



MLCA NEWSLETTER

ACADEMIC EDITION

March 2022



Rabbi Sinensky was on hand to send off our Science Fair Elective on March 15. Pictured above (from left) are Rabbi Sinensky, Mrs. Ter-Saakov, Julius Gormley, Malcolm Weinstein, Noah Posner, Marshall Zafiriou, Nicky Zafiriou, Caleb Sigelman, Ari Shpilman, Katie Fradkin, Newsa Butterworth, Dr. Nagelberg, Lilly Sigelman, Mara Ankenman, Ronan Myers and Raica Tarr.

MLCA SCIENCE FAIR COMPETITORS

Months of hard work paid off for the students who took part in MLCA's Science Fair Elective. Their first round at the Delaware County Science Fair on March 15 earned First Place awards for

- Nicky Zafiriou, "Improving Tupperware"
- Malcolm Weinstein, "Effectiveness of Generally Available Portable Water Filtration Solutions"
- Caleb Sigelman, "Despair is Infectious: An Analysis of How a Community's Conditions Affect Resistance to Vaccination"

Julius Gormley won an honorable mention for his research on "The Mind, Music and Memory."

In the category of Team Projects, Noah Posner and Marshall Zafiriou won Third Place for their "Self-Cooling Pillow." Mara Ankenman and Katie Fradkin won

Second Place for "The Perfect Paintbrush," and Newsa Butterworth and Ari Shpilman won First Place for "Better than Beethoven."

Delaware County Intermediate Unit Special Awards went to Newsa and Ari for "Better than Beethoven" and to Caleb for his "Despair is Infectious" project.

At the Southeast Regional Science Olympiad on March 19, Raica Tarr and Ronan Myers received a Second Place medal for their work on the Solar System.

Malcolm Weinstein and Nicky Zafiriou also received Special Awards from the Delaware County Chapter of the Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers.

We bask in your reflected glory!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GRADE	PAGE
KINDERGARTEN	2
FIRST GRADE	9
SECOND GRADE	14
THIRD GRADE	19
FOURTH GRADE	24
FIFTH GRADE	30
SIXTH GRADE	34
LOWER SCHOOL CLUBS AND SPECIAL ACTIVITIES	39
SEVENTH GRADE	41
EIGHTH & NINTH GRADE	44
UPPER SCHOOL ELECTIVES	47

KINDERGARTEN

TEACHER: MR. CHILBERT

SUBJECT: ENGLISH

Since our last school newsletter, the Kindergarteners have traveled far and wide through times and places of Ancient Africa and the Near East, as well as Medieval Scandinavia. In November, we finished reading the stories about the Egyptian Pantheon. The class favorite was when Horus, the son of Osiris, the King of the Underworld, came back from the dead to defeat his terrible uncle, Set, the God of Evil. We then traveled to the coldest parts of northern Europe to hear the stories told by the Norsemen about Thor, Odin, Loki, Freya, and the terrible frost giants. We spent a long time on a rather funny story of Thor losing his hammer and having to dress up like a princess in order to get it back. Most recently, we have told the stories of the Ancient Israelites from the Creation of the world to Passover and the parting of the Red Sea. The students are well acquainted with Adam and Eve, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses. The students grappled with some of the suspensive moments that appear in the Bible and reappear constantly in Western art and culture. Laden with this knowledge, these students will be able to connect many subjects and stories as they grow and thrive in the MLCA literary and historical curriculum.

Poetry night was a beautiful success! The students stood proud and tall and recited their poems with grace. Already, they are learning new poems for our upcoming event. We have memorized "The Tyger," by William Blake and are in the middle of learning "Sweet and Low," by Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

In phonics, the students have all mastered recognizing consonant sounds and short vowel sounds. These are two of the most important benchmarks for early readers. Very soon, the students will be given their own A is for Apple phonics textbooks to begin the systematic work of the First Grade reading program. We have also begun introducing the basic letter shapes that we will learn next year in the 1st Grade penmanship curriculum. With these measures in place, they will all begin feeling like full-blown first graders before the year is over! After a short hiatus due to the Omicron outbreak, we have re-established the Reading Buddy Program for Kindergarten students. On top of English class and storytime, the Kindergarteners also have the chance to hear quality literature read by older students in their own school. It is a very sweet and wholesome sight to behold.

TEACHER: MR. GORMLEY

SUBJECT: HISTORY

After finishing the period of exploration and early settlement in North America, students spent this trimester learning of the hardships of the early settlers as well as the many conflicts between the English colonists and the natives, especially King Philip's War. In addition, we read of William Penn and his acquisition of Pennsylvania, the Salem witch trials, Washington's boyhood, his rules of etiquette, and early adventures surveying. We continued with stories of Franklin's childhood and a discussion of his inventions and effort to acquire virtue. The similarity in the early lives of Franklin and Washington are noteworthy for many reasons, but I tried to make special note of their efforts at shaping their own lives for the better in the way each saw fit. If there is still a desire for excellence, it seems to have to begin at an early age if it is to come to be.

This month we finished learning about the French and Indian War. After discussing who was allied with whom among the native tribes, we read of young George Washington's adventures and the battle of Fort Mifflin; General Braddock's failed expedition; the English victory at Quebec; etc.

While we continue working through the history of the time, we're learning a few key dates that the children should have mostly memorized by now. I've listed them below. In addition, we'll begin working on learning the Declaration of Independence from the beginning to about mid-second paragraph. Feel free to quiz your children on the following:

- 1492 - Columbus came to the New World
- 1534 - Jaques Cartier explored Canada
- 1585 - Roanoke was settled
- 1607 - Jamestown was settled
- 1620 - the Pilgrims came to Plymouth
- 1664 - New Amsterdam became New York
- 1692 - Salem witch trials
- 1733 - Georgia became a territory
- 1754 - the start of the French and Indian War
- 1765 - Stamp Act
- 1776 - Declaration
- 1787 - Constitution

TEACHER: MRS. BUTTERWORTH

SUBJECT: STUDIO ART

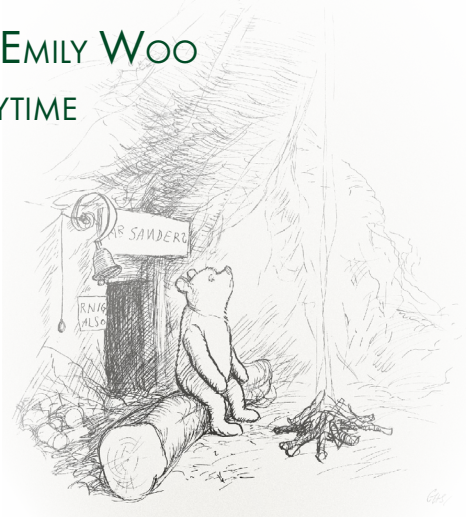
During the winter trimester in Art class we continued to work on the skills kids had learned earlier in the year:

- students identified simple shapes within complex objects
- created their drawings step by step
- practiced sketching with a light pencil pressure
- disciplined themselves to color evenly and accurately inside the lines
- learned to highlight the main object by keeping the background more subdued

The most memorable topics of this trimester in Kindergarten were: Dog, Portrait of a stuffed toy, Frog with umbrella, Person sitting at a desk, and Penguin family. In "Daddy brought a Christmas tree" the students got to practice drawing a car. We drew the human body in motion in the Winter Fun series - Skiers, Sledding, Snowman. Finally, we drew an exciting and complicated "Teddy's room" in perspective. The students also made a composition "City" with colored paper, glue and pencils. In this picture, the students had to show far away buildings higher, smaller and behind nearby buildings.

TEACHER: MS. EMILY WOO

SUBJECT: STORYTIME



Over the past four months, the Kindergarteners have read many, many stories! Our goal during Story Time is to read great works of literature and reinforce the stories by doing activities, making crafts, and/or retelling the stories. This trimester, we had three units: Beowulf by Michael Morpugo, Fairy Tales by Hans Christian Anderson, and Winnie the Pooh by A. A. Milne. I greatly cherish my time with the Kindergarteners!

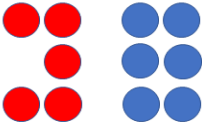
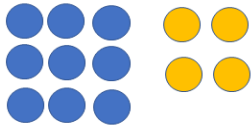
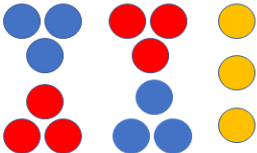
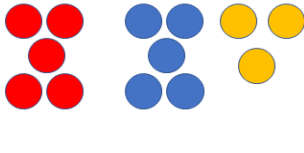
TEACHER: MRS. SHPILMAN

SUBJECT: MATH

The kindergarten math program continues to focus on several key foundational areas - counting and number recognition and arithmetic skills.

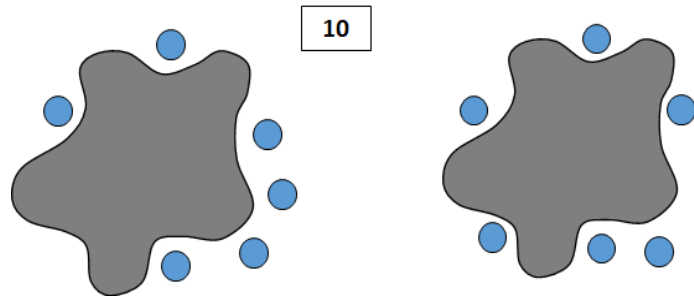
Arithmetic

Addition: Our kindergarten students have gotten very good at adding several single-digit numbers and, more importantly, figuring out convenient ways to do so. We have been practicing the strategies of finding known "anchors" that we know (e.g., $5+5=10$) and using that information to help us count on. We continue to master this skill through several activities, such as the game of peek and see, where I lay out a pattern of circles on the board, show it to the students for a few seconds, and ask them to tell me how many circles they saw and how they figured it out, or rolling 2 or 3 ten-sided dice and adding up the numbers. Here are a few examples from our recent classes:

 $5 + 6 = 11$ $12 - 1 = 11$	 $9 + 4 = 13$
 $6 + 6 + 3 = 15$ $3 + 3 + 3 + 3 + 3 = 15$	 $5 + 5 + 3 = 13$

Number line: We just recently started practicing using the number line for addition and subtraction problems and played the bug-catcher game (low tech version on the board), which the students found silly and I found to be very productive! You can find an online version to play at home at <https://toytheater.com/bug-catcher>.

Subtraction: We have been practicing subtraction by playing Splat!, where we start out with a set of circles on the board (e.g. 10), and some of them get covered by a splat. Our goal is to figure out how many circles got covered. Some examples follow:



Pig 10: we have been playing the arithmetic game Pig 10 as a treat. The students are really enjoying it, and I find it to be great mental math practice, so it's a win-win! We even used the Pig 10 cards to practice addition (as a change of pace from dice :)).

Counting and Number Recognition

We have been practicing counting backwards starting from different numbers less than 100 - it's been a challenge, but we're getting faster. I encourage you to practice this at home with your child! We also like playing a game where I throw the ball and say a number, and the student has to throw it back and say the number that comes right before it. It's not as easy as it sounds!

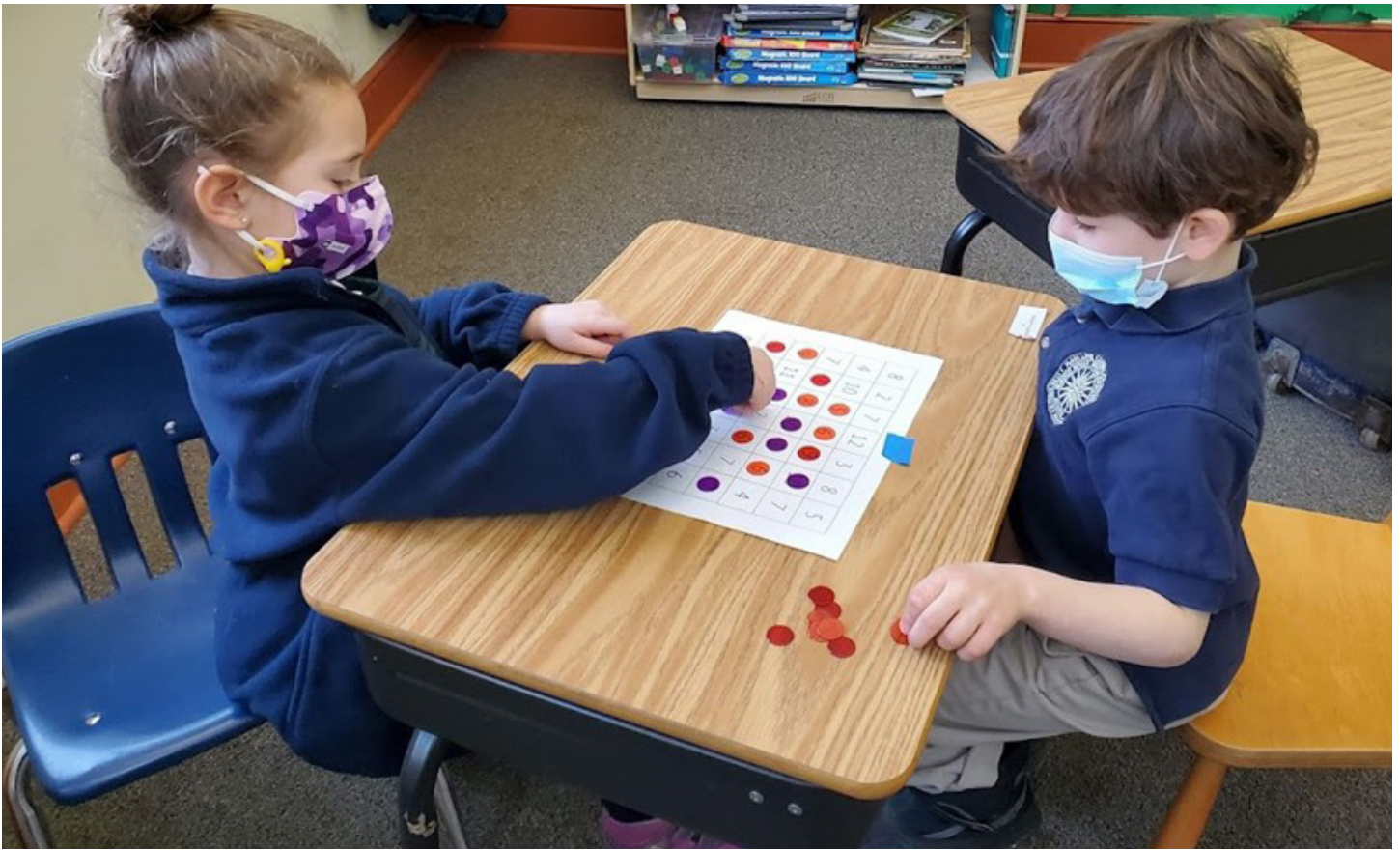
Since returning from winter break, we have been using our Base 10 blocks and our 100 charts to practice naming, comparing and understanding patterns in two-digit numbers. We have slowly been mastering the concept of place value - our students are learning to understand that 52 has 5 tens and 2 ones, whereas 25 has 2 tens and 5 ones, making them different numbers with the same digits. We will continue working on this topic throughout the rest of the year, and progress to three digit numbers later in the spring.

We have been practicing finding numbers on the 100 chart and using it to skip-count by 10s, 5s, 2s, 3s and 4s. We use magnetic 100 charts and colorful magnets, which the kids really enjoy!

Games and special topics

We continue to enjoy building with a variety of sticks and blocks and the students are becoming pros at Qbitz pictures!

We have been building and drawing pictures using our pattern blocks and learning to name the various shapes - rhombus, trapezoid, rectangle, square, and hexagon.



Paloma Weiner and Luca Grigoli work together on a Math game.

TEACHER: MS. EMILY WOO
SUBJECT: CHRISTIAN STUDIES

The K/1 Christian Studies class has covered much Biblical history this trimester. For the past four months, the students have had so much fun learning about the stories of the Bible, starting with Moses & the Exodus from Egypt, then Joshua and the conquest of Canaan, and continuing with the Judges, Kings, and Israel's history before the exile. To supplement the Bible lessons, the students have also been making various crafts and playing review games. The students' enthusiasm in each class makes me so excited to finish our survey of the Bible together!

TEACHER: MRS. BUTTERWORTH
SUBJECT: VIOLIN ENSEMBLE

MLCA Kindergarteners had a very productive trimester in the Violin Ensemble. They now can play short melodies using all 4 fingers and with the bow. During class, I'll write a short melody for E-string on the board. The class sings the melody with the names of the notes, then we sing the numbers of the fingers they use to play it. After we play the first melody several times, then I change some notes or rhythms and we work the same way with the slightly changed melody.

Besides short (4 measures) melodies, the students have learned "Twinkle-Twinkle" and "Hunter and Bunny". In those songs they use 2 strings that are still a little bit confusing for them.

Generally I am satisfied with their hand position, with the quality of sound and intonation they bring from the violins, with their understanding of theory, and with the Kindergarteners' ability to work as a team.

TEACHER: MME. NSELEL

SUBJECT: FRENCH

Since my previous newsletter, students in Kindergarten have been learning lots of French! I get to see the students every day, as a matter of fact twice a day three times per week, so they have many opportunities to speak and listen to the language. I've continued to vary the content of my classes not based on what their schedule says (French/French Enrichment) but rather on the time of the day, the difficulty level of what needs to be done, etc.

Kindergarteners have become very familiar with class greetings and routines. They understand and respond in French to sentences about the weather, the day of the week, how they are doing, etc.. They can also ask permission to use the bathroom, drink some water, get a snack, change their mask, etc..

Concurrently, in addition to constantly reusing the vocabulary learned earlier in the year, here are some examples of what has been covered this trimester: numbers (1 to 50), verbs (to want, to go, to have, to take, to like), places (at home, at the park), lots of objects (book, car, shoes, boat, bike, train, etc..), foods and drinks (orange juice, cake), animals (bear, monkey, bird), etc.

I continue to use the Syntalk flashcards to present this vocabulary and avoid speaking English as much as possible. The students can later pronounce short sentences in French as they say a combination of 3, 4 or more of these images (example: Brigitte takes a book and wants a red bike). In addition to saying/repeating words matching the images, students have been listening to my words and "building" the sentences taking turns on the white board or at their desks (they all have paper copies of each little image).

They are now more comfortable with responding to "who" (qui) and "does he/she.." (est-ce que) questions about these same short sentences. I recently introduced the question "what is it?" (qu'est-ce que c'est?) that can be used in so many ways, showing flashcards, real objects in the classroom, pictures in a book, etc.

To reinforce this vocabulary, we play games such as treasure hunt, memory game, Kim's game, bingo, I spy,

etc. We have also learned 10 new short French songs/nursery rhymes and the students continue to enjoy this ritual a lot! A few favorites were Les Petits Poissons, Sur le Pont d'Avignon and Trois Petits Chats. After memorizing and practicing each song, the students either draw a picture or make a craft about it.

We have been working hard at learning a new language! As I type this newsletter, they just completed the Syntalk method Français 1 and are bringing the textbook home; if you have any time, please ask them to show you what they know already.

Throughout this book, they were introduced to different characters (Antoine, Brigitte, Sylvie, ect..), some animals (le chien, le chat, etc..), foods (la pomme, le gâteau) and drinks (de l'eau, du lait), 4 colors... With these characters, they've learned to describe and repeat actions like eating, drinking, playing, going places (au parc, à la maison) using French verbs conjugated at the 3rd person of the singular form. This first textbook introduces numbers 1-10 only but in class we've counted to 30 already a few times.

The goal of French Kindergarten is developing speaking skills and listening comprehension as well; therefore, in addition to reciting words associated with the pictures in their book, students have been listening to my words and pointing to the matching picture.

In addition to our regular 4 weekly classes, I get to see most of the students in French Enrichment. This is an opportunity for reinforcing the vocabulary learned through games like I Spy, Pictionary, Memory game, etc.. Students also get a chance to illustrate the lyrics of the songs learned the past weeks.

Another focus of Enrichment is practicing what I call "class routines" such as how to say in French "can I go to the bathroom?", "can I drink some water?", etc.

TEACHER: MR. DARER

SUBJECT: SCIENCE & HANDS ON SKILLS

In Kindergarten Science, we have been growing an amaryllis flower and measuring its height each class. The students have recorded the height on their bar graphs.

We further explored different states of matter and investigated shaving cream to determine what state of matter shaving cream is. We also proved that air is matter (something that has mass and takes up space) by observing how a balance scale we made by hanging a ruler tips towards the balloon filled up with air rather than an empty balloon on the other side.

We next discussed forces (something that is a push or a pull) and completed a worksheet to determine if a given force was a pushing force or a pulling force. The students had practice filling out a data table where they had to mark their prediction if an object would roll down a ramp and then mark their worksheet with the result of this activity.

We also discussed chemical reactions and made a snow volcano by mixing baking soda and vinegar. Lately, we have been learning about insects and will discuss the parts of an insect while reading about insect species and looking for them outside.

In Hands on Skills, the students have been learning about tracking and how to identify animal footprints. Through a matching card game, the students know how to identify the tracks of deer, mouse, squirrel, fox, coyote, wolf, mountain lion, bobcat, raccoon, beaver, skunk, opossum, and a badger. They learned that animals related to cats and dogs make tracks with four toes, and that cats walk with their claws retracted, leaving no toenail imprints in their tracks (unlike dogs).

We have gone out to the discovery trail to look for tracks. On these outings, we have practiced using the "fox-walk" technique (a slower, quieter way to walk in the woods) in order to be able to not scare away wildlife. We have also practiced using the "wide angle vision" technique which allows us to enhance our awareness of our peripheral vision, permitting us to notice any slight movement in our field of vision, which could likely be due to an animal moving in the woods. In addition to all the birds the students learned last trimester, they now

can identify a pileated woodpecker, red-headed woodpecker, white-throated sparrow, and carolina wren. We have also been studying bird songs and the students can identify the songs of a cardinal, chickadee, dark-eyed junco, white-throated sparrow, carolina wren, nuthatch, and mourning dove. Ask them to sing the songs of any of these birds!

TEACHER: CANTOR PORTNOY

SUBJECT: MUSIC THEORY

The Kindergarten class is extremely musical. Given their ages, there is wide variation in the ability to understand concepts like "clef" and "note value". Through singing, marching and dancing, the children experience and can distinguish between duple and triple meter.

All classes of course sing a number of national songs, and celebrate the holidays as well as everyday life with appropriate songs and stories.

A new feature of the curriculum is Sir Simon Rattle's book *How to Build an Orchestra*, through which the children gain an understanding of the families of the orchestra, the instruments within each family, and the characteristic sound of the instruments and families.

The class text is *Music Theory Made Easy for Kids* by Lina Ng. This is an extremely attractive activity book using stickers and crayons and other kid-friendly modalities which the children enjoy by and large. Through it and other approaches, the children have good familiarity with the formation of notes, counting, the dotted half, notes in the treble clef, the keyboard and the concept of measure and bar lines.

TEACHER: CANTOR PORTNOY
SUBJECT: JUDAIC STUDIES

My goal is that by the end of the year the kindergarten students will get to know significant parts of the morning prayer, major Torah stories that appear in the weekly Parasha, important customs and values of Judaism. I also want to introduce them to the Hebrew language as it is in prayer, daily conversation, stories and Hebrew songs.

In order to achieve these goals, I see the Hebrew calendar, the prayer, the holidays and the Torah portion of the week, as frameworks that mark the course of progress in learning. We study prayers, hear Torah stories and other stories, draw and sing. I always explain the words of the Tefila and connect it to other subjects such as the week Parasha. Many times I speak to the students in Hebrew. I also ask them to repeat important words. We sing songs in Hebrew especially during prayer but not only. During this trimester, the students were exposed to Torah stories, Hasidic stories, songs and stories in Hebrew, and to Israeli artists: Mirik Snir, Yaakov Orland, Yehudit Ravitz, and YL Peretz.

In the month of Tishrei we learned about Repentance, Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur and Sukkot. We talked about the meaning of prayer, the names of God, and different ways of speaking to God. Later in the trimester I expanded on the explanation of the Tfila by connecting it to characters, stories, and ideas which I taught in class, for example prayers that are praise to God, prayers about the creation of the world and the creation of men, Abraham our father etc.

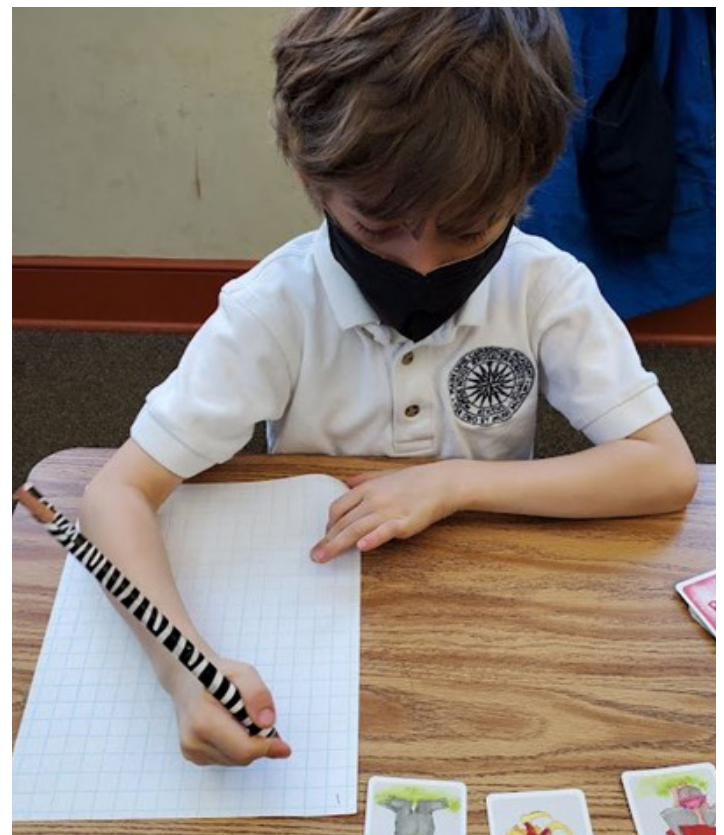
In preparation for each holiday, we dealt with various holiday-related issues. For example, on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, we discussed our responsibility to others. Starting from Parshas Bereishit, we learned stories from the weekly Torah Portion.

The most important goal for me is to connect the children to Judaism in an experiential way using story, song, art and crafts. At each meeting we talk and pray and sing. Sometimes we look at art, and sometimes we hear stories or watch short videos related to the topics taught. It is important for me to be attentive to children and their interests in order to bring them into the world of Judaism.

TEACHER: CANTOR PORTNOY
SUBJECT: HEBREW & JUDAIC STUDIES

The Gur Aryeh K-2. The students in this class now recognize all the letters and vowels in the alphabet and can read Hebrew competently if slowly. Therefore, for the balance of the year, we no longer need rely on transliteration for any part of the curriculum. This is truly a "tzad kadima" (big step!).

The students learned a comprehensive song curriculum for Tu Bishvat, and have assimilated the concept of Leap Year. Because this is such an elongated year, we did a preliminary unit on Pesach, then turned to Purim, and we shall return to Passover after the break. All the students have memorized the parts of the Seder, the Ha Lachma and Four Questions (in three different versions) and the Avadeem Hayinu. In addition to Purim songs, they know the brachot preceding the reading of the Megillah and have been exposed to the traditional "trope" of Megillat Esther. In addition, the children continue to review the Hebrew dates and calendar mastery. We also continue regular celebration of Shabbat on Friday morning and Rosh Chodesh on the appropriate dates.



Henry Winfield hard at work in Math class.

FIRST GRADE

TEACHER: MME. NSELEL

SUBJECT: FRENCH

Since my previous newsletter, students in first grade have not only continued to practice their speaking and listening skills but also worked hard at spelling in French. They get to practice many times by writing words on their own white boards before writing the words again in their notebooks. This is still challenging as French spelling is difficult but I'm pleased with their work and progress.

We are currently studying lesson 18 of the Syntalk method Français 3 and in addition to reviewing words learned in books 1 and 2 last year, the new vocabulary covered so far this trimester includes drinks, languages, sports, etc.

Students continue using the 1st and 2nd person of the singular form of verbs (je/i' and tu) in addition to the 3rd person (il/elle) . Some of the new verbs this trimester describe actions like reading, wearing, wanting, listening, etc.. Every time a new verb is introduced, we try to memorize and recite its conjugation of the singular form. We also started practicing negative sentences and more interrogative ones as well.

We have added five French songs/nursery rhymes to our repertoire and the students continue to enjoy this ritual a lot! C'est Gugusse avec son Violon and Promenons-nous Dans les Bois were probably the most popular in this class.

In addition to our regular 4 weekly classes, I get to see the students in French Enrichment. This is an opportunity to reinforce the vocabulary learned through games and activities such as I Spy, Pictionary, Memory game, word search, etc.. Now that 1st graders have a reasonable amount of French vocabulary we can play more challenging games/activities such as spot the odd one out, go through the entire alphabet and find a word starting with each letter, etc. Students also get a chance to illustrate the lyrics of the songs learned the past weeks.

Another focus of Enrichment is reviewing periodically what I call "class routines" such as how to say in French "can I go to the bathroom?", "can I drink some water?", " can I sharpen my pencil?", "can I change my mask?", "can I get a tissue?", etc...

TEACHER: MRS. BUTTERWORTH

SUBJECT: VIOLIN

First grade students had a productive trimester in the Violin Ensemble. The students who joined this year have caught up fast, so now the class is pretty even in terms of skills. The children have learned several songs in A major and D major using the high 2nd finger pattern. They can play all together, in small groups or solo with accompaniment.

I try to make the lesson more intensive so that the boys don't have a chance to have a "boys club" and break the discipline, but in this situation I don't have the opportunity to pay more attention to each child personally, so we correct the quality by repetitions with short instructions in between.

Generally, I am satisfied with their improving hand position, sound quality and clearer intonation.



Kindergartener Paloma Weiner hard at work with patterns.

TEACHER: MR. GORMLEY

SUBJECT: HISTORY

After finishing the period of exploration and early settlement in North America, students spent this trimester learning of the hardships of the early settlers as well as the many conflicts between the English colonists and the natives, especially King Philip's War. In addition, we read of William Penn and his acquisition of Pennsylvania, the Salem witch trials, Washington's boyhood, his rules of etiquette, and early adventures surveying. We continued with stories of Franklin's childhood and a discussion of his inventions and effort to acquire virtue. The similarity in the early lives of Franklin and Washington are noteworthy for many reasons, but I tried to make special note of their efforts at shaping their own lives for the better in the way each saw fit. If there is still a desire for excellence, it seems to have to begin at an early age if it is to come to be.

This month we finished learning about the French and Indian War. After discussing who was allied with whom among the native tribes, we read of young George Washington's adventures and the battle of Fort Necessity; General Braddock's failed expedition; the English victory at Quebec; etc.

While we continue working through the history of the time, we're learning a few key dates that the children should have mostly memorized by now. I've listed them below. In addition, we'll begin working on learning the Declaration of Independence from the beginning to about mid-second paragraph. Feel free to quiz your children on the following:

- 1492 - Columbus came to the New World
- 1534 - Jaques Cartier explored Canada
- 1585 - Roanoke was settled
- 1607 - Jamestown was settled
- 1620 - the Pilgrims came to Plymouth
- 1664 - New Amsterdam became New York
- 1692 - Salem witch trials
- 1733 - Georgia became a territory
- 1754 - the start of the French and Indian War
- 1765 - Stamp Act
- 1776 - Declaration
- 1787 - Constitution

TEACHER: CANTOR PORTNOY

SUBJECT: HEBREW & JUDAIC STUDIES

The Gur Aryeh K-2 students in this class now recognize all the letters and vowels in the alphabet and can read Hebrew competently if slowly. Therefore, for the balance of the year, we no longer need rely on transliteration for any part of the curriculum. This is truly a "tzad kadima" (big step!).

The students learned a comprehensive song curriculum for Tu Bishvat, and have assimilated the concept of Leap Year. Because this is such an elongated year, we did a preliminary unit on Pesach, then turned to Purim, and we shall return to Passover after the break. All the students have memorized the parts of the Seder, the Ha Lachma and Four Questions (in three different versions) and the Avadeem Hayinu. In addition to Purim songs, they know the brachot preceding the reading of the Megillah and have been exposed to the traditional "trope" of Megillat Esther. In addition, the children continue to review the Hebrew dates and calendar mastery. We also continue regular celebration of Shabbat on Friday morning and Rosh Chodesh on the appropriate dates.



Mr. Darer takes advantage of the brilliant spring sunshine to teach the first graders about shadows. The task: to step on the head of your own shadow! The solution, being worked out here by Isaac Martinson, Calvin Krellner-Oathes and Kiran Ponnuru, is to bend over first. It's trickier than it looks!

TEACHER: MS. EMILY WOO
SUBJECT: CHRISTIAN STUDIES

The K/1 Christian Studies class has covered much Biblical history this trimester. For the past four months, the students have had so much fun learning about the stories of the Bible, starting with Moses & the Exodus from Egypt, then Joshua and the conquest of Canaan, and continuing with the Judges, Kings, and Israel's history before the exile. To supplement the Bible lessons, the students have also been making various crafts and playing review games. The students' enthusiasm in each class makes me so excited to finish our survey of the Bible together!

TEACHER: MS. NA
SUBJECT: STORYTIME

This trimester, the first graders read Rudyard Kipling's *Just So Stories*, E. T. A. Hoffman's *The Nutcracker* and the *Mouse King*, and a collection of Hans Christian Andersen short stories. We are currently making our way through L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* - a personal favorite of mine! The tales of adventure, friendship, and heartbreak have posed challenging ideas for these first graders. They have not backed down from the challenge, however, and have continued to ask insightful questions and engage thoughtfully with the text. Between word-search puzzles, comprehension question games, and coloring activities, our Story Time classes have been busy and fruitful. I look forward to another great trimester of reading together!

TEACHER: MR. CHILBERT

SUBJECT: ENGLISH

The First Grade has grown so quickly as readers. They are enthusiastic about learning new phonics sounds and getting further into their penmanship books. In fact, due to their determination and fervor, the students have already completed the “print” portion of their penmanship books. I have, therefore, already introduced them to cursive letters—something that I usually save for the first week of Second Grade. In phonics, they have added several long-vowel sounds to their toolkit and begun working on difficult English spelling. They are now accustomed to many spelling patterns such as the “double consonant” before an “ing” or “ed” (e.g. hopped vs. hoped and hopping vs. hoping). They have also given their attention to many of the English contractions (e.g. can’t, won’t, there’s) that appear so often in English speech and literature. I often try to couple the phonics rules and/or vocabulary we are learning in class with a story that we read at the end of class. For instance, we have been enjoying many fables and folktales about foxes after learning about the “long y” sound and the meaning of the word “sly”.

Since our last newsletter, the First Grade has learned three new poems: “The Lord Will Provide” by William Cowper, “Going Downhill on a Bicycle” by Henry Charles Beeching, and “The Seasons of the Year” by Isaac Watts. It is our goal to add a few more to our repertoire before the next poetry night. I was overjoyed to see our First Grade recite their poems on stage recently. This was their first on-stage performance and they really did a lovely job. There is no prouder moment for a First Grade English teacher than to see his students recite their poems with pride and love to our whole community.

from “Going Downhill on a Bicycle”

Alas, that the longest hill
Must end in a vale; but still,
Who climbs with toil, wheresoe’er,
Shall find wings waiting there.

by Henry Charles Beeching

TEACHER: CANTOR PORTNOY

SUBJECT: MUSIC THEORY

The First Grade uses the Grade One text in the excellent series by Heather Rathnau entitled Theory Time. In addition to the comprehensive song curriculum, the children have mastered the musical alphabet, the staff, the keyboard, and the concept of skips and spaces as well as repeated notes.

There is naturally quite a difference in ability between those students that take piano and/or were in this curriculum last year. The small class size does afford me the chance to give a little more attention to newer students, but that does not bridge the gap entirely, and some students are still struggling with the placement of notes on lines and spaces in the treble clef. This has delayed the curriculum progress a bit, but we are working hard to bridge the gap.

TEACHER: MRS. BUTTERWORTH

SUBJECT: STUDIO ART

During the winter trimester in Art class we continued to work on the skills kids had learned earlier in the year;

- students identified simple shapes within complex objects
- created their drawings step by step
- practiced sketching with a light pencil pressure
- disciplined themselves to color evenly and accurately inside the lines
- learned to highlight the main object by keeping the background more subdued

The most memorable topics of this trimester were Two Horsemen: Indian and Cowboy, Boy on a tree, Tiger, and a still-life we titled My Dinner. The students practiced drawing the human body in motion in the Winter Fun series - Skiers, Sledding, Snowman. They also got to practice drawing a car in “Dad brought the Christmas tree”.

We practiced portraits in 3/4 perspective and showing a person sitting at the table and then repeated those topics copying “Girl with Peaches” by V.Serov.

TEACHER: MR. DARER

SUBJECT: SCIENCE & HANDS ON SKILLS

In First Grade Science we finished solving our mystery of why the Atacama desert is so dry (the Andes mountain create a “rain shadow” effect”) and used our knowledge of air pressure and the water cycle to build barometers to try to predict if the next day will be rainy or sunny.

The next science mystery we studied was how parachutes cause someone to fall slowly to the ground. While learning about forces and drawing force diagrams, the students designed, built, and launched their own parachutes for lego figures. They conducted several experiments to see how hard the lego figure hit the ground with and without the parachutes.

We also began measuring the temperature outside each class and recorded this information using a line graph. We recently began our newest mystery of where does the sun go during the night. We first drew pictures predicting where our shadow would be relative to the sun and each student, and then looked outside to observe. We will continue this study into the next trimester.

In Hands on Skills, the students have been learning about tracking and how to identify animal footprints. Through a matching card game, the students know how to identify the tracks of deer, mouse, squirrel, fox, coyote, wolf, mountain lion, bobcat, raccoon, beaver, skunk, opossum, and a badger. They know that animals related to cats and dogs make tracks with four toes, and that cats walk with their claws retracted, leaving no toenail imprints in their tracks (unlike dogs).

We have gone out to the discovery trail to look for tracks. On these outings, we have practiced using the “fox-walk” technique (a slower, quieter way to walk in the woods) in order to be able to not scare away wildlife. We have also practiced using the “wide angle vision” technique which allows us to enhance our awareness of our peripheral vision, permitting us to notice any slight movement in our field of vision, which could likely

be due to an animal moving in the woods.

In addition to all the birds the students learned last trimester, they now can identify a pileated, red-headed woodpecker, white-throated sparrow, and carolina wren. We have also been studying bird songs and the students can identify the songs of a cardinal, chickadee, dark-eyed junco, white-throated sparrow, carolina wren, nuthatch, and mourning dove. Ask them to sing the songs of any of these birds!

TEACHER: DR. FRADKIN

SUBJECT: MATH

The first grade students started off the second trimester with some geometry. After learning the names of some basic shapes, the students practiced drawing them on various dot grids. Next, the students practiced rotating and flipping shapes using the grids. This was often very tricky! For some of the harder problems, the students used a mirror to help them reflect the shapes.

After some geometry, the first graders went back to arithmetic and explored the concepts of multiplication and division. They solved many different problems that involved equal sized groups, either counting the total number in all groups for multiplication or dividing into such groups for division. We discussed how skip-counting, something that we have been doing a lot of since the beginning of the year, can be used to solve both multiplication and division problems.

The last unit of the trimester was devoted to picture charts. We drew a number of charts on the board depicting, for example, the types and numbers of pets that the students had, the students’ favorite colors (the most common favorite color in the first grade is gold!), and the students’ birthday months. Then the students solved some problems based on charts that were given to them.

SECOND GRADE

TEACHER: MR. CHILBERT

SUBJECT: ENGLISH

Second Grade English is a lot of fun. Beyond learning grammar, punctuation, vocabulary, and penmanship, the students also enjoy a healthy dose of poetry and literature. As soon as Poetry Night was over, the students hit the ground running on new poems including, "The Bells" by Edgar Allen Poe and "The Voice of Spring" by Mar Howitt. Whenever the students all successfully memorize a poem, we always find a special place on the school campus to recite it with great celebration. I look forward to seeing which location we pick next.

Over the next few months, the Second Graders will be enjoying a timeless classic, *The Arabian Nights*. We will encounter fearsome tyrants, crafty heroes, and many tales filled with genies, magic, and secret treasure. It is a difficult text, dense with choice vocabulary and even philosophical ideas. We will be working through this slowly and thoroughly so that everyone can enjoy the riches of these tales. Already, the students are familiar with sultans, scimitars, and caravans. Throughout the next few months, I will send the students home with school copies of the book in order to re-read some of the stories we read in class. I hope that you enjoy these sweet moments at home with your growing readers.

TEACHER: MS. EMILY WOO

SUBJECT: STORYTIME

The Second Graders are reading *Stuart Little* by E.B. White. They are excellent listeners and have greatly enjoyed the story. By the time the newsletter comes out, I think we will have finished the book (or will be almost done). We have been reinforcing the story by playing review games, in which I ask the students questions about what happened in the story. After the chapter about Stuart's boat race, we also made tin foil boats to see if they could float. Thank you, Second Grade for such an enjoyable time together!

TEACHER: MME. NSELEL

SUBJECT: FRENCH

Since my last newsletter, students in Second grade have completed 11 lessons of the Syntalk method Book D (*Gérard et ses copains*). We continue to focus on speaking and listening skills as well as spelling. Students use their own white boards to practice spelling words before writing them again in their notebooks. These lessons introduced/reviewed school supplies, familiar objects, foods, different types of stores, being thirsty/hungry/cold/hot, etc.

Learning so many new verbs has provided opportunity for practicing interrogative sentences and their answers. Students also get to use negative sentences every time a new verb is introduced or reviewed. The verbs we have practiced since November include: to have, to need, to write, to read, to work, to use, to do/make, to take, to come, and to be. In addition to using those when describing what the characters from the book are doing, I dialogue more and more with the individual student by asking him or her in French the same questions (Do you have a backpack? Do you work at home? Do you make crêpes? Are you hungry? Are you cold? Are you French?)

We added another fable to our "repertoire": *Le Corbeau et le Renard* by Jean de La Fontaine. I'm very pleased with how much the class was able to memorize and recite. Some of this trimester's songs were *Vive le Vent*, *Compère Guilleri*, and *Pirouette Cacahuète*.

In addition to our regular 4 weekly classes, I get to see the students in French Enrichment. This is an opportunity to reinforce the vocabulary/grammar learned through games and activities such as, Spot the Odd One out, riddles, I Spy, Pictionary, Memory game, word search, hangman, True/False, verbs competition, etc.. Students also get a chance to illustrate the lyrics of the songs learned the past weeks. Another focus of Enrichment is reviewing periodically what I call "class routines" such as how to say in French "can I go to the bathroom?", "can I drink some water?", "can I sharpen my pencil?", "can I change my mask?", "can I get a tissue?", "can I look at the schedule?", etc.



TEACHER: MR. GORMLEY
 SUBJECT: HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY

So far this trimester, we've worked our way through some of the New Kingdom of Egypt, especially the reign of Amenhotep IV (or Akhenaton) and Hatshepsut. We discussed Howard Carter and the discovery of King Tut's tomb.

Turning to some other situations worthy of note we learned of the Phoenicians and Dido's mythological founding of Carthage as well as the various trades of glass blowing and cloak dying in which they excelled. Thereafter we spent some time on the Minoans.

What has really gotten them interested most of all of late however is Greek mythology and history. We don't spend so much time on the former, since they get that elsewhere, but I've been giving them samples of the more mature history we'll be reading next year, e.g. Herodotus, Thucydides, and Plutarch. It certainly has them eager to hear more. Currently, we'll begin to wrap that up, studying Alexander. From there we'll move on to a similar sampling of Roman history in preparation for the years to come.

TEACHER: CANTOR PORTNOY
 SUBJECT: HEBREW & JUDAIC STUDIES

The Gur Aryeh K-2 students in this class now recognize all the letters and vowels in the alphabet and can read Hebrew competently if slowly. Therefore, for the balance of the year, we no longer need rely on transliteration for any part of the curriculum. This is truly a "tzad kadima" (big step!).

The students learned a comprehensive song curriculum for Tu Bishvat, and have assimilated the concept of Leap Year. Because this is such an elongated year, we did a preliminary unit on Pesach, then turned to Purim, and we shall return to Passover after the break. All the students have memorized the parts of the Seder, the Ha Lachma and Four Questions (in three different versions) and the Avadeem Hayinu. In addition to Purim songs, they know the brachot preceding the reading of the Megillah and have been exposed to the traditional "trope" of Megillat Esther. In addition, the children continue to review the Hebrew dates and calendar mastery. We also continue regular celebration of Shabbat on Friday morning and Rosh Chodesh on the appropriate dates.

TEACHER: RABBI SINENSKY

SUBJECT: JUDAIC STUDIES

Judaic Studies combines prayer with advanced study of the holidays, the weekly Torah portion, and introduction to the arc of Jewish history.

Prayer runs for approximately 20-25 minutes, and comprises an engaging mix of joint recitation, singing, reading with the cantillation, and silent recitation of the Amidah (standing) prayer.

Following prayer, on Monday through Thursday we have rotated units between studying the holidays and an introduction to Jewish history, with an emphasis on offering an orientation to the Written and Oral traditions. Students take extensive notes, which are structured in a clear, tight outline form to facilitate comprehension and retention.

Each Friday we review the weekly Torah portion, summarizing the contents of each chapter. This enables students to develop a comprehensive understanding of not only each portion but also of the continuity of subject matter from chapter to chapter.

TEACHER: MRS. BUTTERWORTH

SUBJECT: VIOLIN ENSEMBLE

Second grade students had a very productive trimester in the Violin Ensemble. They learned two songs, "Mazurka" and "He's a Pirate", and 2 matching scales, D major and D minor, which help them to understand the correct finger pattern.

These children are great workers; the very complicated Mazurka is already connected and recognizable, and the children can play it with the accompaniment. In "He's a Pirate" we are using low 1st and 4th fingers for the first time, and already they have learned more than half of the song.

Generally I am satisfied with their hands position, sound quality and clearer intonation.

TEACHER: DR. FRADKIN

SUBJECT: MATH

The second grade class began the second trimester with the topic of measurement, more specifically measuring length. They began by making their own rulers using their thumbs or pointers as a unit. After measuring objects with the different rulers and getting different measurements for the same object, the students saw the need for standard units. We also discussed why it is important to have units of many different sizes. The students then measured many objects in inches and centimeters. They finished off the unit solving many conversion problems, both in standard units (inches, feet, and yards) and metric ones.

The second unit of the trimester was devoted to learning strategies for evaluating intricate expressions involving addition and subtraction. The students explored how terms can often be rearranged or combined to simplify calculations. Here are two examples of expressions that the students worked with: $49 - 33 + 99 + 33 - 100$ and $(13+14+15+16+17)-(14+15+16)$.

The final unit of the trimester was on the topic of odds and evens. The students explored how to tell whether an expression will evaluate to being odd or even without computing it and solved many tricky problems and puzzles where parity was the key to solving.

TEACHER: CANTOR PORTNOY
SUBJECT: MUSIC THEORY

It is difficult for me to say enough about this group of children, each of them a potentially outstanding musician. Although they began the year with the Grade Two text in the Heather Rathnau Theory Time curriculum, they have nearly finished the text and will be ready for the Grade Three textbook soon after break.

In addition to the usual technical requirements such as note identification, familiarity with note and rest values, steps and skips, facility in both treble and bass clefs, they are adept at sight singing and keyboard sight-reading even at this early age. Without many errors, they can by and large pick out a familiar tune like "My Country 'Tis of Thee" on the keyboard in almost any key.

They are beginning to intuit the tonic, subdominant and dominant chords, even if they do not use those terms yet. Their singing is incredibly accurate and dedicated. I credit this unusual performance to the fact that they had this curriculum last year and/or they take piano. Whatever the reason, they are an unusual group.

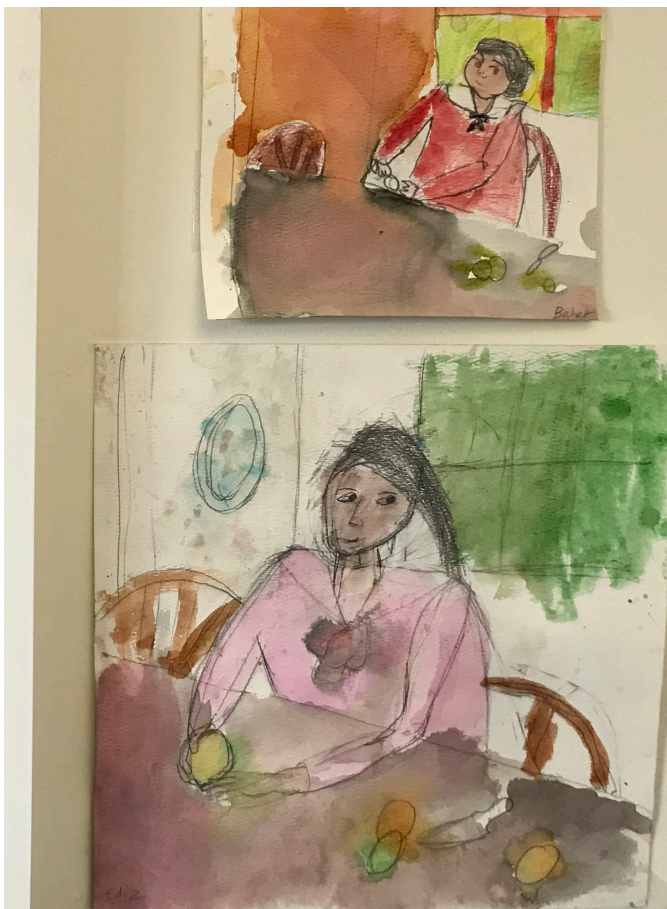
TEACHER: MRS. BUTTERWORTH
SUBJECT: STUDIO ART

By the During the winter trimester in Art class, we continued to work on the skills the students had learned earlier in the year:

- students identified simple shapes within complex objects
- created their drawings step by step
- practiced sketching with a light pencil pressure
- disciplined themselves to color evenly and accurately inside the lines
- learned to highlight the main object by keeping the background more subdued

The most exciting and memorable pictures of this trimester were Two Horsemen: Indian and Cowboy, Boy on a Tree, Frog with Umbrella, and a still-life we titled My Dinner. The students practiced drawing the human body in motion in the Winter Fun series - Skiers, Sledging, Snowman. They also got to practice drawing a car in "Dad brought the Christmas tree".

We practiced drawing portraits in 3/4 perspective and showing a person sitting at the table, and then put those lessons to work copying "Girl with Peaches" by V.Serov.



"Girl with Peaches" interpreted by (clockwise from top) Bahar Kemiktarak, V. Serov and Ediz Goktas.

TEACHER: MR. DARER

SUBJECT: SCIENCE & HANDS ON SKILLS

In Second Grade Science we began the trimester by learning about crystals. The students examined the shape of salt and sugar crystals under a magnifying glass. We then discussed a few geometric shapes of crystals and the lattice structure of different crystals. The students then modeled quartz and salt crystals using playdough for the atoms and toothpicks for the bonds. The class grew both salt and sugar crystals, and observed how their shapes are different.

Next, we studied life cycles and discussed the life cycle stages that insects undergo. The students studied both complete and incomplete metamorphosis through class discussions and a "go bug" matching game where they had to collect sets that included all the stages of an insect's life cycle.

We then learned about stars and discussed how stars are formed and what they are composed of. As part of this unit, the students made constellation lanterns out of cups that project different constellations onto a surface. The students also learned about latitude and built latitude locators to determine our latitude based on the angle of the north star to the horizon.

We continued this astronomy unit by learning about what causes the phases of the moon through class discussions, demonstrations, videos, and worksheets. The students first shared what they knew about the moon and moon phases, then we watched a video of a full moon rising and setting over the course of a night and noticed that it rises in the east and sets in the west just like the sun. We are now exploring what causes the different apparent shapes of the moon by modeling the sun, moon, earth system using a lamp, tennis ball, and our nose (for the view from earth), and observing how much of the moon looks like it is lit up when viewed from earth for different positions.

In Hands on Skills, the students have been learning about tracking and how to identify animal footprints. Through a matching card game, the students know how to identify the tracks of deer, mouse, squirrel, fox, coyote, wolf, mountain lion, bobcat, raccoon, beaver, skunk, opossum, and a badger. They know that animals related to cats and dogs make tracks with four toes, and that

cats walk with their claws retracted, leaving no toenail imprints in their tracks (unlike dogs).

We have gone out to the discovery trail to look for tracks. On these outings, we have practiced using the "fox-walk" technique (a slower, quieter way to walk in the woods) in order to be able to not scare away wild-life. We have also practiced using the "wide angle vision" technique which allows us to enhance our awareness of our peripheral vision, permitting us to notice any slight movement in our field of vision, which could likely be due to an animal moving in the woods.

In addition to all the birds the students learned last trimester, they now can identify a pileated woodpecker, red-headed woodpecker, white-throated sparrow, and carolina wren. We have also been studying bird songs and the students can identify the songs of a cardinal, chickadee, dark-eyed junco, white-throated sparrow, carolina wren, nuthatch, and mourning dove. Ask them to sing the songs of any of these birds!

TEACHER: MR. SHTUHL

SUBJECT: HEBREW

Students started the year with no Hebrew knowledge, so we must make sure to create a solid foundation. We continue reading and learning the letters. By this point, students know all the letters, and are engaged in cursive writing. We use Friends in Hebrew part 1. The emphasis in the book is on the children's reading and learning key words in Hebrew by responding to questions about the passage or about themselves.

I print song lyrics for the students and we read them, translate them and listen to the songs. We correlate the music with the coming holidays, so right now we are listening to Purim songs.

With all the new material, we cannot forget the vocabulary from the previous semester, and occasionally we go back, and test ourselves.

THIRD GRADE

TEACHER: MS. EMILY WOO

SUBJECT: ENGLISH & STORYTIME

The Third Graders have been diligent workers in English class this trimester. We have been working on mastering the following six facets of the English language: reading, writing, poetics, grammar, spelling/vocabulary, and penmanship.

Every week begins with a dictation in which I read aloud five sentences for the students to write. They are graded on accuracy, spelling, punctuation, and application of grammar rules we learned the previous week. I also look for improvements in handwriting.

For reading, the students read one to two short stories or poems per week and answer comprehension questions based on the reading. On Tuesdays and Fridays this trimester, we read through *Tales from the Odyssey* by Mary Pope Osborne as a class. We reinforced the story by playing review games. At home, students read *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood* by Howard Pyle, *My Side of the Mountain* by Jean Craighead George, *Island of the Blue Dolphins* by Scott O'Dell, or *The Jungle Book* by Rudyard Kipling. On select Fridays, we broke off into our reading groups to discuss the chapters of the books we read at home.

For writing, the students were introduced to paragraphs in January and are practicing writing them clearly. We try to write at least one expository paragraph a week. On Wednesdays, students spent twenty to thirty minutes free writing. They are wonderfully creative and have fun writing their own stories.

This trimester, we memorized three poems: "Dandelion" by Hilda Conkling, "Amiens' Song" from *As You Like It* by William Shakespeare, and "Against Idleness and Mischief" by Isaac Watts. The students also participated in our first Poetry Night of the year, reciting poems they memorized at home and practiced in class.

Lastly, we are learning more about English grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and penmanship. We learned how to use quotations and commas correctly in a sentence, and are focusing now on plural and past tense verbs.

Each week we learn a new group of words that all share the same characteristic sound (phonics). Students are memorizing twenty-four spelling words every month. We also practice our penmanship during class and are working hard to write in cursive neatly and correctly.

All in all, we cover a lot of ground during English class, and it is only possible because of the focus and hard work of the students. I have seen immense progress from them this trimester!

We have covered seven review lessons of phonics sounds since the beginning of the year. Each lesson has included reading practice with each of these sounds. We have also encountered informative reading selections about ancient people and characters such as Aesop, Socrates, Alexander the Great, and Damocles. We have begun our first round of spelling practice and quizzes. As the students may have shared with you at home, I give them several exercises to choose from in order to fulfill their quota of spelling practice.

TEACHER: MS. EMILY WOO

SUBJECT: CHRISTIAN STUDIES

The Third Grade Christian Studies class has concluded our study of the book of Mark, in which we learned about the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

To supplement the Bible lessons, the students have also been memorizing the books of the New Testament, making crafts, doing fun activities together, and playing review games. We also have wonderful discussions about the significance of what we are reading; the students have insightful questions!

We will continue through the New Testament with a study of the book of Acts. I am grateful for the time we spend together!

TEACHER: MME. NSELEL

SUBJECT: FRENCH

Since my previous newsletter, students in Third grade have completed 7 lessons of the Symtalk method Book E (Le Français en images). Like in previous years, students work on their speaking, listening and writing/spelling skills equally. The differences are the length and structure of the sentences: longer and more complex. For instance, they practice using "parce que" (because) and "mais" (but) to explain or nuance a character's action (or when they are talking about themselves). New vocabulary learned this trimester includes clothing and accessories, school supplies, modes of transportation, etc...

Students have memorized or reviewed 15 verbs, many of them with irregular conjugation (avoir, savoir, devoir, comprendre, pouvoir). I regularly quiz them on the memorization of these verbs. We recently worked on how to say the time in French (quelle heure est-il?).

We added another fable to our "repertoire": La Cigale et la Fourmi by Jean de La Fontaine. Many of the students were already familiar with the moral of the story based on Aesop's The Ant and the Grasshopper. I'm sure you heard your student practicing at home! Everyone got a chance to recite it in front of the class and I was impressed with most of the performances!

In addition to our regular 4 weekly classes, I get to see most of the students in French Enrichment twice a week. This is an opportunity for reinforcing the vocabulary learned through games and activities such as Memory game, word search, hangman, crossword puzzles, spot the odd one out, Kim's game, true/false, riddles, verb competitions, very short skits, etc... Students also get a chance to illustrate the lyrics of the songs/poems learned the past weeks. Once they are finished with their drawings, they have to describe them to the class.

Another part of Enrichment is reviewing periodically what I call "class routines" such as how to say in French "can I go to the bathroom?", "can I drink some water?", "can I sharpen my pencil?", "can I look at the schedule?", "can I get a tissue?", "how do we say...?", "how do we spell...?", etc.

TEACHER: CANTOR PORTNOY

SUBJECT: MUSIC THEORY

This is an outstanding group of students, some of whom could easily grow up to become professional musicians. They are by and large instinctually musical, and have built upon the excellent work they did last year to embrace and master elementary musical concepts such as key identification, note placement and value, ease with the use of rests, steps and skips, sharps and flats. Beyond that, they by and large "feel" they way music ought to "go", and some of them bring outstanding keyboard skills to their theory work, an incredible advantage.

TEACHER: MR. SHTUHL

SUBJECT: HEBREW

This semester we put more emphasis on speaking the language. Hebrew does not easily "roll" on the tongue, and completing a sentence is like a tongue twister. We created cards with everyday conversational expressions, and frequently test ourselves with them.

This semester we paid more attention to correct Hebrew. The grammar of Hebrew is not as simple as the English: each verb can be said in one of seven different forms. Adding to the complexity is the need to further break down the verbs according to gender and whether they are singular or plural.

For reading & writing, we use the work book Friends in Hebrew part 3. It combines short stories with class work that enhances and tests our reading comprehension.



Mr. Darer and the third grade class prepare the garden beds for a new season. Pictured here (from left) Agnes Sigelman, Francesco Grigoli, Cylena Witoslawski, Mr. Darer, June Winfield and Viktor Berta.

TEACHER: RABBI SINENSKY
SUBJECT: JUDAIC STUDIES

Judaic Studies combines prayer with advanced study of the holidays, the weekly Torah portion, and introduction to the arc of Jewish history.

Prayer runs for approximately 20-25 minutes, and comprises an engaging mix of joint recitation, singing, reading with the cantillation, and silent recitation of the Amidah (standing) prayer.

Following prayer, on Monday through Thursday we have rotated units between studying the holidays and an introduction to Jewish history, with an emphasis on offering an orientation to the Written and Oral traditions. Students take extensive notes, which are structured in a clear, tight outline form to facilitate comprehension and retention.

Each Friday we review the weekly Torah portion, summarizing the contents of each chapter. This enables students to develop a comprehensive understanding of not only each portion but also of the continuity of subject matter from chapter to chapter.

TEACHER: MR. MURDOCH
SUBJECT: STUDIO ART

In the second semester of the year we are building on the first semester foundation of accurate shape, proportion and practicing a layered drawing process. While continuing to explore the fundamentals, we have added pastel chalk and colored pencil on larger format paper.

Students have drawn a variety of subjects including portrait busts, still life objects in class, Rembrandt copies of landscape drawings, a Leonardo DaVinci horse drawing, and unicorns.. Each class is also starting with a quick sketch in their sketchbooks which tests the students ability and is a valuable gauge of improvement through the year. Old master artwork has been used to support and broaden the students experience of art and aim at a higher level of performance.

I am pleased to report the class has uniformly improved their ability to draw what they see in an efficient manner. The students ask good questions, are attentive to their work and display good problem solving ability.

TEACHER: DR. FRADKIN

SUBJECT: MATH

The first unit of the 2nd trimester in third grade math was skip counting. Skip-counting not only lays the foundation for multiplication, but also encourages students to look for patterns and ask questions about why they are there. For example, why do you only say numbers that end in even digits when you skip count by an even number (and only odd ones if you start the skip counting at an odd number)? Why does the ones digit repeat every 10 numbers when skip counting by 3, 7 or 9 (regardless of where you start from!)? The questions and patterns are endless and exploring each one leads to a slightly better understanding of numbers.

The second unit was devoted to the concepts of Perimeter and Area. The students 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 and area of rectilinear shapes that are not rectangles.

For the third unit of the trimester, the third grade students explored multiplication. They practiced multiplying numbers up to 10 by solving a variety of problems and puzzles. They also learned to multiply numbers that end in one or more zero. We then discussed the commutative and associative properties of multiplication and how to use them to simplify certain computations.

Finally, after becoming comfortable with single-digit multiplication, the third graders learned about the distributive property. The main focus was on exploring how one can use the property to help with certain more complicated computations.

The students quickly became comfortable with breaking up 18×7 into 10×7 and 8×7 and then adding the partial products. However, they had a somewhat harder time seeing how to use the distributive property in the other direction.

For example, in order to compute how much money I have if I have 19 quarters and 25 pennies, it is much more work to figure out 19×25 and then add 25 than just notice that 25 pennies gives us another quarter and so the answer is 20×25 cents or \$5.00. Similarly, when we're computing $17 \times 8 + 17 \times 12$, we want to simplify our computation by using the distributive property and re-writing the computation as 17×20 .

TEACHER: MR. GORMLEY

SUBJECT: HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY

This trimester we finished up the backstory of Persia and how Darius came to power. Now we're almost finished with the Persian Wars. The children seemed to enjoy giving their respective speeches on which form of government is best. The majority seemed to favor democracy in the classic sense, although several altered their position to something closer to our modern form of representative democracy, unlike what Darius and the others chose. Interestingly, at this point in Herodotus' narrative, he also suggests that "Custom is King," meaning that nearly everyone sees the habits of their own people as obviously better than those of others. The results of our speeches appear to confirm his assertion.

Since our speeches, we've been going over the story of the trouble-maker of Miletus - Aristagoras. He attempted to cover up a failed raid on the island of Naxos, not by fleeing or making excuses, but by starting a revolt. The revolt led to Athenian involvement and the burning of the temple at Sardis (the regional capital of that part of Persia), which in turn led Darius' invasion of Greece at the battle of Marathon. It's always curious to me that such momentous events can have such unlikely beginnings.

We're currently finishing Xerxes' invasion of Greece and will shortly begin our study of the Peloponnesian Wars. We'll end with Alexander the Great and his conquest of Persia.

TEACHER: MR. DARER

SUBJECT: SCIENCE & HANDS ON SKILLS

In Third Grade Science, we began the trimester by learning about crystals. The students examined the shape of salt and sugar crystals under a magnifying glass. We then discussed a few geometric shapes of crystals and the lattice structure of different crystals. The students then modeled quartz and salt crystals using playdough for the atoms and toothpicks for the bonds. The class also grew both salt and sugar crystals, and observed how their shapes are different.

We next studied ecosystems and built terrariums that incorporate the different parts of an ecosystem. The class also tapped maple trees at school to make maple syrup and learned about the biology and chemistry of this process. We spent some time on the discovery trail practicing scientific sketching and even dissected scat (likely fox or raccoon) found on the discovery trail to see what the animal ate. We found several berry seeds in the scat and plan to plant the seeds in the spring to determine what species of plants the animal ate.

We then reviewed what is a force and had a class discussion on friction. We 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, plastic wrap, and construction paper 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 learned about stars and discussed how stars are formed and what they are composed of. As part of this unit, the students made constellation lanterns out of cups that project different constellations onto a surface. The students also built latitude locators to determine our latitude based on the angle of the north star to the horizon, as well as big dipper clocks that can tell the time based on the month and position of the big dipper, north star, and Cassiopeia constellation.

In Hands on Skills, the students have been learning about tracking and how to identify animal footprints.

Through a matching card game, the students know how to identify the tracks of deer, mouse, squirrel, fox, coyote, wolf, mountain lion, bobcat, raccoon, beaver, skunk, opossum, and a badger. They know that animals related to cats and dogs make tracks with four toes, and that cats walk with their claws retracted, leaving no toenail imprints in their tracks (unlike dogs).

We have gone out to the discovery trail to look for tracks. On these outings, we have practiced using the "fox-walk" technique (a slower, quieter way to walk in the woods) in order to not scare away wildlife. We have also practiced using the "wide angle vision" technique which allows us to enhance our awareness of our peripheral vision, permitting us to notice any slight movement in our field of vision, which could likely be due to an animal moving in the woods. We have been reading Tom Brown Jr's "Tracker" book and Tom Brown Jr's "Field Guide to Nature and Survival for Children" to learn more about animal tracking and how to build a debris shelter.

In addition to all the birds the students learned last trimester, they now can identify a pileated woodpecker, red-headed woodpecker, white-throated sparrow, and carolina wren. We have also been studying bird songs and the students can identify the songs of a cardinal, chickadee, dark-eyed junco, white-throated sparrow, carolina wren, nuthatch, and mourning dove. Ask them to sing the songs of any of these birds!

TEACHER: MRS. BUTTERWORTH

SUBJECT: VIOLIN ENSEMBLE

Third grade students had a very productive trimester in the violin ensemble. They learned "He's a Pirate", Jack Sparrow's theme song from Pirates of the Caribbean. In this song for the first time we use the low 1st and 4th finger, so we also have learned a matching D-minor scale to help them become more confident with the fingering pattern. The children already have completed learning all parts of the song and after spring break we will work on sound quality and increasing tempo.

FOURTH GRADE

TEACHER: MR. CIALINI

SUBJECT: LATIN

We continued to progress through “An Introduction to Languages” having learned the following this trimester: Latin adverbs, prepositional phrases, ways to ask questions, first, second, and third person subject and object personal pronouns, the first, second, and third persons of the verb, conjunctions, the second and third conjugations, the verb “to be” in the present tense, transitive and intransitive verbs, linking verbs, predicate adjectives, the dative case and indirect objects, interrogative pronouns and adverbs, and finally the imperative mood of the verb.

By now the students know three of the five noun cases—the nominative, accusative, and dative—their endings in the first and second declensions, and they can readily identify the case, number, and gender of nouns, pronouns, and adjectives. Additionally they can conjugate verbs of the first, second, and third conjugations in the present tense and can identify a verb’s conjugation in the dictionary form. We spent a good deal of time translating from English to Latin and vice versa—the latter being more difficult but more fruitful. The students have enjoyed these challenges and have been eager to put sentences together themselves, which I’ve welcomed. Sentences have become considerably longer now that we can join clauses together using basic conjunctions, et (and), aut (or) and sed (but).

I’ve also included some spoken Latin and famous Latin sayings into our class time. We have a call and response in Latin, for example, which gets the students’ attention: I say, *Auscultate me* (Listen to me) and the students respond, *Auscultamus* (We are listening). The students particularly look forward to the Latin saying of the day and are sure to remind me if I forget. One saying comes to mind from Seneca: *non semper erit aestas*. “It will not always be summer.” In other words, be prepared for hard times.

TEACHER: MR. GORMLEY

SUBJECT: HISTORY

This trimester we learned of the capture of the city of Veii and the invasion of Rome by the Gauls. Livy’s narratives of each make for quite a bit of excitement. The two are tied together in that the famous consul and later dictator Camillus plays a decisive role in both. Despite his notable victory in the case of the former, he left Rome in self-exile due to partisan complaints that he promised a portion of the plunder to be set aside for religious matters. The people also thought he was comparing himself to Jupiter during his triumph, which made them suspicious. When later the Gauls arrive in a terrible and somewhat unexpected horde, the Romans were ill prepared and lacking good leadership. Fortunately for the Romans, Camillus was not willing to watch his native city suffer while he sat idly by. As an experienced general, Camillus recognized that the Gauls, while fearsome, were undisciplined. This allowed him to ambush them and reduce their numbers. In time, it put him in a position to help the few Romans who remained who held out against the Gauls.

I was reminded in all this why studying the characters involved in history is so important. For all Camillus’ prudence, leadership, piety, and valor, the citizens of Rome were relatively indifferent to him, if not suspicious, after his first major victory. The masses certainly can be fickle. What hope is there if the people won’t accept or recognize good leadership or virtue when they see it? Camillus could have easily let Rome fall entirely. He probably even wanted to out of spite, yet... he didn’t. He did what had to be done even though he had every excuse not to and there might not have been any reward even in a second chance. There’s something distinctly Roman about that and if a little bit of it rubs off on the students, they’ll benefit by it.

We’ve finished the Italian and Pyrrhic Wars recently as well. Currently we’re working our way through the Punic Wars and the exciting account of Hannibal crossing the Alps.

TEACHER: MR. DARER

SUBJECT: SCIENCE

This trimester the Fourth Grade has been learning about ecosystems, graphing, experimental design and variables, and wildlife that live at school.

We began the trimester by studying what makes up an ecosystem and exploring different food webs. The students learned about how energy is transferred along a food web while learning key vocabulary words and concepts such as trophic levels, producer, primary consumers, secondary consumer, types of population growth curves (linear, exponential increase/decrease...), pyramid of numbers, and pyramid of biomass. We also built terrariums as part of this unit.

The class then first watched a video about urban foxes and completed a worksheet on the dynamic relationship between fox and coyote populations. Next, we learned about a study where scientists analyzed the food source for fox pups and measured the pups' weight over several months. The students practiced making bar graphs and line graphs to analyze this data before completing a worksheet where they had to put their analyses into well formed statements and conclusions.

Students then each chose an animal that the trail camera recorded on the discovery trail (white-tailed deer, red fox, eastern coyote, racoon, chipmunk, opossum, cottontail rabbit, gray squirrel, striped skunk) and wrote a paragraph long description that included where the animal lives, what it looks like, and other important details. These descriptions, along with the animals' footprints and discovery trail picture are all on display in the front lobby at MLCA.

We finished this trimester by analyzing different graph patterns and matching up statements to the corresponding graph and then completed a worksheet where the students read an experiment on how the boldness or shyness of bluegill fish affect their length, weight, and survival. During this activity, the students made predictions, analyzed the data, and made claims based on the data. They also had to identify the independent and dependent variables in the experiments.

TEACHER: RABBI SINENSKY

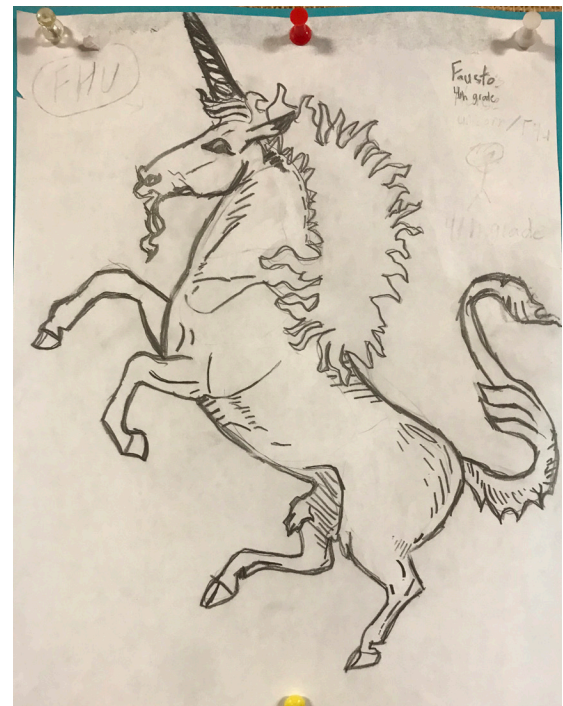
SUBJECT: JUDAIC STUDIES

Judaic Studies combines prayer with advanced study of the holidays, the weekly Torah portion, and introduction to the arc of Jewish history.

Prayer runs for approximately 20-25 minutes, and comprises an engaging mix of joint recitation, singing, reading with the cantillation, and silent recitation of the Amidah (standing) prayer.

Following prayer, on Monday through Thursday we have rotated units between studying the holidays and an introduction to Jewish history, with an emphasis on offering an orientation to the Written and Oral traditions. Students take extensive notes, which are structured in a clear, tight outline form to facilitate comprehension and retention.

Each Friday we review the weekly Torah portion, summarizing the contents of each chapter. This enables students to develop a comprehensive understanding of not only each portion but also of the continuity of subject matter from chapter to chapter.



Unicorn by fourth grader Fausto Ferreira

TEACHER: DR. TASSONE

SUBJECT: ENGLISH

Literature and Reading: The main literary work we focused on was Kenneth Grahame's 1908 novel *The Wind in the Willows*. We read Grahame's novel in its entirety and analyzed its plot. Special focus was placed on the themes of friendship, social responsibility and exploring the vices and virtues manifested by the individual characters throughout the book.

Besides discussions of the plot, various creative activities were, once again, assigned to the fourth grade class. Among these activities was decoration of the novel's central protagonists (Mole, Rat, Toad and Badger). The students were given outlines of each respective animal and told to embellish each character to reflect its personality and lifestyle. Student's engaged in close readings of individual chapters of the book and its various sub-plots to find select adjectives and descriptions used by the author to highlight the different personalities of the characters. We also examined how the different houses of each character are described in the book and how their diverse living abodes reflect the different personalities and values of the characters.

A highlight of our semester was the writing of a short play (subsequently acted out in class by students in groups of four). The plays attempted to bring to life dramatic accounts of how the remaining animals would break Toad out of jail and release him from an unfair prison sentence. In sum, the creative activities were connected to the central themes of the novel and allowed the students to better explore the plot and gain deeper insight into the subtleties of Grahame's story.

Other, shorter, works read this trimester included: select stories from Aesop's Fables, Henry A. Sherman and Charles Foster Kent's *The Children's Bible*, "Character Building Stories" from Sabbath Readings for the Home Circle, Rudyard Kipling's 'Just So' stories, and *Stories of Abraham Lincoln* by Francis Fischer Browne, among others.

Writing: The main writing assignment this trimester was the response essay to the novel *The Wind in the Willows*. The structure of formal essay writing was discussed in class. The students were also taught the differences between a thesis and a topic sentence, and between an

introduction, a body and a conclusion and the role these aspects of writing play in a formal essay. Finally, we explored the process of gathering evidence from a literary text and properly citing authors.

Grammar and Vocabulary: The vocabulary exercises for this trimester continued to focus on both expansion of student lexicon and improvement of spelling. I conducted weekly spelling tests on words taken from that week's literature selections. This overlap allowed the students to expand their vocabulary as well as better appreciate the reading. Grade four study of formal grammar this trimester included: adjectives, adverbs, pronoun agreement, subordinating conjunctions and proper use of prepositions, prepositional phrases and quotation marks.

Poetry and Poetics: Besides exploring poems from various literary periods, this trimester the fourth grade students focused on obtaining a better understanding of poetics and the mechanics of poetic writing. Weekly homework assignments on various aspects of poetic writing were part of the curriculum this trimester. Topics included: irony and oxymoron, synecdoche, metonymy, word stress, music in poetry, lambs, poetic terms derived from Greek and scansion. On top of the poetics homework, poems examined in class, to which the poetics exercises were applied, included poems by: William Wordsworth ("Lines Written in March"), Robert Frost ("The Road Not Taken"), two poems by George Herbert ("Easter Wings" and "The Altar"), Emily Dickinson's "Dawn", William Carlos Williams, "This is Just to Say", and the Romantic Poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge's poem "Kublai Khan".

On February 24th, 2022 the MLCA Winter Poetry Night was held. The grade four students were encouraged to pick their own poems to recite for the event and they practiced the poems both at home and in class.

TEACHER: M. PORTIER
SUBJECT: FRENCH

This semester has been devoted to the study of a tale by Perrault, and the ability to speak and write about oneself. The students also memorized three new poems, one celebrating the return of spring, a rondeau written by Charles d'Orléans. The students have deepened their understanding of the theme we have been practicing during the entire school year: Parler de Soi et du Quotidien by listening to audio documents and class conversations. We covered many subjects in grammar related to these main topics: direct and indirect object pronouns, les adjectifs démonstratifs, les adjectifs possessifs and le passé composé.



Fourth graders Finn Myers, Alexander Bull, Elijah Mencin and Alex Weinstein enjoy picnicing on the playground hill

TEACHER: MRS. RICE
SUBJECT: HISTORY OF ART

The fourth grade Art History class spent the second Trimester studying Roman architecture.

Our focus began with the engineering feats enabled by the Romans' mastery of opus caementicium, cement work, and the extraordinary structural properties of the Roman arch. We talked about the importance of aqueducts and bridges like the Pont du Garre to the expansion of the Roman empire, and of the genius of circular structures like the colosseum to contain the outward thrust of the building's own weight.

Most of our time, though, was spent considering two buildings: the Pantheon and the Basilica of Maxentius and Constantine. In addition to the engineering feats underlying these immense, enclosed spaces, we talked about the use of architecture as a political tool to inspire "shock and awe". Through the incorporation of colossal sculpture, the implied subtext of location and orientation, geometric symbols incorporated into the design, and the overt juxtaposition of gods and emperors, the Romans used their engineering genius to conquer not only the armies of their enemies, but also the hearts and minds of their subjects.

TEACHER: MRS. ANMUTH
SUBJECT: PROGRAMMING

Fourth graders continue their exploration into the world of Scratch programming. Utilizing the Scratch website and resources, students choose strategies to best accomplish the goals of a particular program. They are incorporating timer and score variables to bring their programming to a new level. They are learning about conditional and infinite loops (repeat until, forever, if then, sensing) and deciding where and when to utilize them.

Students are taking their programming skills to the next level. They are designing and programming their own mazes and obstacle courses and differentiating between horizontal and vertical movement to guide their sprites into jumping, stepping and turning. They are creating multi screen projects. They are coding the duplication of sprites via cloning. They are using event driven programming for movement based on keyboard input and mouse interaction. Students enjoy combining acquired skills with new challenges and are making excellent progress along the programming path.

TEACHER: MS. EMILY WOO
SUBJECT: CHRISTIAN STUDIES

The Fourth Grade Christian Studies class has covered much Biblical history this trimester. For the past four months, the students have been studying accounts from the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, and 1 Samuel. We started this trimester with Moses & the Exodus from Egypt, then learned about Joshua and the conquest of Canaan, and continued with the Judges, and the Kings Saul, David, and Solomon.

To supplement each Bible lesson, we play review games, have discussions, make posters, or make crafts like the tabernacle. We are also memorizing the books of the Old Testament in order and the students had the option to memorize a psalm. I am grateful for the time we get to spend together in the morning!

TEACHER: MRS. TER-SAAKOV
SUBJECT: MATH

The fourth grade students are working hard, moving forward steadily and surely. Students got familiar with concepts of counting this year, setting a base for future study of combinatorics. This material is quite advanced for 4th grade, but students did grasp the concepts of tree diagrams, factorials when counting permutations, and counting pairs.

The chapters of Division, Factors, and Fractions contained more traditional material, but each had some challenges. Students got the foundations of long division, and an overview of divisibility rules. We also discovered how prime factorization can be helpful when we are trying to determine if one number is divisible by another. Students polished their skills on adding and subtracting fractions with the same denominator and mixed numbers involving such fractions. Next year we'll come back to the topics of Factors and Fractions to learn how to find the common denominator and use it in adding and subtracting.

Students are demonstrating progress in their working habits, making sure to go back and perform corrections as needed, and explaining their solutions. They love working in small groups and brainstorming harder problems together.

Dawn

When night is almost done,
And sunrise grows so near
That we can touch the spaces,
It 's time to smooth the hair

And get the dimples ready,
And wonder we could care
For that old faded midnight
That frightened but an hour.

by Emily Dickinson



MLCA fourth graders (from left) Elijah Mencia, Nadiya Posner, Fausto Ferreira, and Zoe Fradkin show off their portraits of characters from *The Wind in the Willows*.

TEACHER: MR. SHTUHL

SUBJECT: HEBREW

This semester we put more emphasis on speaking the language. Hebrew does not easily “roll” on the tongue, and completing a sentence is like a tongue twister. We created cards with everyday conversational expressions, and frequently test ourselves with them.

This semester we paid more attention to correct Hebrew. The grammar of Hebrew is not as simple as the English: each verb can be said in one of seven different forms. Adding to the complexity is the need to further break down the verbs according to gender and whether they are singular or plural.

For reading & writing, we use the work book *Friends in Hebrew part 3*. It combines short stories with class work that enhances and tests our reading comprehension.

TEACHER: MR. MURDOCH

SUBJECT: STUDIO ART

In the second semester of the year we are building on the first semester foundation of accurate shape, proportion and practicing a layered drawing process.

While continuing to explore the fundamentals, we have added pastel chalk and colored pencil on larger format paper. Students have drawn a variety of subjects including portrait busts, still life objects in class, Rembrandt copies of landscape drawings, a Leonardo Davinci horse drawing, and unicorns. Each class is also starting with a quick sketch in their sketchbooks which tests the students ability and is a valuable gauge of improvement through the year.

Old master artwork has been used to support and broaden the students experience of art and aim at a higher level of performance.

I am pleased to report the class has uniformly improved their ability to draw what they see in an efficient manner. The students ask good questions, are attentive to their work and display good problem solving ability.

FIFTH GRADE

TEACHER: MR. CIALINI

SUBJECT: HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY

We spent the entire trimester in northern France during the English campaign against Philip VI in the first years of the Hundred Years' War. Froissart's Chronicles is full of dramatic anecdotes and at the center of his history is the English King Edward, who leans toward cruelty but almost always consents, begrudgingly, to be merciful.

The war began over a legal battle over who was the rightful king of France. The Salic Law, a civil law code that had its origins with the Franks 800 years prior, stated that the heir to the French throne could not come from the female line. Edward III, being the son of the French king's sister, therefore could not inherit the throne after his uncle's death. The crown instead went to a cousin, Philip. Edward tried to find a legal way to circumvent the Salic Law, but couldn't, and so invaded France.

We read of the first official battle of the war, a sea battle over the port city of Sluys in Flanders. After an English victory there was a pause to conflict for some years which resumed after the French prince decided to besiege a wealthy English holding in Gascony. Encouraged by a French knight, Sir Godfrey de Harcourt, who had fled France to join Edward, the king sailed to a wealthy but unprotected Normandy rather than to Gascony. This proved a success and the English ravaged the Continen peninsula (the same invasion point for the Allies of WWII) taking "so much [gold, silver and jewelry] there that the very servants in the army turned up their noses at fur-lined gowns."

Edward then took the city of Caen, outran Philip north over the Seine and the Somme rivers, and took the superior terrain outside of Crecy. That battle was a show of gallantry: Edward the Black Prince, having been refused help by his father when he was hard pressed on all sides, fought all the more fiercely and won a tremendous victory; on the French side, the blind king John of Luxembourg asked his men to tie his horse's bridle to theirs so to be led into the battle; he was found dead next to his men and many slain enemies, while his son, Charles, fled

from the battlefield. Philip, who had eight times more men-at-arms, was soundly defeated by the English.

Edward continued his campaign and took the prosperous cities of Calais after an eleven month siege. The townspeople, faced with starvation, pleaded, led by one of the town elders, Sir Jean de Vienne, for Edward to allow them to go free and to ransom the nobles. He refused, declaring he would put them all to the sword. The headstrong king was soothed by his counselors and demanded that only six of the city's most noble men be brought to him barefoot, nearly naked, and with ropes around their necks. When he was about to have them publicly killed, his wife, the pregnant queen Philippa, fell on her knees and pleaded with the king not to put them to death. Grinding his teeth in anger, he consented and handed them over to the care of his wife.

TEACHER: MRS. ANMUTH

SUBJECT: PROGRAMMING

Fifth grade students continue to strengthen Scratch programming skills. We have explored variables in depth this trimester. Students are using variables to display scores, keep track of lives, control movement speed, and keep time in programs. They are utilizing programming blocks to increase and decrease variable values. They are using all kinds of conditional and infinite loops and applying logical programming concepts. We have completed a unit on probability, programming dice, coin flips, and spinners while keeping track of accumulated and categorized results.

Students are continuing to sharpen debugging skills, working independently and with others to troubleshoot programming obstacles. They are employing universal techniques to track loop iteration and program flow. They are acquiring higher level programming skills in a challenging environment and are exceeding all levels of expectation.

TEACHER: DR. TASSONE

SUBJECT: ENGLISH

Literature and Reading: The fifth grade class study of literature this trimester focused on *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson. Stevenson's book was read in its entirety. Special focus was placed on analysis of plot and characters.

The topic of the adventure story and the quest for treasure was covered and focus was placed on learning about the era in which *Treasure Island* is set (the mid-eighteenth century). The individual characters, Billy Bones, Jim Hawkins, Long John Silver, Dr. Livesey, Squire Trelawney, Ben Gunn, etc. were also examined.

Besides discussions of the plot and characters, the fifth graders engaged in creative activities related to Stevenson's book. These assignments included: designing a treasure map of the school – showing where the students would hide their treasure (if they had any), designing a 'Wanted Poster' for Long John Silver and undertaking several creative writing assignments. Reading comprehension quizzes were also regularly given.

Shorter works of literature read this trimester included excerpts from Rupert Sargent Holland's *Boyhood Biographies*, excerpts from biographies of Edmund Spenser and John Milton.

Writing: The main writing assignment this trimester was a formal argumentative essay analyzing a topic from *Treasure Island*. The students learned what an argumentative essay is and how to write one. Some students focused on individual characters in the book, others on Stevenson's symbolism. The structure of formal essay writing was discussed in class. The students were taught the differences between an introduction, a body and a conclusion as well as the role the different parts of the essay play in building a strong argumentative essay. The process of gathering evidence from the literary text and properly citing authors was discussed and the differences between a topic sentence and a thesis statement was also covered.

Grammar and Vocabulary: The vocabulary exercises for this trimester continued to focus on both expansion of student lexicon and spelling. The spelling segment of the vocabulary lesson was developed by implement-

ing our weekly spelling test. Development of lexicon was connected to the spelling test; at the beginning of the week students were given ten words taken from the reading for that week (almost always from *Treasure Island*). Every Thursday was spelling test day and I read out eight of the ten words with students tasked with correctly writing down the words dictated.

The grade five study of formal grammar in the second trimester included: gerunds, nouns and adjectives, correct use of prepositions and prepositional phrases, nouns of direct address and appositives, verbal phrases, relative clauses and adverb clauses.

Poetry and Poetics: The fifth grade poetics curriculum included regular homework dealing with the mechanics of poetry and poetics. Topics covered included: the definition of poetry, rhyming patterns, meter, anapestic verse, scansion, music in poetry, catalectic and acatalectic feet, perfect rhyme and end rhyme, enjambment and end stop and masculine and feminine rhyme.

Poetry selections this trimester were drawn from various periods, among the poems we studied in detail included: William Wordsworth's "Lines Written A Few Miles above Tintern Abbey", Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's "Evangeline", Edgar Allan Poe's "Annabel Lee", Thomas Greenleaf Whittier's "The Barefoot Boy" and Emily Dickinson's "If I can stop one heart from breaking", amongst others. February 24th, 2022 was the MLCA Winter Poetry Night. The grade five students were encouraged to pick their own poems to recite. Students memorized poems of their choice and were encouraged to recite their memorized poems in class for practice.

TEACHER: DR. FRADKIN

SUBJECT: MATH

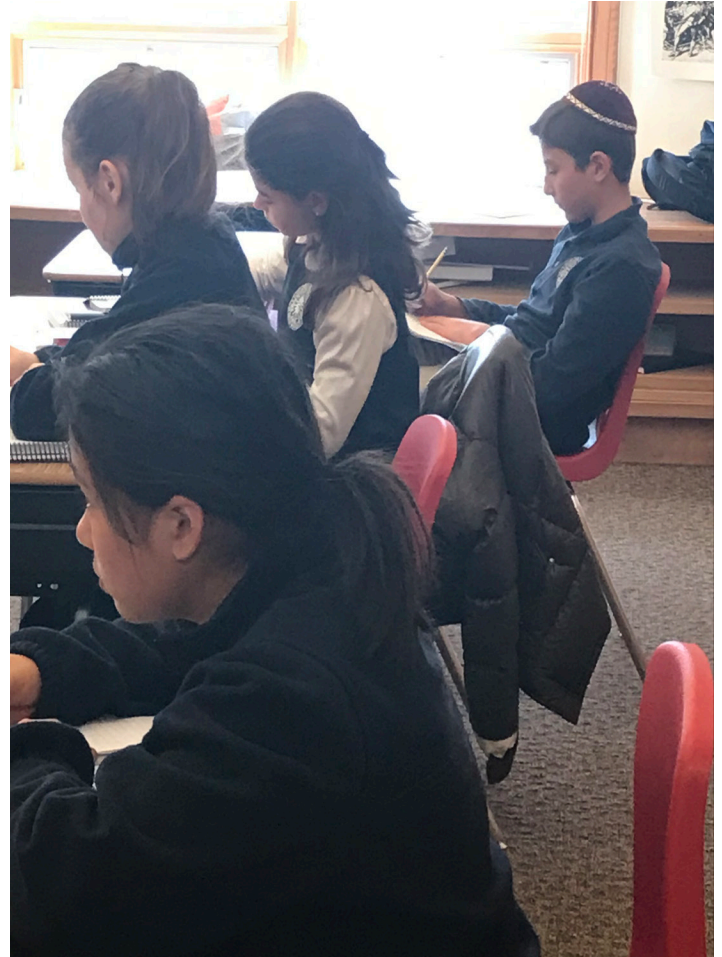
The first topic of the trimester in 5th grade was 3D solids. The students learned about polyhedra and how to count their faces, edges and vertices. They also discovered for themselves Euler's famous formula that relates these quantities in polyhedra. Finally, the students computed the surface area and volume of certain special types of polyhedra, mostly prisms and pyramids.

For the second topic of the trimester the 5th grade students revisited integers. The main focus was on multiplying and dividing integers. The students also evaluated expressions that involved exponents and tested the students' understanding of the intricacies of the order of operations.

Following the unit on integers was a unit on expressions and equations. Students learned the meaning of "like terms", simplified expressions that involved one or more variables, and solved multi-step equations. This topic will be revisited many times over the next few years as it is the basis of algebra.

The final unit of the trimester had the students 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.

Ariel Yu, Pietra Tarr, Abigail Vuernick and Benjamin Vuernick take in their Latin lesson.



TEACHER: DR. NAGELBERG

SUBJECT: SCIENCE

This trimester in the fifth grade we have reached beyond our planet, and beyond our galaxy, to explore what we can of our larger universe. Along the way, we have practiced our skills with scientific notation and using formulas in science. Students are also developing their plans for the fifth grade science fair.



TEACHER: MR. CIALINI
SUBJECT: LATIN

At the close of the second trimester, the 5th grade now knows all five cases and all six tenses of the verb. The final three tenses—the perfect, pluperfect, and future perfect, were a bit difficult for the students not merely because each tense brings with it a new set of endings, but also because these tenses are built upon a new verb stem. Before learning these three tenses, the class had only ever contended with the present stem; yet that is only one of four principal parts of the verb. I’ve described the four principal parts of the verb as the four walls in which the Latin language is housed—they are the basis of many adjectives, gerunds, participles, periphrastics, passive voice verbs, etc.

Remaining in the world of verbs, the students also learned the imperfect, future, perfect, pluperfect, and future perfect of the verb to be. The difference between these tenses are subtle but important. There are three tenses in Latin that indicate the past since not all past events occurred at the same time. Thus, *vocabat* “I was calling” is more recent than *vocavit* “I called” which is more recent than *vocaverat* “I had called.” At present students have just to memorize these new paradigms and translations, but they really become vital later down the line when the subjunctive mood and subordinate clauses come into play.

We also learned that there are adjectives of the 2nd declension which end in *-er* rather than *-us*. Some of these drop the letter *-e* when declined, others do not.

There were also interrogative particles—that is, ways to ask yes-or-no questions: some questions anticipate a ‘yes’ or a ‘no’: *Ambulabasne in agrō?* “Were you walking in the field?”; others anticipate a ‘yes’ answer: *Nonne ambulas in agrō?* “You were walking in the field, weren’t you?”; and others a ‘no’ answer: *Num ambulas in agrō?* “You weren’t walking in the field, were you?”

Finally, we learned the ablative of means: the means by which an action is done. For example, *legatum gladiō vulneravit*. “He wounded the lieutenant with a sword.” There was also the formation of adverbs from adjectives of the first and second declensions. *Altus, a, um* “deep” becomes *alte* “deeply.”

TEACHER: RABBI SINENSKY
SUBJECT: HEBREW

5th-grade Hebrew focuses on modern and biblical Hebrew. At the beginning of the year we dedicated a number of weeks toward vastly improving our Hebrew vocabularies and mastering foundational principles of grammar. Students use their own Hebrew-English dictionaries, which they will be using to gain further mastery over modern Hebrew, including reading and writing. In addition, they have memorized hundreds of roots and common vocabulary words, laying the groundwork for a high level of facility in modern Hebrew.

As a foundational text for our study of Biblical Hebrew, we have closely studied nearly 30 verses in the narratives of Abraham in the book of Genesis. As a cornerstone of our approach, each verse is read aloud by students. Next, we translate each term, identifying the root, any prefixes or suffixes, and any broader principles of Biblical Hebrew grammar that help to explain the meaning of the verse. Students have been progressing at the rate of approximately two verses per instructional period, including study of relevant vocabulary and grammatical principles.

Class notes are divided into a chart that comprises three sections: words and roots; principles of the language; and basic knowledge, which generally includes a summary of the verse. Students recently have been increasingly called upon to read and translate verses independently in Hebrew.

TEACHER: M. PORTIER

SUBJECT: FRENCH

The 5th Grade had an excellent semester: Monte Cristo is now prepared to carry out his revenge on the people who betrayed him. Despite the numerous discussions in class on the distinction between a hero of justice and an avenger, the students remain divided on this important question!

A special attention has been given to oral comprehension this semester, especially regarding precise information about time, making purchases, and following instructions.

In grammar, we worked on two major subjects: the relatives' pronouns and how to use the past tenses to tell a story.

The students finished memorizing *Le Mont du Crâne*, the long poem written by Alexandre Dumas that may have inspired him later to write *Le Conte de Monte Cristo*. I am impressed by their participation in class and the speed of their progress.

TEACHER: RABBI SINENSKY

SUBJECT: JUDAIC STUDIES

Judaic Studies combines prayer with advanced study of the holidays, the weekly Torah portion, and introduction to the arc of Jewish history.

Prayer runs for approximately 20-25 minutes, and comprises an engaging mix of joint recitation, singing, reading with the cantillation, and silent recitation of the Amidah (standing) prayer.

Following prayer, on Monday through Thursday we have rotated units between studying the holidays and an introduction to Jewish history, with an emphasis on offering an orientation to the Written and Oral traditions. Students take extensive notes, which are structured in a clear, tight outline form to facilitate comprehension and retention.

TEACHER: MR. MURDOCH

SUBJECT: STUDIO ART

We are building on the first semester foundation of accurate shape, proportion and practicing a layered drawing process.

While continuing to explore the fundamentals, we have added pastel chalk and colored pencil on larger format paper. Students have drawn a variety of subjects including portrait busts, still life objects in class, Rembrandt copies of landscape drawings, a Leonardo Davinci horse drawing, and unicorns. Each class is also starting with a quick sketch in their sketchbooks which tests the students ability and is a valuable gauge of improvement through the year.

Old master artwork has been used to support and broaden the students experience of art and aim at a higher level of performance.

I am pleased to report the class has uniformly improved their ability to draw what they see in an efficient manner. The students ask good questions, are attentive to their work and display good problem solving ability.

Each Friday we review the weekly Torah portion, summarizing the contents of each chapter. This enables students to develop a comprehensive understanding of not only each portion but also of the continuity of subject matter from chapter to chapter.

SIXTH GRADE

TEACHER: M. PORTIER

SUBJECT: FRENCH

The students finished reading *Les Vingt Mille Lieues sous les Mers*, and now understand that Captain Nemo built the submarine to escape society. They have presented many different written and oral reports on this theme. We also studied a poem by Verlaine and a painting by Joseph Vernet while working on the pronoms relatifs and les temps futur. The sixth graders have made immense progress in their oral expression and comprehension. I look forward to their continued progress.

TEACHER: MRS. RICE

SUBJECT: ART HISTORY

The sixth grade Art History class spent this trimester building on images hinted at in the illuminated manuscripts we studied at the start of the year. We discussed the importance of pictures as a means of communication in an age when literacy was in decline, and addressed the particular influence of Christian symbols when the Church was the sole remaining continental power. We had fun looking at images from some medieval bestiaries, and dove into the layers of symbolism connected to the evangelical symbols associated with Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Like the green glasses Dorothy and her companions donned to enter the Emerald City, the vision provided by this Christian prism may not have been factually accurate, but it provided a coherent world-view for Europeans in the chaotic Middle Ages between the fall of Rome and the Renaissance.

Most of our time was spent in becoming acquainted with the complex language of heraldry. The need for coats of arms to identify knights in battle was a reminder of the political violence of the time, but the color fields, ordinaries and symbols which constituted these family crests constitute an elaborate visual vocabulary and grammar that is at once highly ordered and at the same time adaptable as a sort of visual poetry. To prove this point, the students created their own crests, choosing elements to tell their own stories within the framework of this system from another time.

TEACHER: MR. GORMLEY

SUBJECT: HISTORY

As we approach the modern era in European history for the upper grades, it becomes increasingly difficult to move with any kind of speed, because there is so much happening. We've been working through the complexities of the Hundred Years' War, which in large part has to do with the fact that the Normans of France, who were originally of viking descent, conquered England. This in turn is compounded by inter-marriage among the nobles of both nations so there seems never to be a shortage of confusing, intricate plots or reasons for war.

Along the way, we've used Froissart's account of the war (especially the battles of Crecy, Calais, and Portiers) as well as his version of the era of Richard II, the Jacquerie, and the madness of Charles VI of France. From there we've been relying on David Hume's *History of England* for Henry IV and V, although we read Raphael Hollinshed's account of the battle of Agincourt. The latter was the source upon which Shakespeare most often drew for his historical plays of that period. We then read Joan of Arc's first biography and an eye-witness account of the battle of Castillon, where cannons played a part like never before. At almost the same time, the fall of the Romans (Byzantines) in the east was happening. We read a first-hand account by a Greek in Mehmed II's retinue for detail.

Shortly, we'll return to Hume for the War of the Roses and move to Machiavelli and Gucciardini's chronicles of the Medici and the alliance-shifting city states of Italy in the 15th-16th century.

TEACHER: DR. TASSONE

SUBJECT: ENGLISH

Literature and Reading: The sixth grade study of literature this trimester focused on *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare. Shakespeare's play was read in its entirety. Special focus was placed on the tragic theme and the motivation of the protagonist. *Macbeth's* fatal flaw, his ambitious nature, was explored in class and the roles of other characters were examined (especially the Weird Sisters and Lady *Macbeth*) for how they contribute to the tragedy. The topics of responsibility and good ruler ship were examined in relation to both the play and English history. Besides discussions of the plot of Shakespeare's play, the sixth grade class also engaged in creative activities throughout the trimester. These included: dramatizing and reading scenes from the play, writing a journal entry and having classroom discussions about the themes of *Macbeth*.

Other shorter works read this trimester included: an adaptation of *Everyman*, "*Gareth and Lynette*" by Alfred Lord Tennyson, "*The Maid's Sword and Banner*" by Mark Twain, "*Robin Hood Turns Butcher*" by Howard Pyle and "*Tawney Rachel or the Fortune-Teller*" by Hannah More, among others.

Writing: The writing assignments for grade six this trimester included shorter writing pieces, a poem, expository composition and an argumentative essay on *Macbeth*. In preparation for writing their essays the students learned about the mechanics of what makes an argumentative essay work. The structure of formal essay writing was discussed in class. The students were taught the differences between an introduction, a body and a conclusion as well as the role the different parts of the essay play in building a strong argumentative thesis. The differences between a topic sentence and a thesis statement were covered and the process of gathering evidence from the literary text and properly citing authors was discussed.

Grammar and Vocabulary: The vocabulary exercises for this trimester focused on a continuation of expanding the student vocabulary. Regular spelling tests were, once again, used to facilitate the acquiring of new vocabulary.

Grade six formal grammar topics included: mood (indicative, imperative and subjunctive), aspect and other verb forms, adjectives and pronouns as adjectives, adverbs and interrogative, relative and reflexive pronouns.

Poetry and Poetics: This trimester the sixth grade poetics curriculum included regular homework assignments dealing with the mechanics of poetry and poetics. Topics covered included: syllable stress patterns in poetry, scansion, masculine and feminine rhymes, perfect rhyme, internal rhyme and caesura, stanza forms, heroic verse and sonnets. In class, this trimester, the sixth grade explored poems from Alfred Lord Tennyson ("*The Lady of Shallot*"), William Wordsworth ("*The Idiot Boy*"), and a look at various Shakespearean and Spenserian sonnets among others.

The grade six students were also encouraged to pick their own poems to recite for the MLCA Winter Poetry Night. The event was held on February 24th this year. The grade six students memorized poems of their choice and practiced the poems for homework as well as in class before reciting them live before a captive audience of their peers, teachers and parents.

TEACHER: MRS. TER-SAAKOV

SUBJECT: MATH

Exciting times for the six grade - the last days of working on *Beast Academy* material! The topics students were covering this year were actually Pre Algebra topics: Ratios and Rates, Decimals, Percent, Square Roots, Exponents. The problems are challenging and require accurate records of the steps performed. Students are learning to work with material by rereading the instructions, the guide book, and watching the videos with sample problem solutions on *Beast Academy* website whenever they get stuck on a problem. We are going to reinforce the important concepts learned this year by working through the corresponding chapters of the *Art of Problem Solving Pre Algebra* textbook this spring.

TEACHER: MR. CIALINI
SUBJECT: LATIN:

This trimester we continued to learn the passive voice in all its complexity. The passive voice really has two primary difficulties. First, it means mastering entirely new verb endings in all six tenses; moreover, the form of the passive for the three tenses of the perfect system is built upon the fourth principal part of the verb; thus, not only are students juggling new endings but they are also switching between different verb stems. These stems can look quite dissimilar. *Agiunt* and *acti sunt* are actually the same verb, the former is active and the latter is passive. To know that, one needs to memorize all the principal parts of each verb.

The second difficulty is learning how to translate the passive voice. It can become quite a mess when the subject is acted upon rather than acting. The nominative is acted upon while the ablative denotes the actor: *Caesar laudatus est a militibus*. "Caesar was praised by his soldiers." Nonetheless, we proceeded to the third conjugation in the active and passive voice, and cardinal and ordinal numbers. However, before advancing to third conjugation i-stems it was clear that the foundational grammar was beginning to teeter under the pressure of more and more paradigms and rules of the language for the students, and we all agreed that a thorough review was needed.

Thus, for three weeks, each class period we reviewed the vocabulary, grammar, paradigms, and syntax of every chapter from one to twenty-three in the form of worksheets which the students were required to have completely correct. This proved to be very fruitful for the class and I'm confident that they'll move into the final trimester with greater confidence.

TEACHER: MR. MURDOCH
SUBJECT: STUDIO ART

In the second semester of the year we are building on the first semester foundation of accurate shape, proportion and practicing a layered drawing process.

While continuing to explore the fundamentals, we have added pastel chalk and colored pencil on larger format paper. Students have drawn a variety of subjects including portrait busts, still life objects in class, Rembrandt copies of landscape drawings, a Leonardo Davinci horse drawing, and unicorns. Each class is also starting with a quick sketch in their sketchbooks which tests the students ability and is a valuable gauge of improvement through the year.

Old master artwork has been used to support and broaden the students experience of art and aim at a higher level of performance.

I am pleased to report the class has uniformly improved their ability to draw what they see in an efficient manner. The students ask good questions, are attentive to their work and display good problem solving ability.

TEACHER: MS. ERIKA WOO
SUBJECT: CHRISTIAN STUDIES

The 5th and 6th grade Christian Studies class has been reading through the gospel of Luke. Dissecting it using inductive bible study, we mark up the passage with questions and annotate important verses. We ask questions about the miracles Jesus performed, geography, and the importance of parables. Together we have insightful discussion on the meaning of Jesus' words and actions, and how it all applies to our lives now. I eagerly await our time together as each class is full of lively and fruitful discourse.

TEACHER: MRS. ANMUTH

SUBJECT: PROGRAMMING

Sixth grade students continue to strengthen programming skills with App Lab. This trimester we focused on declaring local and global variables; assigning, increasing and decreasing variable values. Entwined in this unit, students learned to display the numeric or string value of a variable, use variables as timers and counters, input and validate user input, and combine string and numeric variables for text output.

Students worked together and individually to debug programs. We utilized the console and “watchers” to trace the value of variables and other elements throughout a program. We learned a sequence of steps to view and diagnose issues. Students learned how to view program history and restore a prior version of a program. They learned how to control the speed of program execution and utilize other debugging commands, such as “break” and “step in”.

We are concluding this trimester with the utilization of timed loops. We are learning about three kinds of timed loops: `getTime`, `setTimeout` and `timedLoop`. Students are learning the mechanics of these loops and how best to employ them in a program. Six grade students are motivated learners. We forge ahead to integrate new concepts as we build upon previous content.

TEACHER: DR. NAGELBERG

SUBJECT: PHYSICS

Some of the oldest records of scientific exploration deal with things that are found far, far beyond our planet—beyond our reach. But the light from the stars that are beyond our reach reaches us, and in the past century we have gotten better and better at seeing and interpreting that light. This trimester in sixth grade physics we have studied some of the properties of light and learned how some astronomical data is collected. We finished the trimester by exploring some properties of matter, particularly matter in the earth’s atmosphere. We worked with astronomical data, lenses, scales and cell phone sensors to take a hands-on approach to these topics.

TEACHER: MR. CIALINI

SUBJECT: LATIN

Though we began this year with a new textbook, Jenny’s First Year Latin, the 6th grade made quick work of many chapters, being well-acquainted with most of the concepts. We exceeded our goal of completing one chapter a week, closing the trimester on chapter 11. Thus far we have covered:

- First and Second declensions (masculine and neuter)
- Present, imperfect, future, and perfect tenses of the first conjugation
- Agreement of verbs
- Principal parts of verbs
- Conjugation and the uses of Sum in the present, imperfect, and future tenses
- Ablative of place where
- Ablative of place from which
- Accusative of place to which
- Direct and Indirect objects
- Genitive of possession
- Adjectives of the First and Second declension
- Adverbs
- Interrogative particles

Always wanting to forge ahead, the 6th grade, as I say, demonstrated their mastery of the above concepts without trouble. In actual fact, we could have advanced faster through these concepts; however, having not taught this class last year and taking the time to discern their level of understanding, I opted to keep things at a regular pace while moving quickly where we could. The review was not fruitless, and the class’s weak spots—which were few—were given extra attention as we moved along.

A particular highlight of the trimester—besides getting to know the students—was seeing just how seriously they take their studies. Though some more than others, every student participates of their own volition. I look forward to the coming trimester as we work deeper into the new challenges of Latin.

LOWER SCHOOL CLUBS AND SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

TEACHER: MR. DARER

SUBJECT: NATURE AND SCIENCE CLUB

In Nature and Science club we have continued our noticing patterns and phenomena and have been using this for the basis of our studies. We observed a rainbow in a high up cirrus cloud and used this observation as our stepping stone into understanding light, prisms, and how the ice crystals in the cirrus cloud refracted the sunlight separating it into light of different wavelengths, allowing us to see different colors. We also discussed what causes wind, rain, and hail.

We have continued learning about edible wild foods that grow around MLCA and had hot cider with spicebush twigs we harvested. The spicebush has a cinnamon/allspice flavor. We also made pine tea from white pine needles we harvested.

We continued to review directions and techniques for natural navigation and practiced these skills by looking at pictures and figuring out which direction the photographer was facing based on the tree shapes, moss/lichen, moon, shadows, wind blowing in the leaves, and other features. We also learned how to start a fire in the rain and using natural materials we can gather from the forest. The bark of a birch tree easily catches a spark, and any conifer stumps produce fatwood which results from the sap flowing into the stump causing a high concentration of the sap which makes the wood very flammable. We used the bark of a paper birch and eastern hemlock fatwood to make a small fire in the rain, all started with a flint and steel.

The students also made big dipper clocks that can tell the time based on the month and position of the big dipper, north star, and Cassiopeia constellation, and used these clocks for astronomy night.

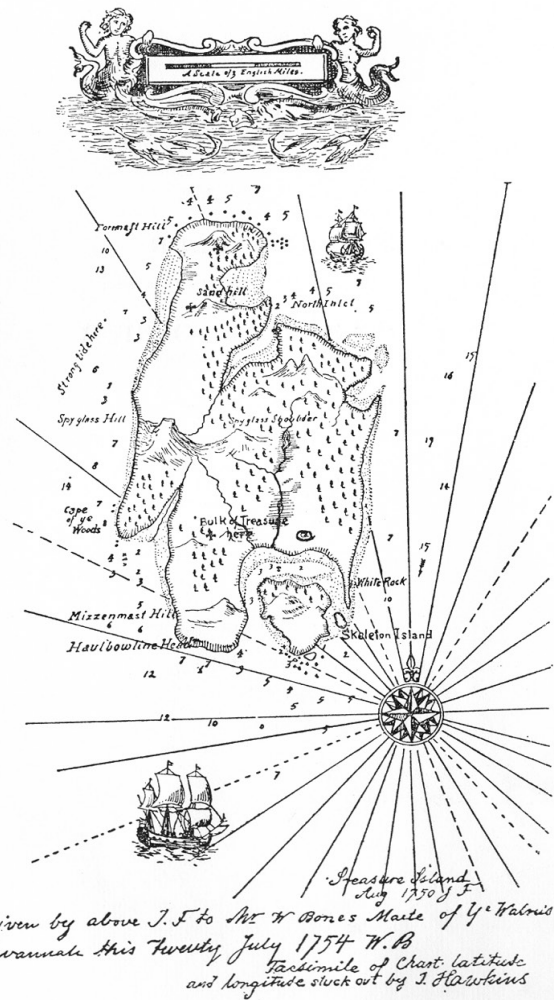
TEACHERS: DR. FRADKIN &

MRS. TER-SAAKOV

SUBJECT: MATH CLUB

The Lower School math club continued working on problem solving techniques, and problems that require a high level of reading comprehension, perseverance, and ability.

Students got to test their skills participating in the AMC 8 competition in January, as well as the (weekly) ongoing Math Madness competition. The MLCA team won all three Math Madness matches that have happened so far. Go Owls!



TEACHER: MME. PHELAN
SUBJECT: FRENCH TUTORING

Our French tutoring sessions are tailored to the unique needs of our students. They may need to catch up with their classmates because they are new to our school. They may need additional support for a short period of time or an enrichment type program in French.

The tutoring is divided into 4 parts : oral comprehension, written comprehension, oral production and written production.

Oral comprehension:

Most of our tutoring time is spent in French. English is only used to help the student understand a grammar rule or a particular idiom.

Written comprehension: depending on the level of the student, texts are introduced to study a particular theme, vocabulary or grammar point.

Oral production: The one on one time allows for more opportunities for students to develop their oral skills. Discussions are always encouraged and role plays are a big part of our sessions.

Written production: early in their learning of French, students start producing sentences to review new skills they have learned. As proficiency increases, the sentences become longer and more complex.

TEACHER: MRS. MARTINDALE
SUBJECT: POETRY CLUB

Poetry Club is working with Upper School Poetry Elective students and has begun rehearsals for our spring performance of Macbeth. At the moment we are focusing on memorizing lines and blocking scenes. Students are also working collaboratively on the set design.

TEACHERS: MRS. VOZNAIA &
MRS. BUTTERWORTH
SUBJECT: PIANO

All students in the winter semester began to study the new program. All students began to play with both hands together. We are working on musical technical skills and expressiveness. As before, the elementary classes learn how to play loud and soft, try to make crescendo and diminuendo. But the most important thing is how it turns out to follow the posture and the position of the hand. Unfortunately, it is not possible to sightread in Zoom mode, but I hope that we will do this when we return to personal lessons.

After two long years of disciplined observance of strict Covid protocols, teachers and students alike are grateful the current climate is giving us the opportunity to breathe a little easier. Mixed-grade play periods outside around the gaga pit are a pleasure everyone has missed!

SEVENTH GRADE

TEACHER: MR. CIALINI

SUBJECT: LATIN

The 7th grade now have mastered all five noun declensions and all four verb conjugations. We learned the following this trimester: the accusative of extent of space, accusative of duration of time, the formation of adverbs from 3rd declension adjectives, the defective verb *inquam* which is used to introduce direct quotations, and the verb *possum*, meaning I am able; also, active and passive present infinitives, complementary infinitives, and infinitive phrases. We closed the trimester with the regular and irregular comparison of adjectives, ablative of comparison, and finally the dative with adjectives.

With regard to the last item, adjectives of nearness, likeness, and fitness in Latin use the dative case to complete their meaning. In the same vein, there are some adjectives whose meaning is completed using the genitive, such as *cupidus* (desirous, eager).

The class also had to master the three degrees of adjectives: the positive, comparative, and superlative. A great many adjectives have comparative and superlative forms that are straightforward, that is, the stem of the adjective remains the same as the positive degree but adds a new ending—*certus* (certain) becomes *certior* (more certain) which becomes *certissimus* (most certain). But, some adjectives are defective in their comparison, which is to say that they lack either a positive, a comparative, or a superlative—*exterior* (outer) and *extremus* (outermost), like many others, lack a positive. Yet, it is the irregular comparison of adjectives which is most demanding. For instance, *bonus* (good) becomes *melior* (better) which becomes *optimus* (best). This became less confusing to the class as they realized that similar irregularities exist in English—adjectives such as ‘good’ and ‘bad’ are irregular in English, too.

Finally, the class’ translation skills have continued to improve and I have seen excellent collaboration as they work in groups and aid one another.



6th graders Sasha Maslen and Tiago Ferreira attend to their Math lesson.

TEACHER: RABBI SINENSKY

SUBJECT: HEBREW

7th-grade Hebrew focuses on modern and biblical Hebrew. Class is conducted entirely in Hebrew, including conversation and notetaking.

As a foundational text for our study of Biblical Hebrew, the class is studying the narratives of Isaac, Jacob, and the 12 tribes in the book of Genesis. As a cornerstone of our approach, each verse is read aloud by students. Next, we translate each term, identifying the root, any prefixes or suffixes, and broader principles of biblical Hebrew grammar that help to explain the meaning of the verse.

At this stage, students are progressing at the rate of roughly seven verses per instructional period, with their abilities rapidly expanding. Having recently passed the 4/5 point of the book of Genesis, we are on track to study more than 1,000 verses and complete the book of Genesis by year’s end. Students are now expected to compose their own Hebrew-language summaries of each verse, and anticipate key exegetical questions that emerge from textual and logical difficulties in the text.

TEACHER: DR. TASSONE

SUBJECT: ENGLISH

Literature and Reading: The seventh grade study of literature this trimester focused on various works. We began by reading a short story by E.T.A. Hoffmann entitled "The Sandman". This was read in preparation for our look at Hoffmann's complex novel *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr*. In class we read the first two parts of the Hoffmann novel before, finally, exploring the late work *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare. The latter was read in its entirety. Topics explored within the writings of Hoffmann and Shakespeare included: nature versus nurture (in both *Tomcat Murr* and the character of Caliban), the nature of creativity, romanticism versus neo-classical art and the theme of the individual versus society.

Besides detailed discussions of the plot and themes of the various works of literature we read, reading comprehension quizzes formed a regular part of the second trimester curriculum. The seventh grade also engaged in their regular journal writing assignments, classroom debates about various themes in *Tomcat Murr* and *The Tempest* and also the dramatic presentation of different scenes from Shakespeare's play. We also had student viewings of video clips from different productions of *The Tempest* adapted for both stage and screen.

Writing: The writing assignments for grade seven this trimester included ongoing journal writing assignments and a full argumentative essay defending a claim about the student's interpretation of a relevant aspect of either Hoffmann's "The Sandman", Hoffmann's *The Life and Opinions of Tomcat Murr* or Shakespeare's *The Tempest*.

Grammar and Vocabulary: The vocabulary exercises for grade seven this trimester focused on both spelling and vocabulary building. The spelling segment of the vocabulary lesson was developed by continuing the practice of a weekly spelling test.

Grade seven grammar topics this trimester included: the subject complement, predicate nominative, the diagramming of sentences, direct and indirect objects, objects of prepositions, object compliments, nouns of direct address, appositives, and proper use of quotation marks.

Poetry and Poetics: The seventh grade explored various poems this trimester with close look at poetry by Christina Rossetti, "May", Elizabeth Barret Browning "Among the Nightingales", William Wordsworth "A Danish Boy", William Shakespeare ("Sonnet 105") and Edmund Spenser, *Amoretti* LXXV, "One Day I Wrote her Name".



Lilly Sigelman displays her drawing of a thatched cottage.

TEACHER: M. PORTIER

SUBJECT: FRENCH

The seventh grade students just completed the book *Cyrano de Bergerac*, which did not start easily for this group. However, they enjoyed it at the end and explored the nobility and aristocracy and the importance of theater in the 17th century. They have advanced their oral comprehension incredibly in preparation for the DELF while advancing their grammar skills with the *Participe présent*; *gerondif*, the *subjonctif présent*, and the *concordance des temps passé*. Also in preparation for the DELF, students participated in many conversations and reciting speeches- stretching their pronunciation muscles.

TEACHER: MRS. TER-SAAKOV

SUBJECT: MATH

Honors track seventh grade students spent a significant portion of the second trimester studying various approaches to solving quadratic equations, as well as applying those skills to word problems. We definitely will come back to this topic in our weekly reviews, as it is both challenging and very important for the future.

Students just started the course of Geometry, and are quite excited about it. The geometry course is traditionally used as a platform to introduce the concept of postulates and formal proofs. It may take time for students to get used to the new requirements. There will be an increase in the number of low-stake quizzes to help students adjust and feel more confident for the tests.

AoPS track students are almost done with the AoPS Introduction to Geometry course. The instruction is over; students are finishing up the last few assignments. There were quite a few fascinating problems. Overall, it was a challenging but very interesting course. AoPS Introduction to Algebra B has already started. Luckily, the first few weeks are devoted to quadratic equations which are familiar. A large portion of the course will be devoted to exploring functions using basic tools already accessible for students, setting the foundation for future studies.

TEACHER: RABBI SINENSKY

SUBJECT: JUDAIC STUDIES

Prayer runs for approximately 20-25 minutes, and comprises an engaging mix of joint recitation, singing, reading with the cantillation, and silent recitation of the Amidah (standing) prayer.

Students read each day's Hebrew-language news headlines from a special website developed by the Israeli Ministry of Education geared toward adult Hebrew-language beginners. Each day students record approximately 10 new modern Hebrew words and phrases, and are working toward being able to listen to Hebrew-language news broadcasts. Having mastered this skill, students are now committing to memory hundreds of new Hebrew words, at a rate of approximately 25 new words per class.

TEACHER: MR. GORMLEY

SUBJECT: HISTORY

Often there are examples in history of a particular happening or phenomenon that seems to echo to other times and places. Seldom, however, is it so evident as in the time period in question (16th-18th century Europe). During the Thirty Years' War, we observed the emergence of Wallenstein, a military man who nearly acquired total political supremacy for himself in the midst of chaos. During the English Civil War, Cromwell accomplished among the English what Wallenstein failed to accomplish among the Germans. During the French Civil War (La Fronde), members of the nobility openly claimed to be imitating the English parliament in combating their sovereign, resulting in the Great Condé emerging as a similar figure to Cromwell and Wallenstein, although with less success.

Looking forward, it becomes clear that Napoleon was perhaps the most advanced version of the type in question, to say nothing of Robespierre who differs in that he was not a military man. In any case, one can observe the emergence of a clear pattern which ought to be instructive to those who would stir internal conflict. The pattern seems to suggest that, to begin such conflict is ultimately to invite the elevation or domination of characters such as Wallenstein, Cromwell, Condé, and/or Napoleon. Worthy of mention is how our American Revolution seems to have differed from this pattern. Why?

TEACHER: DR. NAGELBERG

SUBJECT: BIOLOGY

This trimester, seventh graders explored basic concepts in biology including evolution by natural selection, Mendelian Genetics, the cell cycle and cladistics. Along the way, students applied selective pressures to moths, followed lily chromosomes undergoing mitosis, bred paper pigeons and built phylogenetic trees.

EIGHTH & NINTH GRADE

TEACHER: DR. SIGELMAN

SUBJECT: ENGLISH

This term we read Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and the first half of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*.

We read *Macbeth* slowly, trying to read as much of the text together in class as possible, and devoting time to discussions of fate, free will, crime and responsibility, and the continuity of generations. We used the well-known Folger edition, which provides helpful notes and glosses to the difficult Shakespearean vocabulary on every page. I encouraged students to learn to use these resources which a good edition such as Folger provides – something that is easy to overlook in our digital age! Students wrote two essays in connection with *Macbeth*: a shorter essay analyzing the hero's fall from honorable warrior to cruel usurper; and a longer essay analyzing the role that the continuity of generations plays in *Macbeth*.

We began *Robinson Crusoe* several weeks ago. The Norton Critical Edition which we are using reproduces the text of the first edition of the novel, thus exposing students to the way Defoe originally wrote his manuscript – with all the peculiarities and "misspellings" of early 18th-century English. It is thus also an opportunity to learn about the history of our language. As always, I encourage students to make ample notes on the margins of their books, picking up on key themes and images in the work. Thus, in *Crusoe*, we have been tracking the different biblical analogies. We have seen that Defoe sees his protagonist as analogous to Jonah, the Prodigal Son, and Job, and we have read the relevant passages from the King James translation of the Bible. Thus far, students wrote one short essay on *Crusoe*—a description of an

example where they themselves, or a literary character, has disobeyed sage advice (just as young *Crusoe* disobeys his father's advice), and the consequences of this disobedience.

This term, the students read, analyzed, memorized, and performed the following poems:

- Shakespeare, Sonnet 2
- Shakespeare, Sonnet 18
- Shakespeare, Sonnet 27
- Tennyson, In Memoriam XI
- Edgar Allan Poe, "Eldorado"
- John Donne, "No man is an island"

We accompanied our study of Shakespeare's sonnets with a special unit where students composed their own sonnets, adhering to the proper meter, rhyme, and thematic scheme of a sonnet. One rule I had is that sonnets must be on serious topics (e.g., "Shall I compare thee to a nacho chip" was not allowed!). I was deeply impressed with the results!

Besides literature, poetry, and writing, we continued with grammar review (using 12th grade-level volume of the classic *Warriner's Grammar*); weekly SAT vocabulary lists; and practice English SATs.

TEACHER: MS. ERIKA WOO
SUBJECT: CHRISTIAN STUDIES

The 8th and 9th grade Christian Studies class has started an exploration of the last book in the bible: Revelation. Talking through the apocalyptic letter John wrote while in exile, the students dove into discussions on heaven and hell. We started with the background of this book, who wrote it and why, and then quickly moved to analyzing the both awesome and awful imagery and symbolism that makes this book often confusing. By drawing pictures on the board and making analogies on our own, we have made good headway into Revelation and I look forward to our future discussions and discoveries.

TEACHER: DR. NAGELBERG
SUBJECT: CHEMISTRY

This trimester eighth and ninth graders explored chemical reactions, stoichiometry and carbon chemistry. Students expanded their vocabulary of carbon compounds and learned what observations they could use to determine if a chemical reaction took place. Chemical reactions were placed in an everyday context.

TEACHER: M. PORTIER
SUBJECT: FRENCH

After completing the play by Moliere, the 8th and 9th graders have steadily advanced in reading *le Horla* by Guy de Maupassant. It is a challenging read for them, however, they are interested in the theme of the book and are exploring diverse expressions of emotion and self reflection. In writing, we are practicing the usage of double pronouns, *le participe présent*, *le gérondif*, and direct and indirect speech.

TEACHER: DR. MARTINDALE
SUBJECT: U.S. HISTORY

This was our busiest semester covering American History from 1776 and the Declaration of Independence through the Presidency of Andrew Jackson—whose public career began brilliantly at the Battle of New Orleans but ended tragically with the appointment of Roger Brooke Taney as head of the Supreme Court and Jackson's refusal to extend the charter of the Second Bank of the United States.

Politically we followed the rise of Henry Clay and John Calhoun, while on the battlefield we traced the military defeat of the British in our war for independence.

Immigration was intense, a market economy accompanied the rise of cities, there was a great push west, and finally, we studied the rise of king cotton in the south.

These were times of enormous change and development for America. What follows, the subject of our final trimester, is our greatest tragedy, the civil war and Reconstruction. That was no fun.



Andrew Jackson During the Battle of New Orleans, illustration by Frederick Coffay Yohn, c. 1922.

TEACHER: MR. CIALINI
SUBJECT: LATIN

This trimester the 8th and 9th grade were truly in the tall timbers of Latin grammar and are just four chapters away from the end of Jenny's.

We began with *cum* clauses, which come in four varieties, three of which are in the subjunctive. They establish time, circumstance, cause, or concession and are used everywhere in Latin. Next we learned deponent verbs which are passive in form but present in meaning and, more often than not, they are used in place of regular verbs, and Latin will often opt for the deponent verb if it has the same or a similar meaning as a non deponent. For example, *confiteor* (deponent) is properly used more than *credo*—although they are not exact synonyms. *Confiteor* is everywhere in the psalms: “*Confitebor Domino in toto corde meo*” (111); “*Confitemini Domino, quoniam bonus, quoniam in saeculum misericordia eius.*” (107). Other deponent verbs, such as *patior*, *pati*, *passus sum* (suffer; permit, allow) are foundational for many English words: ‘patient’, ‘passion’ (as in to suffering), and ‘passive’.

An ablative absolute, like *cum* clauses, communicates circumstance, time, cause, or concession and, though it is usually made of only two words, it can be translated as an entire clause. *Signō datō, oppidum oppugnauerunt.* ‘When the signal had been given, they attacked the town.’

We also learned common irregular verbs such as *fero*, *eo*, *volo*, *nolo*, and *malo*. Each is used frequently in Latin and its forms ought to be memorized. Likewise, the verb *fiō* ‘be made, become’ is the opposite of a deponent in that its form is active while its meaning is passive. *Fiat Lux!* ‘Let there be light!’ Finally, we closed the trimester with impersonal verbs.

We continued to work with Dr. Sigelman through *Lingua Latina*'s retelling of the *Aeneid*. They also memorized the words of Panthus, the priest of Apollo, as Troy was falling: “*Venit summa dies et ineluctabile tempus Dardaniae...*”—The last day and the inevitable time of Troy has come...

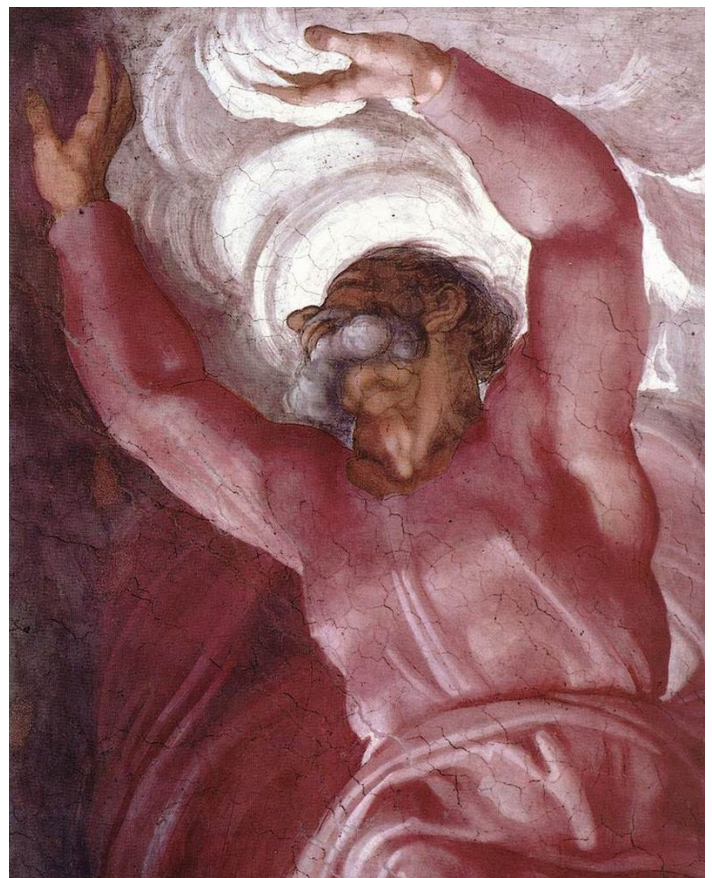
Detail from “The Separation of Light from Darkness,” from Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel.

TEACHERS: MRS. TER-SAAKOV
SUBJECT: MATH

Students in eighth and ninth grade had some exposure to the math section of SAT. Short weekly quizzes composed of SAT problems take place on Wednesdays along with the traditional Mental Math set. In spring we'll be working through one topic per week rather than going through mixed sets.

Honors track eighth-ninth grade students just completed the Coordinate Geometry chapter. Students may have noticed a significant number of problems on graphs and coordinate planes during our SAT practices, so we'll spend extra time reviewing this topic. Students are now working on the last chapter of the Geometry course, the transformations. Algebra 2 textbooks are already waiting for us once this chapter is covered.

AoPS track students are in the middle of the Intermediate Algebra course. As students explore polynomials, they are exposed to various approaches of algebraic manipulations helpful in challenging problems, as well as such fundamental ideas in proofs as induction and proof by contradiction.



UPPER SCHOOL ELECTIVES

TEACHER: MR. GORMLEY

SUBJECT: DEBATE

Although this trimester we had various students out due to COVID and some holidays that fell on our Monday meeting time, we did our best to work through various topics, while continuing to work on our ability to recognize syllogisms, fallacies, etc. We began by reading the argument from Thucydides' account of the Peloponnesian Wars, regarding whether or not Sparta should go to war with Athens. From there we read Pascal's Wager and had several rounds of debates on that topic. Students are still in the early stages of digesting and thinking an argument through, but there is notable improvement on the whole.

More recently on a day when we were short several students, the group expressed interest in debating the Communist Manifesto by Marx. I decided to try it, provided we read the text thoroughly. Curiously, there were a number of students who had some idea of it before having read it, but seem to have developed quite another, opposite opinion of it after having looked at it in a bit more depth. To give an alternate view, we also looked at Vaclav Havel's essay Power of the Powerless, given that he experienced the practical results of Marx's theory first-hand. In any case, we will be having a larger group debate on the topic with a panel of faculty members as judges upon our return from break, which I hope will be exciting.

Congratulations to Katie Fradkin (right) for advancing to the State MathCounts competition by placing among the top four individuals in the Delaware County Chapter. Further congratulations go to Ari Shpliman (7th grade) for placing among the top 10 individuals in the chapter. MathCounts is the most prestigious and well-known middle school math competition in the US with over 100 thousand participants nationwide.

TEACHER: DR FRADKIN &

MRS. TER-SAAKOV

SUBJECT: MATH COMPETITION PREP

During the second trimester, the main focus of the Competition Prep elective was on preparing for (and taking) the AMC 8 and MathCounts competition exams. These are the two most well-known and prestigious math competitions for middle school students. Schools get to select their top 12 students to represent the school on the MathCounts chapter round. For MLCA this means that every eligible Competition Prep student got to participate. They held their ground well against the best students from other schools in the region. Katie Fradkin (8th grade) and Ari Shpilman (7th grade) placed 4th and 10th, respectively, out of the 146 participants. In addition, Mara Ankenman, Lilly Sigelman (both 7th grade), Marshall Zafiriou, and Nicholas Zafiriou (both 8th grade) all placed in the top 50% of all participants.



TEACHER: MR. SOTO

SUBJECT: TRACK/FITNESS

In the second half of the 2021-2022 school year the Upper School students are preparing for and being challenged in the following domains: muscular strength endurance, cardio-respiratory endurance, speed, power, balance, and agility. Portions of the National Physical Fitness test, the dot drill, and other nationally-recognized fitness tests are being used, including sit-ups, push-ups, the shuttle run, the one-mile cross country run, 40-yard dash, wall sitting, the dot drill, standing broad jump, and long jump.

Each week the group has the opportunity to practice different components of the fitness test and students are given the directions to complete the test. They are also given the chance to build up their speed, stamina, and strength to help them improve on their personal fitness levels.

The National Fitness Standards are percentile scores based on the students' age and either their time, number of completed repetitions, or feet and inches reached. The five categories are:

PEAK - 85th percentile and above

EXCEEDS - 70th-84th percentile

MEETS - 50th-74th percentile

APPROACHING - 35th-49th percentile

BELOW- 15th and below percentile

The fitness tests will be administered starting in May with one or two events performed per day. In the event of illness, injury, or absence from Track/Fitness on a test day there will be a make-up day provided when possible.

The class grade is not determined based on the percentile scores mentioned above. Instead, passing the class entails showing up for class on time, being prepared to give your best effort that day, good behavior, and participation with a positive attitude. A "C" grade may be earned by any or combination of the following; con-

sistent late arrival, negative attitude towards the teacher and/or any student, misuse/abuse of equipment, or giving minimal effort. A failing grade may be earned by any or combination of the following; a student that continuously disrespects the teacher and/or students, continuous refusal to participate (which includes not showing up for class, arriving late consistently, leaving class early without permission), and/or continuous misuse of equipment.

TEACHER: M. PORTIER

SUBJECT: DELF ELECTIVE

The DELF training has inspired our students to work even harder, and preparations continue for the exam on May 14.

TEACHER: MR. MURDOCH

SUBJECT: STUDIO ART

In the second semester of the year we are building on the first semester foundation of accurate shape, proportion and practicing a layered drawing process.

While continuing to explore the fundamentals, we have added pastel chalk and colored pencil on larger format paper. Students have drawn a variety of subjects including portrait busts, still life objects in class, Rembrandt copies of landscape drawings, a Leonardo Da Vinci horse drawing, and unicorns from old master references. In addition, the last project started was a trois crayon portrait

Old master artwork has been used to support and broaden the students' experience of art and aim at a higher level of performance.

I am pleased to report the class has uniformly improved their ability to draw what they see in an efficient manner. The students ask good questions, are attentive to their work and display good problem solving ability.

TEACHER: DR. NAGELBERG
SUBJECT: SCIENCE FAIR

This trimester was a flurry of activity in the Upper School Science elective. Students collected the data for their research projects, completed the slides/posters for their presentations, and practiced delivering their presentations to their peers. Students participating in the Science Olympiad also continued their preparations for the regional Olympiad. Both the regional Science Fair and regional Olympiad will take place in mid-March.

TEACHER: MRS. MARTINDALE
SUBJECT: POETRY WORKSHOP

The Poetry Workshop is working with Lower School Poetry Club students and has begun rehearsals for our spring performance of Macbeth. At the moment we are focusing on memorizing lines and blocking scenes. Students are also working collaboratively on the set design.

TEACHERS: DR. FRADKIN &
MR. O'BRIEN

SUBJECT: PROGRAMMING

The students in 7th grade programming started the second trimester with exploring the turtle module in python. This module allows one to draw pictures using some basic commands. After figuring out how to draw different polygons, the students made more sophisticated drawings such as fancy stars and snowmen.

The rest of the trimester was devoted to several longer term projects that required them to use all of the basic structures they learned during the first trimester. For the first project, the students coded the Bulls and Cows game, which is similar to the popular Wordle game.

The second project involved another famous word game: Hangman. The students coded not only the text version of the game, but they also used turtle to draw the gallows and the hanging person. All of their games were not only well programmed, but were also fun to play!

SAVE THE DATE! SAVE THE DATE! SAVE THE DATE! SAVE THE DATE!

MAIN LINE CLASSICAL ACADEMY
Presents
MACBETH

HOST:
MLCA Poetry and Drama Club 610-525-2300

SPRING THEATER PRODUCTION

Wolf Performing Arts Center
1240 Montrose Avenue
Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania 19010

THURSDAY, JUNE 9 FROM 5:30 PM
TO 6:30 PM ET

SAVE THE DATE! SAVE THE DATE! SAVE THE DATE! SAVE THE DATE!