

Main Line Classical Academy
Newsletter
January, 2019

English, Kindergarten - Frank Chilbert

In kindergarten English class, we have continued studying poetry and ancient mythology. The students have nearly memorized all of William Blake's "The Tyger." This poem is longer than the previous poems and offers a lesson in the relationship between meter and meaning. As we hear the trochaic rhythm throughout the poem, we can almost hear the mighty workshop of the Tyger's mysterious creator. I have included the poem below. Feel free to have your child recite it at home!

We finished studying the Ancient Egyptian myths and begun since traveled to North across the Mediterranean Sea to Ancient Greece. Here, we have learned about the creation of the world according to the Greeks. We saw several Lords of the Universe fight for power until, finally, Zeus took permanent residency on his throne in Olympus. There, we have also encountered Hera, the queen of Olympus, Ares, the god of War, Aphrodite, the goddess of Love, Hephaestus, god of metalworks and craftsmanship, and Hermes, the messenger of the gods. Soon the students will know a little bit about each of the twelve major olympian gods.

The Tyger

BY WILLIAM BLAKE

Tyger Tyger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night;
What immortal hand or eye,
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies.
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand, dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, & what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? & what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain,
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp,
Dare its deadly terrors clasp!

When the stars threw down their spears
And water'd heaven with their tears:
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tyger Tyger burning bright,
In the forests of the night:
What immortal hand or eye,
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

English, 1st Grade - Frank Chilbert

In first grade English, we have many things going on at once. We have been studying “There is but One May in the Year” by Christina Rossetti. The poem gives us pause and forces us to consider the complexity of change. It also gives us reason to hope in a warmer season and gratitude. We have continued in our “A is for Apple” phonics textbook which we have used so far to confirm our mastery of complex diphthongs. Here are the latest additions to our repertoire: “aw, oa, igh, or, ar, ee, ew, oi, and ai.” We have also continued work in our italic penmanship workbooks. Whenever we have time at the end of class, we have been introduced to a few new characters in our chapter book, *Stuart Little*, included Snowball, Margalo, and the Lillian B. Womrath.

English, 2nd Grade - William Walter

Before and after the winter break the second grade class read selections by and about Abraham Lincoln, including 1) a short autobiographical account, 2) a letter written to a woman who lost five sons in the war, and 3) a funny story that Lincoln told that vented his frustrations about his generals. The reading selections gave the class an opportunity to learn more about the 16th President of the United States as well as some general facts about the Civil War. As an English teacher, I am especially interested in the unusual connections between the American Civil War and literature and language. Here are some of the rather interesting connections that were mentioned in class:

- There were some writer-abolitionists of the Civil War Period who were major contributors to the classical canon of American literature, such as Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1852), whom Lincoln called the “little lady who started the war”; Henry David

Thoreau, author of *Walden*; and the Quaker poet John Greenleaf Whittier, one of the founding members of the Republican Party.

- The poet Robert Lee Frost, author of “Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening,” was named after the southern general Robert E. Lee, as the poet’s father was a southern sympathizer.
- General Burnside’s facial hair was responsible for an eponym being introduced into the English language. (An eponym is a word formed from a name, whether fictional or real.) General Burnside wore long side whiskers, and as a result of his “fashion statement,” the last two syllables of his name were inverted to make sideburns.
- Abraham Lincoln came to Gettysburg in 1863 to dedicate a cemetery for the fallen soldiers in the battle where tens of thousands had died in bloody contest. It is on this occasion the President delivered his famous Gettysburg Address, which is one of the most quoted American historical documents. The document is a literary tour de force in its use of rhetorical devices. Although the class did not go over the rhetoric, I did read the Gettysburg Address aloud to them.
- On the night of April 14, 1865 Abraham Lincoln entered a crowded Ford’s Theater to watch the play *Our American Cousin* (1858) by Tom Taylor. Shortly after 10 p.m. a Shakespearean actor named John Wilkes Booth entered the balcony box where the President was seated and suddenly shot him. Ironically, Booth had performed previously with his brother Edwin in Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*, the main character of which was assassinated by Brutus!

English, 3rd Grade - Frank Chilbert

In 3rd grade English, we have been focusing a lot on grammar, literary terms, and poetics. We have added to our literary and poetic terms so that our time reading and reciting becomes more and more rich. We have learned how to locate assonance and consonance, what quatrain and ballad stanza are, and how plot and theme help readers contemplate the essence of stories. In grammar, we have begun identifying parts of complete sentences. We now know what a subject and a predicate are, how to find them in a sentence, and how to identify different kinds of modifiers including adjectives and adverbs. Soon we will begin studying of prepositional phrases. We have continued using end marks, apostrophes, and quotations marks in our expository and comparative paragraph exercises.

At the end of class, if we have time, we read a little from George MacDonald’s *Princess and the Goblin*. We also spend time in class reciting the poems that we have been assigned for the next poetry night. Be sure to ask you children what poem they are currently mastering.

English, 4th Grade - William Walter

This month I devoted almost an entire class period to talking about the idea of “form follows function.” I wanted to disabuse the students of a common fallacy, that most poetic devices, such as rhyme, are meant merely to make a poem sound “pretty.” No—all poetic devices, including

rhyme, serve to achieve a particular effect. Giving the analogy of a car, I mentioned that one does not have to understand physical laws or the engineering of a car to appreciate its performance. However, when a driver knows the names of machinery parts under the hood, his appreciation of his car goes up. And when a driver knows what those parts actually do, that appreciation goes up geometrically. So it is with poetry. Anyone can enjoy a Shakespearean sonnet without even being aware that there are such poetic devices as epizeuxis, place, or epanalepsis. However, when a reader recognizes literary devices and also knows their function, he develops a wonderful appreciation and love of the literature. In my “form follows function” lesson, I strove not only to have the students recognize the caesura, end rhyme, imagery and alliteration of Tennyson’s poem “The Eagle,” but also to have them know how those poetic devices function in expressing the majesty of a bird of prey.

English, 5th Grade - William Walter

In going over a particularly difficult section of grammar with my fifth grade students this month, I exhorted them not to confuse verbals with rodents. They laughed, but I explained that they might be tempted to conflate the word verbals with gerunds (a kind of verbal) and get gerbils. They were, I think, very confident that they would never do such a thing. I tried to shake that confidence by telling them a story of a student that I had long ago who actually confused verbals with radios. I had asked the class, “Name one kind of verbal,” and this student answered, “Radio.” (I recently became reacquainted with the student who is now working in the banking industry.) “Radio?” I thought. “Radio?” At that point, I was more confused than the student, but I was eventually able to help her sort out the names used for electronic devices from grammatical terms, which can be difficult to do, as there is so much jargon in grammar—jussive subjunctives, past participle principal parts, split infinitives and the like. Rest assured, every one of the students in the fifth grade class was an expert at identifying the three kinds of verbals in a sentence (at least when I last quizzed them). Ask your fifth grader whether he or she knows what an infinitive is, or a gerund, participle, or verbal!

English, 6th and 7th Grade - William Walter

In their survey of English literature, the 6th and 7th graders are now studying works of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods. As prompted by the literature, I will often present important historical background information, talking, for instance, about the English monarchs or the events of the day that influenced the writing of a particular work. In reading Macbeth this past month, the students have been learning about James I, the Scottish king who in 1603 became the first to rule over a united Scotland and England. James I was a walking contradiction. Though he was uncouth in his ways—a country bumpkin, who was dirty and untidy in his dress and who shocked the English gentry with his bad manners and broad Scottish accent—, he was nonetheless a very learned man and an author of two books, one about demonology and the other about the evils of tobacco. About fifteen years before Shakespeare’s dark tragedy Macbeth was performed, the largest witch trial in Scottish history was held, called the North

Berwick Witch Trial. This is how the trial came about. James was sailing northward to Denmark to marry Princess Anne, the sister of the reigning Danish king. On their return home, the Danish ships met with some stormy waves, and the ships had to station in Norway for several weeks until the storms cleared. What was causing the storms? Was it some strange meteorological phenomenon? Was it a jet stream? A tsunami? Global warming? The admiral of the ships that were escorting the king had an answer: Witchcraft. Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, which was most likely performed for King James in a private showing (James was a patron of Shakespeare's acting company), must have pleased James, as it deals with one of his hobby horses—witches. Another piece of interesting historical information I presented to the class was that *Macbeth* also makes an indirect reference to the Gunpowder Plot in which King James was nearly blown up in a 17th-century terrorist plot to be carried out on November 5, 1605, a day now recognized in England as Guy Fawkes Day. In Shakespeare's play, the porter of *Macbeth's* castle, imagining himself in his drunkenness to be a gatekeeper in hell, chats idly about the conspirators against King James entering into the nether places. If one of your children is in the class, you most likely know all about the Guy Fawkes point, which allows a student to dethrone the class king (sans gunpowder, of course).

History, Kindergarten & 1st Grade, Early American History - Graham Gormley



This month we spent some time learning about the effects of the English Civil War on emigration to colonial America. We learned a bit about the similarities and differences between the Puritans and Quakers as well as how the former tended to settle in the northeast, while the latter stayed generally in the area of NJ and PA. The girls seemed to especially like acting like

Quakers who refused to tip their hat to others, which got them (the Quakers) into some trouble at the time.

We're also learning to recognize the original colonies and territories through a game we play. We've learned to recognize Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland on a map so far.

More recently we spent some time on the lives of William Penn and Benjamin Franklin, especially the latter's discoveries, inventions, etc. and we're just about to begin learning of Washington's life prior to the revolution.

History, 2nd Grade - Graham Gormley

Over the past month we've delved into some background on Persia. We learned of the origins of Cyrus, noting the similarity to so many other founding myths (Romulus and Remus and Sargon of Akkad, for example), his encounter with the Lydian king Croesus, and his death at the hands of the Massagetai. From there, we talked about his son, Cambyses, whose fortune seems to fail him despite enlarging the empire his father left him. The children seemed to especially enjoy the insanity with which he ruled the Persians.

More recently we've begun learning the story of how Darius came to power in Persia in order to connect that back to the Greeks, culminating in the Persian Wars. There is a famous passage just prior to Darius' ascendance to power, wherein he and his peers advocate various types of regimes for the new government. We are going to mimic their speeches in class, each advocating for his or her own regime-type.

We've entered a phase where things really start to get exciting now! We're past getting familiar with who is who and which city-state is which. Now we get on to the conflicts between them and the truly interesting human questions involved in their struggles.

History, 3rd & 4th Grade - Graham Gormley

Since returning from break, we've examined the Decemvirs, a board of ten Romans from whose authority there was no appeal. Although they were established to make formal, written laws to limit both the powers of each office as well as potential abuse of the plebs, the lawmakers themselves enjoyed *unlimited* power and *frequent* abuse of those who they were ostensibly supposed to protect. For a time, their rule drained the spiritedness of the Roman people such that threats from abroad were insufficient to rouse them to their own defense. Much like in the case of Lucretia, improvement wouldn't come until blood was spilled. The people would not be moved to revolt until the daughter of a centurion was killed before the eyes of the masses.

Ironically, the ringleader of the Decemvirs, upon being tried for his part in the tyranny, immediately demanded the right to appeal which he had denied to everyone else while he had held power.

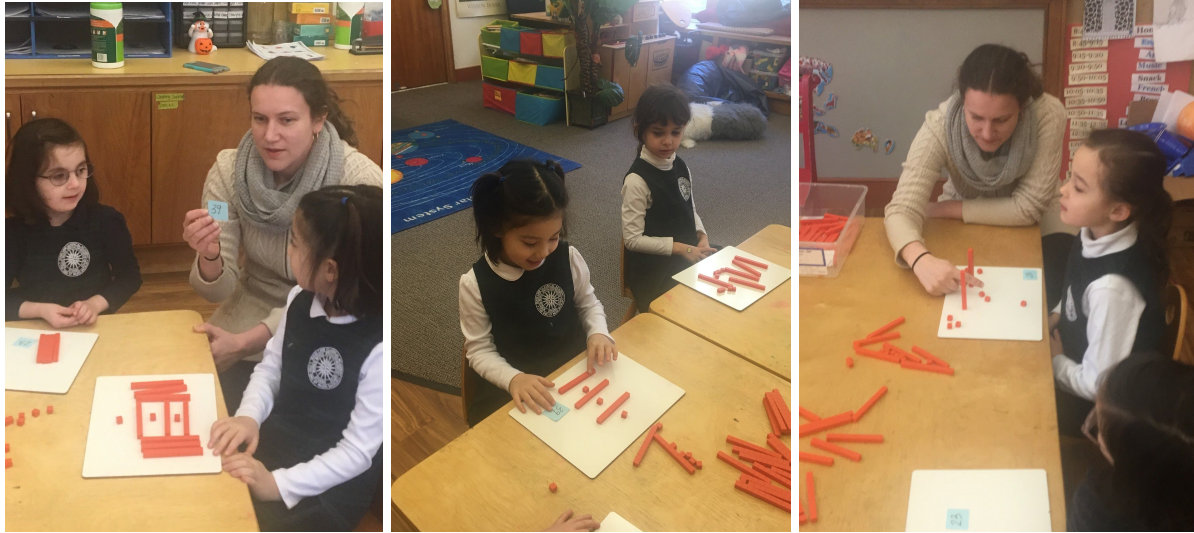
The story of the Decemvirs was in contrast to the example of Cincinnatus, who held the same kind of power by himself, yet took great pride in giving it back to the republic in a mere sixteen days upon completing the task for which he was appointed.

Meanwhile, the class continues to hold their own assembly, while working through the dilemmas underwent by the Romans in the form of a game. The children might not realize it, but they are learning oratory in the process of running for consul or tribune. They've also begun to take on that very Roman habit of always looking for justification in the law for whatever they might attempt to do (even if it is, strictly speaking, outside the law). It's great fun and we've only had a couple of deaths (...in the game)!

History, 5th, 6th & 7th Grade - Jacob Feeley

After completing a lengthy unit on the Punic Wars, students in Roman history studied about the Roman conquest of Greece and Asia Minor (modern day Turkey). They also read a short biography of the famously stern Roman statesman, Cato the Elder. As a class, we discussed how Cato might view contemporary society. What would he commend, and what would he censure? Students also had the opportunity to learn about Roman gladiators by studying the Colosseum in Rome, and through examining images of games on a pot that was excavated in Colchester, England, and which is on display in the British Museum. We also took a brief hiatus from Roman history to learn about the architecture of Greek and Roman temples.

Math, Kindergarten - Yulia Shpilman



Counting routine - We have continued to focus on 2-digit numbers with kindergarteners and have spent the past month playing with base 10 blocks to count, recognize and compare two-digit numbers. Base 10 blocks are a wonderful tool to visually see that 47 is made up of 4 tens (sticks) and 7 ones (blocks) and that 52 is much bigger than 25. This will serve as a great baseline to understand the fundamentals of our number system

Arithmetic practice - The students are becoming quite fluent in single-digit addition and we have now added repeated addition to our repertoire, which is a first step to understanding multiplication. I am very pleased to see how much progress the students are making with their arithmetic skills. They have been requesting more worksheets too, so we will continue to hone our addition skills on paper as well as verbally.

Special topic

- a. **Calendar** - this is actually not a new special topic, but one we've been returning to throughout the year. In addition to being able to name which day, month, year we are on right now, we are working to understand how the calendar is organized, how many days are in the week, in a month, months in a year, etc. This is very challenging for most students, but we will continue to review it so the concepts settle in slowly in their minds.
- b. **Right and left** - we have been practicing recognizing right and left (sounds basic, but more challenging than you think) by playing fun games, such as Robots, where the students follow commands of the teacher, as if they were robots. We have also been reinforcing these concepts by certain worksheet activities.

Game time - since our kindergarten class is a very chatty group, we don't always get to a game at the end of class, but we try to whenever possible. At the moment, we have been playing Ghost, Cats and Owls and Where is the penguin hiding?, all of which the students enjoy immensely.

Math, 1st Grade - Sasha Fradkin

The first graders spent the month of January exploring different methods of adding 2-digit numbers. First they used base-10 blocks to help them with the task; they'd make the two numbers out of the blocks separately, combine the two groups, and finally figure out what number is made by the total set of blocks. They also learned how to use the 100s chart (a chart with the numbers 1-100 listed in rows of 10) to help them add 2-digit numbers. Since going down a column adds 10 and going across a row adds 1, adding 23 is equivalent to going 2 steps down and 3 steps across. Finally, they practiced adding the numbers just on paper, by handling the tens and the ones separately and then combining. For example, $46 + 35$ would be broken up into $40 + 30 = 70$ and $6 + 5 = 11$, and then they'd add $70 + 11$ to find the original sum.

Math, 2nd Grade - Sasha Fradkin

Second grade students spent January working on different strategies for doing 2- and 3-digit subtraction. First they learned the method of subtracting the hundreds, the tens and the ones separately, regrouping a ten or a hundred if necessary. Then they practiced solving subtraction problems by turning it into an addition problem with a missing addend (eg, to solve $120 - 85$, figure out how much you need to add to 85 to get 120). A third method involved subtracting a little extra to make the subtraction easier and then adding back the extra ($72 - 38 = 72 - 40 + 2$), and a related method of shifting the difference ($72 - 38 = 74 - 40$). We also spent a lot of time discussing which problems are best approached by which methods.

Math, 3rd Grade - Sasha Fradkin

The third grade class spent the month of January learning about the concepts of Perimeter and Area and solving many problems involving the concepts. They discovered that a shape with a bigger perimeter will not always have a bigger area. Most of the focus was on rectangles and rectilinear shapes (those that can be divided into rectangles). The students explored what happens to the perimeter or area of a rectangle when it's height is increased by 1, or some other fixed amount. They also learned and discovered many tricks for finding the perimeter of rectilinear shapes that are not rectangles.

Math, 4th Grade - Tatiana Ter-Saakov

Grade 4 students enhanced their multiplication skills, practicing a few methods of multiplying two-digit and three-digit numbers. They know how to determine the last digit of product just by the last digits of factors. The students are using their skills now exploring exponents.

Math, 5th Grade - Sasha Fradkin

The fifth grade class spent the month of January exploring the topic of statistics. They learned about the concepts of mean, median, mode and range, and computed these quantities for various sets of numbers. They learned different methods for computing the average of a set of numbers and explored which ones work best for which types of problems. They solved many tricky word problems that helped them get a better feel for the different concepts. They also worked on analyzing data presented in various graphical forms and computing the different statistics for such data.

Math, 6th & 7th Grade - Tatiana Ter-Saakov

The 6th-7th grade has covered the chapter on square roots and applications, including the famous Pythagorean theorem. We'll keep reviewing this important topic. Currently the class moved on to exponents chapter, which is the last in Beast Academy series. In a couple of weeks students will move on to Introduction to Algebra book by Art of Problem Solving.

Science, Kindergarten - Adam Darer

In Science class this month, we started our Physics unit learning about forces and motion. We began the New Year by discussing what speed measures. The students completed a lab where we measured the time it took for them to walk (at slow, medium, and fast speeds) across the classroom. From this experiment, the students concluded that walking at faster speeds means that it takes less time to walk across the classroom. We had a great discussion on motion and forces, and explored several types of forces (gravity, friction, pushing/pulling, tension) and how we interact with these forces in our daily lives. We then completed an experiment where we had to first predict then test if common objects (such as a rubber band, roll of masking tape, etc.) would roll down a ramp. The students each had to make their own prediction, which was great practice in developing a hypothesis and critical reasoning skills. Afterwards, we had an insightful discussion about why certain objects rolled down the ramp, while others did not roll.

Science, 1st Grade - Adam Darer

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down a ramp. The students each had to make their own prediction, which was great practice in developing a hypothesis and critical reasoning skills. Afterwards, we had an insightful discussion about why certain objects rolled down the ramp, while others did not roll.

Science, 2nd & 3rd Grade - Adam Darer

In Science class this month, we started our Physics unit learning about forces and motion. We began the New Year by discussing what speed is and how to calculate speed. The students completed a lab where they measured the time it took for them to walk (at slow, medium, and fast speeds) across the classroom, and used this information to determine their speeds. We then learned how distance-time graphs can tell a story of how an object is moving and graphed our own distance-time graphs. The students performed an experiment to determine how the incline of a ramp affects the speed that a ball rolling down the ramp is moving at. We had a great discussion on motion and forces, and explored several types of forces (gravity, friction, pushing/pulling, tension) and how we interact with these forces in our daily lives. The students then worked in groups to come up with a short skit that included several of these forces and the other groups had to identify the forces that were performed in the skit. We then completed a friction laboratory experiment exploring how the surface of a material affects the amount of friction that is produced. For this experiment, the students tested the friction of sandpaper, wax paper, and a plastic bag by attaching (one at a time) a small square of each material to a string with a plastic cup on the end. The students hung the cup off the end of the table and counted how many pennies they had to add to the cup in order for the small square of material to begin moving.

Science, 4th Grade - Tatiana Ter-Saakov



Back in December the students concluded their biology unit with the topic of habitats and ecosystems. Now we moved on to the exciting unit of chemistry. Students were observing “chemical reefs” by putting two kinds of salts on opposite sides of a dish with water, letting them diffuse. The chemical reaction started along the invisible border in the middle as two solutions reached each other, and was mesmerizing to watch. We are working on atomic structure and Periodic Table now to be able to understand better the chemical reactions around us.

Science, 5th Grade - Adam Darer

In Science class this month, we started our Physics unit learning about forces and motion. We began the New Year by discussing what speed and acceleration measure and learning how to calculate speed and acceleration given distances and time. The students completed a lab where they measured the time it took for them to walk (at slow, medium, and fast speeds) across the classroom, and used this information to determine their speeds. I then challenged the class to collectively design and perform an experiment to calculate the acceleration of a ball rolling down a ramp. After much thoughtful discussion and several experimental trials, the students were able to calculate the acceleration of the ball. We then learned how distance-time graphs and speed-time graphs can tell a story of how an object is moving and began analyzing and then creating our own distance-time graphs. We also graphed and compared how the distance-time graphs look different for objects that are moving at a constant speed versus objects that are accelerating. Most recently, we started our discussion on forces where we learned about several types of forces (such as gravity, air/water resistance, friction, etc...) and practiced drawing and labeling force arrows on diagrams such as a boat moving forward in a lake and a cyclist pedaling on a bicycle. We then completed a friction laboratory experiment exploring how the surface of a material affects the amount of friction that is produced. For this experiment, the students tested the friction of sandpaper, wax paper, and a plastic bag by attaching a small square of each material (one at a time) to a string with a plastic cup on the end. The students hung the cup off the end of the table and counted how many pennies they had to add to the cup in order for the small square of material to begin moving. Next we are going to explore the concept of scientific notation as well as unit conversion (dimensional analysis).

Biology, 6th & 7th Grade - Danielle Nagelberg

The sixth and seventh graders are wrapping up a unit on Mendelian genetics. We read excerpts from a translation of Gregor Mendel’s 1865 paper, and learned how two scientists who spent time as professors at Bryn Mawr College, Nettie Stevens and Thomas Hunt Morgan, found that Mendel’s genes exist in real physical space, on chromosomes. We are working on our understanding of Punnett Squares, and preparing to move into the language of DNA and modern genetics.

Robotics, Computer Programing - Tatiana Ter-Saakov



Each class successfully created a version of line following subroutine, so now the robot can use its color sensor to follow the edge of the black line. The 7th grade version is more sophisticated, but all three work, and are being used in programming the missions. The 7th grade was also able to successfully place the gecko figuring on the wall, which required building a worm lift attachment. The 5th grade created an attachment to unload “food” (plastic rectangles), and successfully delivers it to two destinations. The most exciting event of this month happened during the 4th grade class, when the students were able to run the robot over a steep ramp - after many unsuccessful attempts (the key turned out to be a switch to rear-wheel drive)! Next month the students will start combining missions into 3 minute runs.

French - Kindergarten

This month, we talked about greetings for the new year. After the winter break, we started by reviewing all the vocabulary of our second Syntalk book. We continued our routine about the date and numbers. Every day, we reached at least 50 and our goal is to count up to one hundred one by one. We played memory games with new vocabulary and learned four new songs:

- Brousse, brousse https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMgi_Mdan9Q
- Mon âne, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YK0ix1KoGTQ>
- Vent frais (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2GDTx1bLCGQ>)
- Un éléphant qui se balançait, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ns92r5TQH3k>

We continue to write French sentences in our book by reading and then copying words in the correct order. We read a lot of color adjective and agreed them with the noun described orally. We described pictures using colors (from our book, as well as from Van Gogh’s paintings). The children read a lot one on one with the teacher. We reviewed the French alphabet.

Vocabulary:

vert/verte (green)

violet/violette (purple)
blanc/blanche (white)
bleu/bleue (blue)
noir/noire (black)
un chat (a cat)
un chien (a dog)
prend (takes)
un arbre (a tree)
un oiseau (a bird)
un train (a train)

French - 1st Grade

This month, we talked about the greetings for the new year. We continued our routine about the date. We learned the songs:

- Gugus <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U8eOX0Qk3IY>
- Le bon roi Dagobert <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aqKjdSjNgRU>

We started to learn the French national anthem “La Marseillaise”

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KTLBYoUy6RM>) and talked about the French revolution.

We explained the vocabulary and talked about the meaning and the historical context. We started to memorize and say it out loud.

We continue to conjugate regular -ER verbs and we learned to conjugate the verb LIRE (to read) to the present tense with singular and plural pronouns. We also practiced asking yes/no questions and answering them either by positive nor using negative. We also learned adjective of nationality. We conjugated the irregular verb “vouloir” and studied its “special” construction following by infinitive. We reviewed the infinitive form of all the verbs we studied so far. We learned the days of the week as well as the time of the day and combined these two elements. We answered to the question “qui” (who).

Vocabulary:

vouloir (to want)
lundi (Monday)
mardi (Tuesday)
mercredi (Wednesday)
jeudi (Thursday)
vendredi (Friday)
samedi (Saturday)
dimanche (Sunday)
ce matin (this morning)
cet après-midi (this afternoon)
ce soir (this evening)
lundi matin (Monday morning)
lundi après-midi (Monday afternoon)

lundi soir (Monday evening)
au cinéma (at the movie theater)
le/un film (the/a movie)
parler (to speak)
écouter (to listen to)
lire (to read)
je lis (I read)
tu lis (you-singular- read)
il/elle lit (he/she reads)
nous lisons (we read)
vous lisez (you -plural- read)
ils/elles lisent (they read)
français (French)
anglais (english)
américain (American)
espagnol (Spanish)
russe (Russian)
les CD (the CD)
de la musique (music)
la radio (radio)
la prof (a woman teacher)
le prof (a man teacher)
le livre d'anglais (English book)
le livre d'américain (American book)
le livre de français (French book)
le livre d'espagnol (Spanish book)

French - 2nd & 3rd Grade

This month, we talked about greetings for the new year. We have learned the song “Les comédiens” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V7EOrJEUaPI>), by Charles Aznavour. We have studied the lessons 20, 21 and 22 of our book «Gérard et ses copains ». Throughout these lessons, we studied the expressions “c’est/ce n’est pas” and reviewed the possessions with “de” in French. We also use the verbs “écouter” and “regarder” (built without preposition in French), and we conjugate the irregular verb “pouvoir” (followed by the infinitive). We wrote dialogs using these new verbs and the students took an evaluation describing pictures to the teachers one by one orally and also by writing. We started to answer questions about a short text.

Vocabulary:

avoir faim/ soif/ chaud/ froid (to be hungry/thirsty/hot/cold) être
être fatigué(e)/ content(e)/ grand(e)/ petit(e) (to be tired/ happy/ tall/ small)
c’est (it is)
ce n’est pas (it is not)

de/d' (of)
écouter (to listen to)
j'écoute (I listen)
tu écoutes (you-singular- listen)
il/elle/on écoute (he/she/we listen)
nous écoutons (we listen)
vous écoutez (you-formal or plural- listen)
ils/elles écoutent (they listen)
écouter de la musique (to listen to some music)
écouter la radio (to listen to radio)
regarder (to look at)
regarder la télé (to watch TV)
regarder un film (to watch a movie)
pouvoir (to be able to, can)
je peux (I can)
tu peux (you-singular- can)
il/elle/on peut
nous pouvons (we can)
vous pouvez (you-plural- can)
ils/elles peuvent (they can)

French - 4th Grade

This month, we talked about greetings for the new year. We have learned the song “Les comédiens” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V7EOrUEUaPI>), by Charles Aznavour. In our book “First Start French,” we completed the lessons 15 to 19 about the numbers above 70 in letters, the place and position vocabulary, the school and classroom vocabulary, and the word “de” (preposition and partitive article). We also reviewed the irregular verb “prendre”, the irregular -IR verbs like “dormir” and the regular -IR verbs like “finir” (to finish). In our symtalk book “Plein La Vue”, we completed the lessons 11 and 12 about professions and workplaces, the verb “savoir” (to know) and adverbs (parfois -sometimes-, souvent -often-, toujours -always-, ne...jamais -never-).

French Proverbs:

Impossible n'est pas français (Impossible is not French)

Jamais de la vie! (Not in this life!)

L'argent ne fait pas le bonheur. (Money doesn't make happiness.)

French - 5th, 6th & 7th Grade

This month, we talked about greetings for the new year. We have learned the song “Les comédiens” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V7EOrUEUaPI>), by Charles Aznavour.

We started the year by correcting two difficult tests which the students took in December. It gave us the opportunity to review the previous material.

Then, in the book "*French First year*", we focused on the conjugation of PASSE COMPOSE for regular and irregular **avoir** verbs. We used it daily in short discussions. We completed a test about passé composé. We continued the reading of the book "*Histoire d'une Revanche.*" We read the ten chapters together, practicing reading aloud and summarizing the settings of the story.

Latin, 4th Grade - Jacob Feeley

Fourth grade Latin has learned a new case: The dative case! This case is used for the indirect object. Students have now learned three out of the five major Latin cases. In addition, they have learned how to conjugate a Latin verb in the present tense. Parents: Ask your children to conjugate a Latin verb for you! They have also learned how to conjugate the present tense of the irregular verb: "To be," at which point they also learned the famous phrase, "Cogito ergo sum." Other key Latin phrases they have learned are: persona non grata, ad nauseum, per se, per capita, post mortem, and more. As for the *Aeneid*, we recently finished reading about the dramatic story of Dido and Aeneas.

Latin, 5th Grade - Jacob Feeley

Fifth grade Latin is acclimating well to their new textbooks. They are making flashcards on a weekly basis to build their vocabulary. In doing so, they are also improving their English vocabulary by making connections between Latin words and their English derivatives. Recently, they learned the imperfect and future tense of the verb "to be," which they previously knew only in the present tense. Ask them to conjugate the verb "to be" for you in all three tenses! We are proceeding slowly but steadily in our reading of *The Eagle*, which the students enjoy and which is teaching them about life in a Roman province, the Roman military, and Roman slavery.

Latin, 6th & 7th Grade - Asya Sigelman

After coming back from winter break earlier this month, we have been busy learning new verbal forms. The students have been introduced to the concept of the four principal parts necessary to identify in full any Latin verb, and we have been practicing memorizing and identifying the four principal parts of first conjugation verbs (for example, the full "identity" of the verb "to love" in Latin is "amo, amare, amavi, amatus"). We have also learned three new tenses in the first conjugation. We now know all six tenses in the active indicative for first conjugation verbs: present, imperfect, future, perfect, pluperfect, and future perfect. In addition, we have been studying the irregular verb "sum, esse, fui, futurus" (to be). We have been learning new weekly vocabulary, including some essential military terms which will come in especially useful when students encounter Caesar's *Gallic Wars* (projected for end of next year). Finally, we have been growing our bank of prepositions and adverbs as well as of "question words" (num, nonne, ne).

Art History, 4th Grade - Jessica Harper

We are continuing to look at medieval illuminated manuscripts, most recently studying a depiction of the story of Joseph from Les Antiquités Judaïques from about 1405 and an image of Adam, Eve, Mary and Christ from The Salzburg Missal from about 1478. The exciting thing about the first image is that it is the first time we have looked at work with an artist's name- it is painted by Jean Fouquet- and this is an indication that we are starting to see influences of the Renaissance. Up until this point, all the works we have studied have been the efforts of anonymous artists. Jean Fouquet was the first French artist to go to Italy and see the Renaissance for himself and he brings back some exciting new ideas: perspective and drapery being two of them. This class has a particular delight in Bible stories and it was with much enthusiasm that we discussed topics like sibling envy and forgiveness in the story of Joseph, the students pointing out in Fouquet's image where Joseph has been dropped in a well by his jealous brothers, which figures are the slave traders with their exotic animals, and the literal "red sea" they cross en route to Egypt. Meanwhile, the image of Adam and Eve lead us into some enthusiastic discussions about Genesis 1-3 and the Judeo-Christian understanding of reality and the purpose of man. This class loves to think critically about the text and as soon as one student poses a question, half a dozen arms shoot up to offer ideas. It is delightful to see these students wrestle with some of the same ontological questions that engaged so many of the great thinkers of history.

Art History, 5th - 7th Grade - Jessica Harper

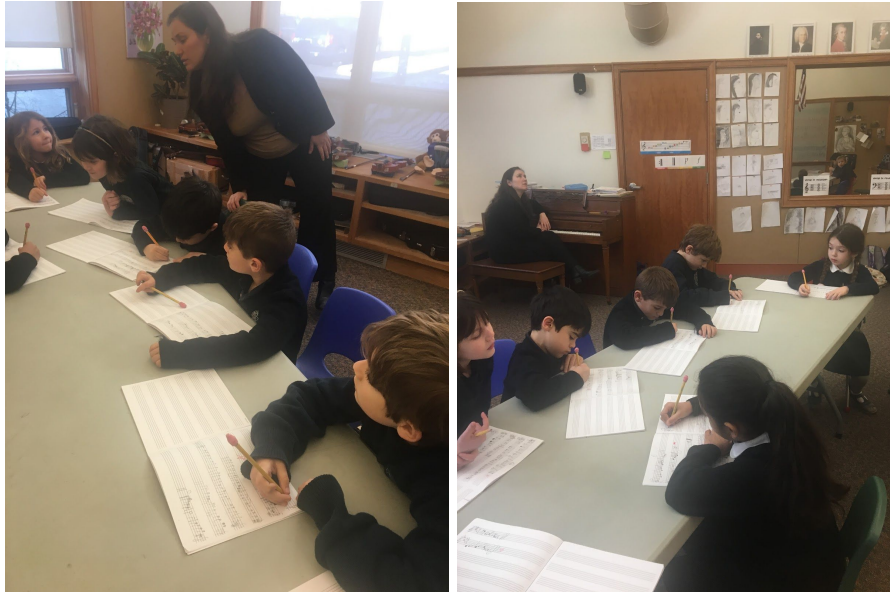
We are continuing to work on critical thinking and observation skills through writing practice. We have compared Giotto's orderly and tense early Renaissance painting of Judas greeting Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane and Caravaggio's harrowing Baroque image of the same scene. We have also examined Michelangelo's and Caravaggio's very different depictions of Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus. By now the students notice right away the stage like presentation of the rational and public depictions of these stories that the Renaissance favors. They have begun to understand the historical forces that shifted these aesthetics toward intimacy, drama and disorder in the Baroque, and the values of the culture that produced these images. They continue to practice how to organize these observations into a cohesive essay with logical and clear points.

Music, Kindergarten - Karina Butterworth

During the month of January, the students wrote a few music dictations with 5 notes in C major with quarters, half and whole notes. They are now decoding melody better and writing more accurately. Sometimes we do oral dictations (rather than written dictations), when they sing the melody with names of notes without writing them down. On violins the girls have better control

of their bowing, and they began to use 1st and 2d fingers pizzicato. They have improved a lot on piano as well.

Music, 1st Grade - Karina Butterworth



During December and January we made good progress in the violin ensemble. The children learned the songs “Twinkle-twinkle,” “Choo-choo train,” “Study,” and “Hunter and Bunny.” They understand finger pattern and bowing, and are working better both as a team and individually. In music theory, the students learned the D major scale, how to write it in bass clef, where to write sharps, and what is 1st and 2d tetrachord. They also wrote dictations in D major.

Music, 2nd & 3rd Grade - Karina Butterworth

During December and January we made great progress on our violin ensemble. In January, the children learned *Mazurka* by N. Baklanova. It is a complicated song for children of this level because it has high and low second finger, slurs, harmonic note, staccato and a fast tempo. I am very proud of them, and they are working more as a team now. Also we repeated old “Song” by J. Haydn and learn easy 1G songs for 1 day. In terms of musical theory, the students learned D major scale and the main chords in this scale, tonic (T), subdominant (S) and dominant seventh chord (D). They write eight measures dictations in $\frac{3}{4}$, (before it was 4 measure in $\frac{4}{4}$).

Music Theory, 4th - 7th Grade - Geert Ruelens

We are back on track with our music classes after a well-deserved winter break. We started the semester with a short video that I had promised to bring the kids. Remember when we did our module, last year, on the instruments of the orchestra? Well, an interesting question came to mind concerning the strings of the violin family. Nowadays, they are made out of metal, but they

weren't always. I had the students guess and they came up with the most inventive answers: strings made of hair, glass, leather, plastic, grass, etc. we had as many (wrong) answers as there were students. In fact, strings were made out of gut. I remembered having seen a very interesting video (BBC) on how gut strings are made, as they are still used by people who play period music on old instruments. The students were very excited and attentive. I could tell from their correct answers that they really paid attention to the details. Only one student felt nauseated.

We also did a rhythm/clapping exercise where the students had to beat/clap a pattern and going around the circle recited in rhythm things that they had done during break. This was interesting, and a great warm up for what came afterward. We have been spending the last two classes on rhythmic dictation. We are keeping it simple by sticking to 2/4, 3/4 and 4/4 time, and using only quarter and eighth and half notes, as well as quarter rests. This still proves a great challenge and it takes many listens to get it right. That is, unless there is a prize to be had, then all kids can get it (just about) right from the very first try.

We ended last year with a module on major chords, which I am going to bring back soon, after spending a few more classes on rhythm dictations and a hearing test.

Art, Kindergarten & 1st Grade - Karina Butterworth



This month we spent two lessons working with a combination of oil pastel and watercolor. The students drew works entitled "Soap Bubbles" and "Aquarium." The girls also drew two still lifes using watercolor: "Guitar" and "Toy Monkey with Accordion." The children are learning to use entire class period (45 minutes) without rushing and attempting to draw more accurately. The

students also worked on drawing faces with different emotions: sad, happy, surprised, angry, crying and laughing.

Art, 1st Grade - Karina Butterworth

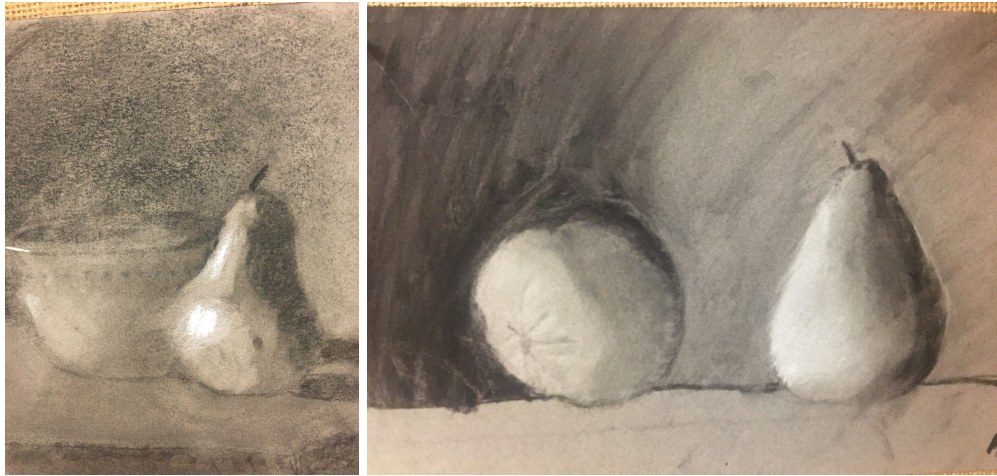
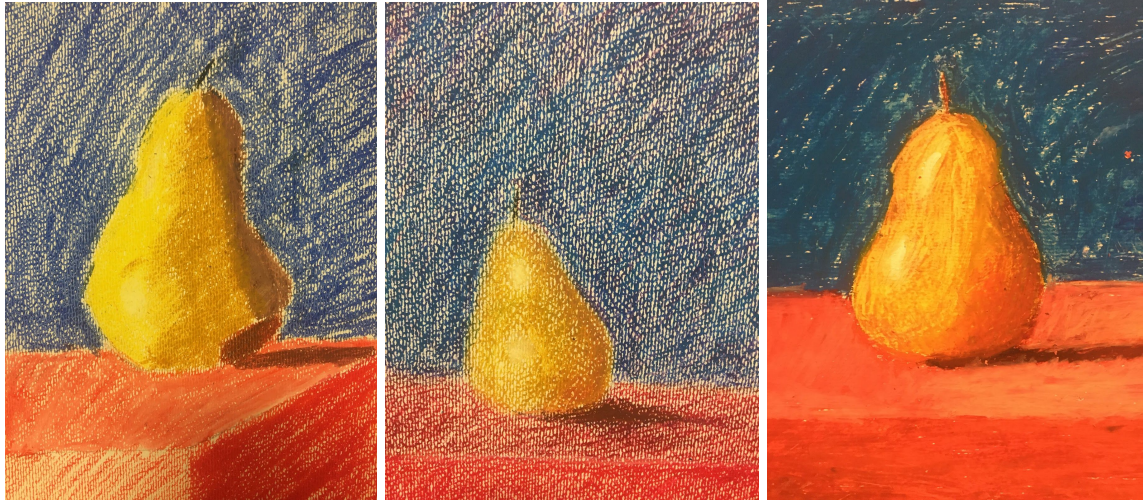


This month we again spent a few lessons discussing perspective. The children drew landscapes where they had to show objects far away as smaller and higher, and objects close up as bigger, lower and with more details. We spent one lesson working with a combination of oil pastel and watercolor. The students drew a work entitled “Aquarium.” The children drew a copy of Mozart’s portrait with color pencils, a portrait of each other with pencil, and still life entitled “Toy Monkey with Accordion” with watercolor.

Art, 2nd & 3rd Grade - Karina Butterworth

This month we again spent a few lessons discussing perspective. The students used rulers to draw through the vanishing point. They drew works entitled “City” and “Subway Station.” Also they drew “Eight Faces with Different Emotions: Sad, Happy, Crying, Laughing, Angry, Surprised, Silly and $\frac{3}{4}$.” The students also drew two still lifes: “The Kitchenware” and “Toy Monkey on Tricycle.” They have learned to draw different textures, metal, plastic, fabric with only pencil. They have also learned to find a combination of simple shapes in complex objects.

Art Studio, 4th, 5th 6th & 7th Grade - John McCormick



Hands-On Skills - Adam Darer

This month in Hands-On-Skills, the students were busy learning how to identify animal footprints. We spent many classes walking around the discovery trail and the school property searching for and identifying animal tracks. The students can now identify the following animal footprints: black bear, deer, mouse, raccoon, skunk, raccoon, wolf, and fox. We are now starting our woodworking unit where the students will be learning important woodworking skills.

Modern Hebrew, 4th Grade - Tal Gutman

We opened the new term by sharing experiences from the winter break. The students shared their highlights from the break - where they have been, what they had done and what they liked the most. We used the opportunity to review the forms of the verb "was" in the past that we learned earlier this year. Another activity we did to practice speaking as well as question formatting was daily interviews: each student interviewed a peer in the class, asking questions such as – how old are you, what do you like to do, how many siblings do you have, what is your favorite animal and so on.

Our main Topic in January was animals and caring for them. The students expanded their knowledge learning more animals names, nouns and verbs / infinitives related to animals like pet, bark, jump, take care, break – מטפל, נובח, מלטף, קופץ, שובר.

We read detailed texts on the subject and discussed them in Hebrew. One of the texts moved the students a lot: it was a story about two friends, Amos and Eithan, and a street dog – Duki (In Israel there are street dogs). After Duki broke his leg Amos and Eithan took care of him, played with him, took him to the doctor and helped him recover. When Duki recovers, they both want to adopt him and fight as a result. The story has no solution and the students conducted a discussion – who deserves to adopt the dog more and why. It was great to listen to their opinions and their well supported arguments! We did not reach a consensus on the matter...

To encourage the students to active use of their Hebrew knowledge we had a few sessions of creative writing while we practiced a certain topic. For example, while we reviewed the use of helping verbs and infinitives, each students received cards with pictures of a person/s, a helping verb and an infinitive (like need + clean the room) and had to write on the white board a meaningful sentence that included in addition to the verb also a description of the person, and the reason he is doing the action. When we practiced cardinal numbers, the students wrote a shopping list of things they want "to buy" and their amount, while making sure to match the number (feminine or masculine) and the gender of the noun. These activities allowed the students to demonstrate their own style, personal interests and unique humor and were the students' favorite this month.

Modern Hebrew, Kindergarten - 2nd Grade - Jacob Feeley

Students continue to work on basic conversational Hebrew. They are also working on their Hebrew through exposure to children's stories written in Hebrew. In addition, they are building

their vocabulary and familiarity with Hebrew syntax by learning to sing classic Israeli songs. Parents: Ask your children to sing to you one of the songs they have learned! (By the way, most of them can be found on the internet).

Judaic Studies, K-2 - Asya Sigelman

In Judaic Studies this month we have delved still deeper into the study of *shorashim* (the three-letter roots of Hebrew verbs, nouns, and adjectives). The children now know over a dozen *shorashim*, some of which are tricky since they frequently “hide” one of their three letters. We have been doing multiple drills, learning to pick out and identify the *shorash* inside a word. I am proud to announce that we have completed the first volume of our Biblical grammar textbook, *Lechavin u Lehaskil*, and the students will be taking their textbooks home to keep and review. In the next textbook which we will be starting in February, we will turn to the study of *sofiot* – suffixes frequently found at the end of Hebrew words and what they tell us about the meaning of the word. We have also been reading excerpts from the story of *Noah* in the original Biblical Hebrew and memorizing gradually some of the more memorable passages. In our daily *tefillot* (prayers) we have added *Ashrei*, one of the most important *Tehillim* (Psalms). We have been taking turns chanting *Ashrei*, with one of the students leading the others in the prayer. We have taken note of the acrostic form of this psalm (every line starts with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet), and we have been paying attention to the meaning of the lines. According to tradition, *Ashrei* was composed by King David. Accordingly, we have been reading (in English) stories about the life and adventures of King David – his childhood, his epic battle with Goliath, and his subsequent turbulent life at the court of King Saul, before he attained his own kingship.

Judaic Studies, 4th Grade - Jacob Feeley

Students continue to work on a close reading of Parshat Vayera. Key topics in grammar they are covering are: the ה"א הידיעה, the future tense, and the ו"ו ההיפוך. In addition, they are learning some of the foundational anecdotes about and teachings of the sages of the mishnaic and talmudic periods (i.e. Hillel, Shamai, Rabbi Eliezer, Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai) . They are also studying about some key topics in Halakha as presented in the Mishna and Talmud.

Christian Studies, Kindergarten - 2nd Grade - Frank Chilbert

Since we returned from Winter Break, we have contemplated a number of important stories that took place at the beginning of Jesus’ ministry. These included Jesus’ being lost in the temple in Jerusalem, his baptism in the Jordan River, and his temptation in the wilderness. In each story, we considered how Jesus’ humanity and his divinity were communicated. As we begin preparing for the climax of Jesus’ ministry, we will learn about the season of Lent. We will learn why it lasts for 40 days and how it helps us prepare for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

