locating themselves through texts and applying academic practices.

In addition, it is important to have them simultaneously write and practice the literary/critical analysis, which does not use “I” or first person, as they use the author as their subject, which essentially prepares them for college composition and humanity courses. Therefore, we are closely reading Albert Camus’s brilliant novel *The Stranger* where we are uncovering the theme of existentialism, which includes reading and using secondary sources like Paul Kleinman’s *Philosophy 101: From Plato and Socrates to Ethics and Metaphysics, an Essential Primer on the History of Thought*.

We have had lessons on how to incorporate a secondary source into their critical analyses. Students are learning how to strengthen their thesis statements by structure, MLA format, and referring to a check-list. Also, we had a large writing workshop where all students participated by critiquing an already established literary analysis on Camus’s work. The essay itself is strong and acts as a modeling technique. The students are always encouraged to write draft after draft before the due date; those who take advantage of this writing process flourish academically and gain confidence as writers and students.



Albert Camus,
author of *The
Stranger*

The Tenth Grade English class dives into J.D. Salinger's coming-of-age novel *The Catcher in the Rye*



by [Amira Booth-Soifer](#) (English Teacher)

Throughout our reading of “The Catcher In The Rye,” students have made many cross-textual connections. Students have made connections between the themes, nuances, and analysis of the actions in the text both to their own lives and to other texts.

In keeping with our focus on active reading and discussion that makes the general more personal, students have taken part in two creative writing assignments exploring themes, ideas, and characters from “The Catcher In The Rye.” One assignment was based on a descriptive essay Holden Caulfield writes for his roommate (about his deceased brother Allie’s baseball mitt) towards the beginning of “The Catcher In The Rye.” The 10th graders’ descriptive essay topics varied from in-depth descriptions of sushi rolls, pets, childhood mementos, the world as perceived by a mouse, and more. As we’ve ventured further into our exploration of the novel, we’ve had extensive discussions about Holden’s often problematic relationships with women and girls. In keeping with those discussions, students were asked to pick a female character from the novel and write an essay from her point of view. Through this assignment, students explored how Jane, the girl Holden obsesses over from afar throughout the novel, might feel about this possibly unwanted attention, the sympathy a nun he meets might feel for this lonely teenager, and the discomfort or ambivalence other female characters might feel towards Holden. In doing this assignment and in the class discussions and activities surrounding this assignment, students problematized and questioned Holden’s role as a “reliable narrator” and the notion of what makes a 1st person narrator reliable-- or not-- in the first place.

As we begin to delve into the final chapters of “The Catcher In The Rye,” we are going to continue to examine the best way to actively annotate, read, and discuss a novel, and students will soon begin their final research projects-- an in-depth diagnosis for Holden Caulfield-- in the upcoming weeks. I am looking forward to seeing what these creative and insightful students continue to bring to the table, enlivening, problematizing, and analyzing-- all in all, bringing new life and new perspectives to this this 60+ year old text!

From Matrices to Infinite Series . . .

by [Lauren Little](#) (Math Teacher)

11th Grade Pre-Calculus:

In precalculus honors we are in the middle of a unit on matrices. Matrices are used to solve systems of equations and have many practical applications. Students of mathematics start learning to solve systems of equations in algebra, but systems with only two variables. In our class we studied solving systems of equations in three variables, then studied how to solve these systems using matrices, which can be used to solve systems of equations in many variables.

12th Grade Pre-Calculus:

In precalculus, we are studying trigonometric ratios. Trigonometric ratios are special ratios in right triangles, for example, the sine ratio is the ratio of the side opposite the angle to the hypotenuse. Going forward we will use these ratios to solve right triangles, meaning we will find the lengths of all the sides and the measures of all the angles.

12th grade Calculus:

Did you know that there are infinite sequences which if their terms are added up their sums are not infinity, but actual numbers? Isn't that amazing?! You can add an infinite number of numbers and get a finite value! That is what what my AP calculus students have learned over the past few weeks. They have learned how to determine which infinite series sum to infinity (diverge) and which sum to a finite value (converge). These infinite series have many practical applications. They are used to approximate functions that are not so easy to evaluate, differentiate, or integrate. It is how calculators do it!





At Alice Tully Hall, one of our Tenth graders, Hanchi S., performed in a violin concert. She was the concertmaster for the performance (pictured above - standing, second from the left).

