

Main Line Classical Academy
Newsletter
February, 2019

English, Kindergarten - Frank Chilbert

In kindergarten English class, we have continued studying William Blake's "The Tyger." The poem invites us to build up a rich vocabulary. Most notably, we have learned "anvil," "immortal," "symmetry," "sinews," and "dread." Feel free to ask them about some of these words at home!

In Ancient Greek myths, we have been introduced to nearly all twelve major Olympian gods and goddesses! They are: Zeus, Hera, Ares, Aphrodite, Hephaestus, Hermes, Demeter, Poseidon, Athena, Apollo, and Artemis. The students are waiting to hear who the last god is. We have also read stories about Hades, Persephone, Arachne, and Icarus. Once we have covered some of the major stories about these gods and goddesses, we will turn our attention to some of the great Greek heroes. We will watch as they conquer ancient monsters left over from the greatest wars during the primordial times. We will see their virtues shine forth in dark times, and consider what it is that makes them capable of such feats.

The Tyger

BY WILLIAM BLAKE

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

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

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

What the hammer? what the chain,
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp,

Dare its deadly terrors clasp!

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

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

English, 1st Grade - Frank Chilbert

The first grade English scholars are nearing the end of their first volume of "A is for Apple." In time, they will have covered a total of 36 phonics sounds. Their textbooks have readings that help the students review previous sounds, making their reading fluency increase more and more. Currently, the scholars are capable of reading full paragraphs. Here is one that the students read individually last week:

"I just love birds! I love to see them fly. With their wings spread out, they seem to float in the sky. I like birds that are bright and have a charming chirp, like the finch or the nightingale. I like hawks and bats, too. But sometimes bats make me afraid! I know a girl who saw a bat in her house. The bat flew into the house at night and went right on her night shirt." (Walter "A is for Apple").

As we wait for spring to return to us, we will begin learning a new poem about a boy and a bicycle called "Going Downhill on a Bicycle" by Henry Charles Beeching. It shouts of joy and transcendence, and also presents the theme of work and play. The students are also going through *Stuart Little* as a class. Stuart has embarked on his long journey to find his lost friend, Margalo. As he searches for her, he finds himself in various smaller, exciting adventures. He must decide at each point which adventure to see through and which he will have to, quite sadly, refuse.

English, 2nd Grade - William Walter

This month the second graders read, among many other selections, two reading passages about Henry V, the King of England during what has come to be known as the Hundred Years' War. Like the kings before him, such as Edward III, Henry thought that the Kingdom of France belonged to him by right. (His great-grandfather, Edward III, was the son of a French princess; his grandfather had been the King of France.) Although the story that the second graders read

makes no suggestions to the fact, many of the English kings of that period went to war merely for glory and riches. One battle that the students learned about was the Battle of Agincourt, in which Henry V defeated the French with his greatly outnumbered army. The class went over the possible reasons for this surprising victory. When Henry V finished routing the French, he was recognized as the heir apparent. However, when all was said and done after the Hundred Years' War, England lost all of its French territory except Calais, which it held onto until the reign of Queen Mary, daughter of Henry VIII. Even after England had no possessions in France, English kings continued to claim that they were the true French rulers. In the Mayflower Compact, for instance, James I (1566–1525) is titled the King of France. George III was the last monarch to make the ridiculous claim. The students learned many historical facts about Henry V and his involvement in the French Wars, but they also learned some details about one of the most famous historical plays written about this period—William Shakespeare's *Henry V*—and encountered one of the most famous characters created in literary history—Falstaff.

English, 3rd Grade - Frank Chilbert

The third grade English scholars have been reading many stories lately. They have heard about the triumphs of Julius Caesar, the foolishness of blind men and an elephant, and many others. The readings have gotten longer and the students are showing the virtue of perseverance as we press on into the second volume of the textbook. They have all been assigned their poems to begin memorizing so that they recite them at poetry night. Here are assignments:

Matteo: "If I Could Stop One Heart from Breaking" by Emily Dickinson

Avery: "The Owl" By Alfred Tennyson

Tiago: "Now Shall My Inward Joys Arise" by Isaac Watts

Anne: "The Elixir" by George Herbert

Kaylee: "Seasons" by Christina Rossetti

After a grammar-heavy unit, we have returned the bulk of our attention back to punctuation. Recently, the students have been practicing how to use quotation marks in different kinds of sentences. Their writing assignments will become easier as they polish some of these punctuation tools.

George MacDonald's *Princess and the Goblin* has taken us into a far off country manor set deep in the mountains, on the edge of a kingdom. We have discussed important themes such as memory and trust as we have watched a young princess navigate difficult challenges such as not being believed by a loved one when she was telling the truth.

English, 4th Grade - William Walter

In addition to other prose and poetic works, the 4th grade students studied "The Barefoot Boy." This poem by the American Quaker John Greenleaf Whittier is justly considered one of the his best. In memorizing several stanzas of the poem this poem, the fourth graders learned about

themes in Romantic poetry, of which the poem serves as an excellent example. In the work, Whittier reflects on his childhood as a “barefoot boy,” and in Wordsworthian fashion depicts the beauties of the natural world. The focus of the poem is showing how a wealthy child in his connection to nature is more wealthy than any business magnate:

Prince thou art,—the grown-up man
Only is republican.
Let the million-dollared ride!
Barefoot, trudging at his side,
Thou hast more than he can buy
In the reach of ear and eye,—
Outward sunshine, inward joy
Blessings on thee, barefoot boy!

In studying the poem, the class also went over many poetic devices, including place, anaphora, personification, and meter. I have been trying to impress upon the students that poetic devices do not appear in a work merely for “decoration”—just as automakers do not put engines in cars for how it looks. No, the poetic devices give the poem “motion,” as it were. Among other things, they often help the poet communicate his theme; in this instance it is the theme of a child’s appreciation of nature. I was so pleased with a response to a question I asked regarding Whittier’s use of personification in the poem. “Why do you think that Whittier uses personification in the poem? What purpose does it serve?” One very astute young lady answered, “By personifying the brook in the poem, the poet shows the close connection that the boy had with nature. For him it was not just a stream; it was like a living being.” Lesson learned!

English, 5th Grade - William Walter

This past month, I graded and handed back essays that the fifth graders had written on a personal experience. After reading examples of personal narratives by classic authors, the students used them as models for their own writing. In general, students often respond to narrative essay assignments by saying they “have nothing to write about; nothing ever exciting happens to me.” I tell student writers that almost every experience that we have—especially a common, everyday experience—is worthy of thinking and writing about. The great 19th-century essayist Charles Lamb wrote about getting sick (who has never gotten sick?); the 20th-century writer Christopher Morley wrote about getting a haircut (whose hair never needs cutting?); and E.B. White, who was a greater essayist than he was a children’s book writer, wrote about the death of a pig (a common enough experience!). The fact is that writing is thinking. Unless students learn to think beyond an experience to see its significance, they will never get past writing superficial chatter. The topics of the students’ narratives were beautifully and profoundly common.

English, 6th and 7th Grade - William Walter

It’s interesting to note that during the Neoclassical Age the most popular books for children were not about magic, or social activism, or dragons, or witches, or young love—some of the topics

which made New York Best Seller List in 2019. No. It was moral literature. This month the 6th and 7th grade students read a children's work by the 18th-century author Hannah More. A philanthropist who labored with William Wilberforce against slavery, More wrote stories against the vices of the age, one of which was fortune telling. Titled "Tawney Rachel," the story deals with a charlatan who cheats the gullible out of their money. Although the story is pedantic in parts and overgeneralizes, it is a good read, and I do not remember one student not enjoying it thoroughly. (The 6th and 7th graders all said they liked it very much.) The other works that the students read this month included an excerpt from Frances Burney's diary (in which she describes being chased by George III in a garden), Thomas Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" (a great example of the pastoral elegy), Percy Bysshe Shelley's "Ozymandias" (a philosophic poem about the nature of art), Oliver Goldsmith's "Elegy on a Mad Dog" (a humorous poem) and William Cowper's "John Gilpin" (also a humorous poem).

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

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 Montreal; etc.

We also spent a bit of time discussing Washington's boyhood, including the Rules of Civility that he copied.

From there we've finally begun studying the American Revolution. We pretended to be both the Americans at the Continental Congress and the British Parliament at different times. Who was going to pay for the war against the French? If not the colonists, then who else? How would they pay? On the other hand, was the Stamp Act a fair means of acquiring the money? Why couldn't the colonists have a say in the process?

After the Boston Massacre, Boston Tea Party, and the so-called "Intolerable Acts," the class finally decided (as colonists) that it was time to establish an armed force to be ready at a moment's notice: the Minutemen. We practiced several "drills" to see if we could line up and be prepared for inspection like soldiers, which seemed to be something the children enjoyed.

Moving forward, we'll be getting into Lexington and Concord, the Declaration, and more. I'm looking forward to it!

History, 2nd Grade - Graham Gormley

This month we finished up the backstory of Persia and how Darius came to power. The children seemed to enjoy giving their respective speeches on which form of government is best. The

majority seemed to favor oligarchy in the classic sense, i.e. rule of the few, unlike what Darius and the others chose and unlike our own government. Of course, it nearly went without saying that each of those advocating oligarchy would be among the few who rule...

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. It's always curious to me that such momentous events can have such unlikely beginnings.

For next month we'll cover the battle of Marathon and Xerxes' rise to power over Persia.

History, 3rd & 4th Grade - Graham Gormley

This month 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're finishing up the remainder of the Italian Wars for now and headed to the Pyrrhic and Punic Wars next.

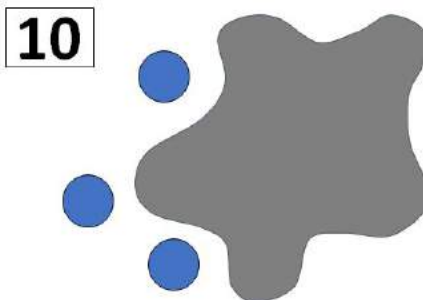
History, 5th, 6th & 7th Grade - Jacob Feeley

Students have learned about social turmoil in the Roman Republic through reading about the reform minded policies of the Gracchi brothers, ancient populists. They also received a basic introduction to Roman law. Some classes were devoted Roman architecture, like temples and the Colosseum. We are now taking up the periods of Roman history dominated by strong men such as Marius, Sulla, Pompey, and Julius Caesar. Here Roman history grows increasingly violent and unstable; eventually the Republic collapses. Meanwhile, Rome's foreign conquests expand significantly.

Math, Kindergarten - Yulia Shpilman

Counting routine - We have been using our number lines to continue our work with two-digit numbers. The students are getting quite good at recognizing and comparing them, as well as finding their place on the number line. We will be moving on to using 100 charts next month and looking for patterns in it.

Arithmetic practice - This month, we started working on single-digit subtraction. We are doing this by playing a game called Splat!, where a total number of dots is given, but some have been covered by an ink splat. The students are doing a great job figuring out how many dots are under the splat and learning subtraction along the way. We have also continued practicing addition and repeated addition, and are working on building fluency in these concepts.

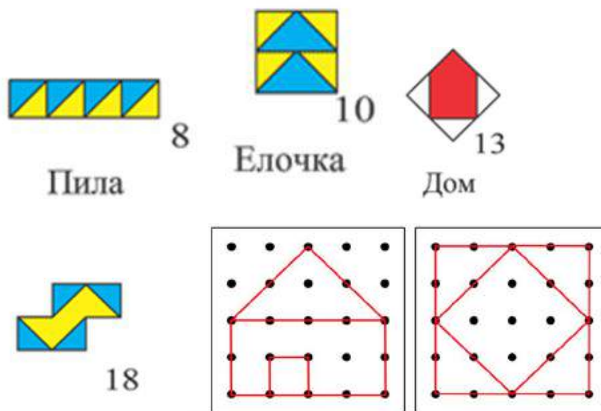


Special topic

- a. **Odd and even** - we had a wonderful discussion on even and odd numbers with the students this week. We first split various groups of beads into two piles, checking whether their original number was odd or even. We then noticed a pattern that odd and even numbers alternate (this was quite exciting!). Finally, we had a fun time jumping back and forth over a rope and predicting where we will end up - in the front or the back - depending on how many jumps we made. We did this activity for a while, until one student noticed that when we jump an even number number of times, we end up in the back, and when we jump an odd number of times, we end up in the front. We tested this

hypothesis, and it felt like a true moment of discovery for the students when it proved to be correct.

- b. Spatial reasoning - we have been working on building our spatial reasoning skills by doing puzzles and pictures with various sets of blocks and other materials such as geoboards. The students enjoy these, and although they feel like a break from numbers, they're challenging in their own right!

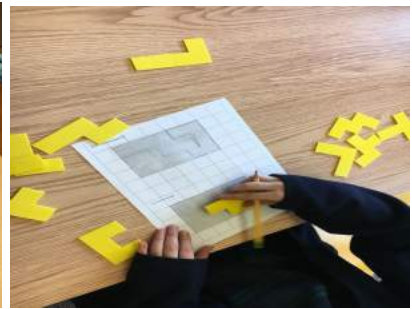
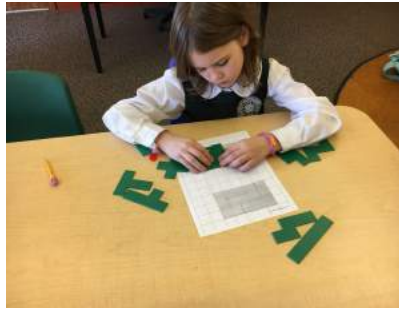


Game time - we occasionally have time for a game at the end of class. We have been playing Cats and Owls and Swish this month. .

Math, 1st Grade - Sasha Fradkin

The first grade class spent the month of February exploring 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.

Math, 2nd Grade - Sasha Fradkin



The second grade students took a break from Beast Academy during the month of February and played with some topics in geometry. They counted triangles in tricky configurations and made different figures out of pentominoes, shapes made up of exactly five squares connected at the edges. They also practiced using graph paper to make smaller scale models of figures that they made out of the pentominoes. At the end of the month, we went back to Beast Academy and arithmetic with a chapter on expressions.

Math, 3rd Grade - Sasha Fradkin

The third grade spent the month of February exploring multiplication but at a deeper level than the first grade students. They practiced multiplying numbers up to 10 by solving a variety of problems and puzzles. They also learned about the commutative and associative properties of multiplication and how to use them to simplify certain computations. As the month drew to a close, they started a chapter on perfect squares.

Math, 4th Grade - Tatiana Ter-Saakov

The fourth grade students are working on a topic with deceptively simple name of “counting.” In fact we are studying very basic principles of combinatorics which will give foundation to probability in a few months.

Math, 5th Grade - Sasha Fradkin

The fifth grade spent the month of February exploring the concepts of factors and multiples. They practiced finding the Greatest Common Factor and the Least Common Multiple of two or more numbers. They also solved some tricky problems and puzzles involving these concepts. The students learned and used the Euclidean Algorithm to find the greatest common factor of two numbers, an efficient algorithm first described by Euclid more than two thousand years ago!

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

The 6th-7th grade bid a bitter-sweet farewell to Beast Academy series. Students are excited to work on *Introduction to Algebra* by the Art of Problem Solving. These are transition times in several aspects: now students are expected to read two-three pages of intense mathematical material in the textbook about twice a week. We discuss the material the following day, the students have an opportunity to ask questions, and then are encouraged to review the material again. Also, the problems in this book tend to be on the more challenging side, so students are working on additional packages with practice problems to enhance basic skills. The students are still getting used to new routine, but are making steady progress in the new topic of graphing linear equations.

Science, Kindergarten, 1st Grade - Adam Darer

We began Science class this month, by exploring where the energy that allows us to grow, jump, and run comes from (the food we eat) and where the energy in our food ultimately comes from (the sun). We looked at how much energy is in different types of foods we eat and how much energy we use up when performing different exercise activities. We explored different types of fuels that people use for energy (wood, coal, oil, etc.) and talked about renewable and non-renewable sources of energy. We then examined several types of energy (chemical, thermal, kinetic, gravitational-potential, and practiced identifying the type(s) of energy involved in everyday processes such as eating a chocolate bar or playing the piano. We looked at how energy can be transferred from one object to another and in that process the type of energy may change. To demonstrate this transfer of energy, we built a tall racecar track and the students observed how the gravitational potential energy of the hot wheels car was converted into kinetic energy as the car started going down the track. We also tested how much kinetic energy we needed to make the hot wheels car successfully go around an upside-down loop. We just began our unit on electricity and started our discussion by reviewing the parts of an atom, what happens when similarly charged objects (+, +) or (-, -) are brought close together (they repel), and what happens when charged objects of different charges are brought close together (they attract). We then used this concept to explore what would happen if we lined several atoms up touching each and introduced an electron to one at the end (they electrons would start "flowing" from one atom to the next). We then looked "inside" a battery and drew a picture of the positive charges on one end and negative charges on another end. After reviewing that wires

are made up these atoms, we then discussed how electricity flows when the wires are attached to the battery and how we can use this energy to power a light bulb. After making hypotheses, we then tested which classroom objects would conduct electricity. We first built a circuit and then attached the object to the circuit and observed if the lightbulb in the circuit would turn on.

Science, 2nd & 3rd Grade - Adam Darer

We began Science class this month, by exploring where the energy that allows us to grow, jump, and run comes from (the food we eat) and where the energy in our food ultimately comes from (the sun). We looked at how much energy is in different types of foods we eat and how much energy we use up when performing different exercise activities. We explored different types of fuels that people use for energy (wood, coal, oil, etc.) and talked about renewable and non-renewable sources of energy. We then examined several types of energy (chemical, thermal, kinetic, gravitational-potential, elastic potential) and practiced identifying the type(s) of energy involved in everyday processes such as eating a chocolate bar or playing the piano. We looked at how energy can be transferred from one object to another and in that process the type of energy may change. To demonstrate this transfer of energy, the students built catapults out of pencils and rubber bands and explored how the elastic potential energy in the rubber band is converted to kinetic energy that causes small objects to be propelled across the classroom. We just began our unit on electricity and started our discussion by reviewing the parts of an atom, what happens when similarly charged objects (+, +) or (-, -) are brought close together (they repel), and what happens when charged objects of different charges are brought close together (they attract). We then used this concept to explore what would happen if we lined several atoms up touching each and introduced an electron to one at the end (the electrons would start "flowing" from one atom to the next). We then looked "inside" a battery and drew a picture of the positive charges on one end and negative charges on another end. After reviewing that wires are made up these atoms, we then discussed how electricity flows when the wires are attached to the battery and how we can use this energy to power a light bulb. After making hypotheses, we then tested which classroom objects would conduct electricity. We first built a circuit and then attached the object to the circuit and observed if the lightbulb in the circuit would turn on.

Science, 4th Grade - Tatiana Ter-Saakov



The fourth grade continues to explore chemistry, now through experiments with natural PH indicators. Black tea, zinger tea and turmeric each showed a visible change in color when mixed

with vinegar, baking soda solution, or even ashes. We are going to test PH of different substances using litmus paper next.

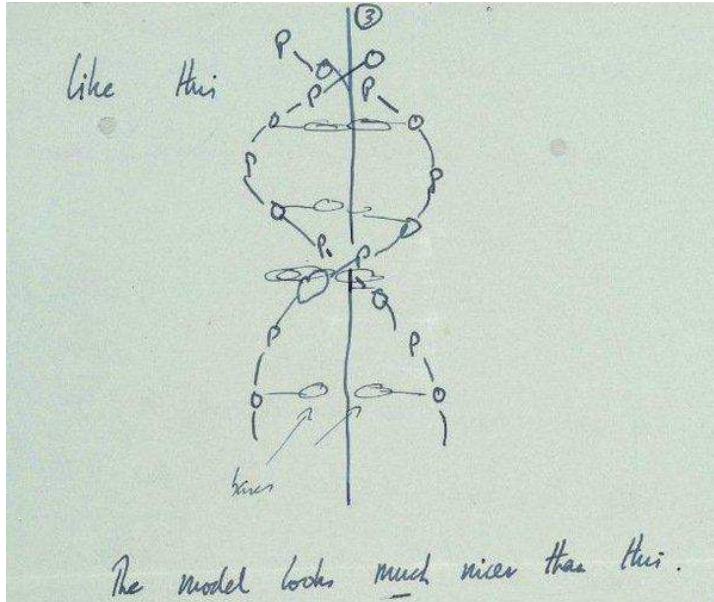
Science, 5th Grade - Adam Darer

We began our Science class this month by learning how to write numbers in Scientific Notation format and why it is useful know how to do so. We practiced turning numbers larger than ten and less than one into Scientific Notation format. We also learned how to convert from one unit to another using dimensional analysis. The students completed a worksheet and then came up with their own dimensional analysis problems to solve. Next we started learning about energy. We began our discussion by exploring where our energy comes from (food) and where the energy in our food ultimately comes from (the sun). We explored different types of fuels that people use for energy (wood, coal, oil, etc.) and talked about renewable and non-renewable sources of energy. We then examined different types of energy (chemical, thermal, kinetic, gravitational-potential, elastic potential, electrical, light, and sound) and practiced identifying the type(s) of energy involved in everyday processes such as eating a chocolate bar or playing the piano. We looked at how energy can be transferred from one object to another and in that process the type of energy may change. The students practiced drawing energy transfer diagrams for everyday activities and then had a lot of fun drawing their own energy transfer diagram for a story they made up. We ended our lessons on energy by demonstrating the Law of Conservation of Energy using pennies as our “unit” of energy and discussed the difference between useful and wasted energy in a process and how to calculate the efficiency of these processes. The students are now completing a laboratory activity where they roll balls of three different masses down ramps of three different heights. In this activity, the students will have to take measurements to calculate the potential energy of the balls when they are at the top of the ramp and the kinetic energy of the balls as they are rolling down the ramp.

Biology, 6th & 7th Grade - Danielle Nagelberg

The 6th and 7th graders are hard at work unraveling the logic of genetic codes. Each student has been assigned a gene to examine at the sequence level. They will use these assigned genes to learn more about DNA’s “grammar.” They began by exploring decoding strategies and observing features of the chemical structures of amino acids and nucleic acids. Next, they modeled Erwin Chargaff’s experiments deciphering the proportions of adenine, guanine, cytosine and thymine in DNA samples from various species. We then read and discussed how Francis Crick and James Watson used key data and insights from Erwin Chargaff, Rosalind Franklin, Raymond Gosling and Maurice Wilkins along with their own modeling to deduce DNA’s double helix structure. Students modeled the double helix structure using kits, and used beads to model DNA base-pairs from their assigned genes. They will use their observations regarding their assigned sequences to understand how genetic information is translated into cellular structures.

We also devoted some time this month to planning experiments by asking questions about food biochemistry. In March, students will continue the process of decoding genetic sequence while also returning to species diversity via genetics, taxonomy and physiology.



From Francis Crick's 1953 letter to his twelve-year-old son, Michael, describing his model of the DNA double helix (from <http://www.lettersofnote.com/2015/07/a-most-important-discovery.html>)

Robotics, Computer Programing - Tatiana Ter-Saakov

The students continued working on the missions, most have worked on two missions or more by now.

French - Kindergarten

This month was a short one due to the snow days and the Presidents' Day break. We continued to work in our second book "Français 2," and continued our routine about the date and numbers. We learned 3 new songs:

- Une souris verte, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2rt2g_afiAg
- Un éléphant qui se balançait, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ns92r5TQH3k>
- Lundi matin, l'empereur, sa femme et le p'tit prince
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UZqyssnv5Gw> ,

We proceeded with writing French sentences in our book by reading and then copying words in the correct order. We read color adjective and agreed them with the noun described orally. We described pictures using precise colors (from our book , as well as from Van Gogh's paintings). We counted in French, using pictures with cats, dogs, trees, birds, boys and girls. We reviewed all our «old» songs, especially the alphabet one. In the lesson 8, we looked over the French letters and wrote some of them on our white boards. We read individually the French sentences of this lesson to the teacher.

Vocabulaire :

L'alphabet français

bleu clair = light blue

bleu foncé = dark blue

va = goes

veut = wants

mange = eats

des bananes = bananas

une/la fille = a/the girl

un/le garçon = a/the boy

French - 1st Grade

This month was a short one due to the snow days and the Presidents' Day break. We continued to learn the French national anthem *La Marseillaise* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KTLBYoUy6RM>) and we also learned *Le fermier dans son pré* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=>). The students completed some written and oral evaluations about the previous lessons studied. Then, they studied the lessons 19 to 21 in their French book *Mon monde*. They conjugated the verb *nager* and *ÊTRE* at the present tense. They also answered questions with the question words : *où* , *qui*, *avec qui*, *est-ce que* and they continued to work on possession (*le frère de...* , *la sœur de...*).

Vocabulaire :

être = to be

je suis = I am

tu es = you are

il est = he is

elle est = she is

une/la fille = a/the girl

un/le garçon = a/the boy

un/le frère = a/the Brother

une/la sœur = a/the sister

nager = to swim

à la piscine = at the swimming pool

un maillot = a bathing suit

au cinéma = at the movie theater

le film = the movie

qui = who

où = where

French - 2nd & 3rd Grade

This month was a short one due to the snow days and the Presidents' Day break. We started to study one of Jean de la Fontaine's fable, *Le Corbeau et le Renard* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPkxWKrHVg8>). We explained the vocabulary and talked about the meaning and the historical context. We started to memorize it and say it out loud. We completed the lessons 22 and 23 in the Syntalk book D. We conjugated the verb *devoir* (following by infinitive) at the present tense. We practiced some short dialogues with a pair, and read a short text and answered few questions about it. We took a short listening test.

Vocabulaire:

devoir (must, to have to)

je dois (I must)

tu dois (you must)

il/elle/on doit (he/she/we must)

nous devons (we can)

vous devez (you can)

ils/elles doivent (they can)

au cinéma (at the movie theater)

à la piscine (at the swimming pool)

mais (but)

de la salade (some salad)

des céréales (some cereals)

une banane (a banana)

des raisins (some grappe)

un steak

un yaourt (a yogurt)

une tomate (a tomato)

un biscuit (a cookie)

un bonbon (a candy)

le chocolat (chocolate)

le matin (morning)
l'après-midi (afternoon)
le soir (evening)
le goûter (snack)

French - 4th Grade

This month was a short one due to the snow days and the Presidents' Day break. We started to study one of Jean de la Fontaine's fable, *Le Lion et le Rat* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhBFq8-CVd8>). In our book *First Start French*, we completed the lessons 19 to 21 about the numbers above 70 in letters, the vocabulary of the house (room and objects), the comparisons, the near future with **aller+infinitive**, the imperatives and the expression *Il faut*. In our syntalk book *Plein La Vie*, we worked on some dialogues and some oral evaluation.

French Proverbs:

Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose. (The more that changes, the more they stays the same.)

Il faut manger pour vivre et non vivre pour manger. (It is necessary to eat to live, not to live to eat.)

French - 5th, 6th & 7th Grade

This month was a short one due to the snow days and the Presidents' Day break. We started to study one of Jean de la Fontaine's fable, *Le Lion et le Rat* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhBFq8-CVd8>). Then, in the book "*French First Year*," we focused on the conjugation of PASSE COMPOSE for irregular **avoir** verbs. We continued the reading of the book "*Histoire d'une Revanche*." We read a chapter together; practicing reading aloud and summarizing the settings of the story.

Latin, 4th Grade - Jacob Feeley



Latin I students recently learned how to form commands. They also learned interrogative pronouns and adverbs. Presently they are getting acquainted with third declensions nouns like, soror, pater, mater, frater, and canis. They continue to read stories from the *Aeneid*.

Latin, 5th Grade - Jacob Feeley

Latin II students have been recently learning about the many uses of the ablative case. Soon, they will learn a second way to express the past tense: the perfect tense. At this point, they will also begin to read short narratives in Latin. The students continue to enjoy reading the *Eagle*, the historical novel about Roman Britain.

Latin, 6th & 7th Grade - Asya Sigelman

This month, we continued reviewing and cementing our knowledge of the six Latin tenses (present, imperfect, future, perfect, pluperfect, and future perfect). Recently, we also added to our grammar arsenal one new mood, the **imperative**, and one new case, the **vocative**. We have also embarked on a new poetry unit -- Horace's "Cleopatra Ode" (also known as Carmina 1.37), a poem celebrating Octavian's victory at the battle of Actium over the army led by the lovers Mark Anthony and Cleopatra in 31 BC. The ode introduces students not only to new vocabulary and syntax but also to new meter (the Alcaic stanza). Here is the first stanza of the poem, which we have translated, scanned, and are currently memorizing by heart:

Nunc est bibendum, nunc pede liberō
pulsanda tellūs, nunc Saliāribus
 ōrnāre pulvīnar deōrum
 tempus erat dapibus, sodālēs.

In addition, we have begun reading Diane Stanley's *Cleopatra* – an age-appropriate, illustrated historical account of the Hellenistic queen and of the key role she played in Roman history.

Music, Kindergarten - Karina Butterworth

During the violin ensemble, the girls started to connect the left hand (fingers) and the bow. They have improved a lot on piano as well and their songs have become longer and more complex. The students are writing simple musical dictations with less help than before. We talk about every measure, but some of the girls are able to finish the dictation before the explanation. We play a musical card game and they are able to recognise many notes.

Music, 1st Grade - Karina Butterworth

This month during the violin ensemble the children learned Allegro from Suzuki book 1. We also continued working on "Twinkle-Twinkle," "Choo-choo Train," "Study," and "Hunter and Bunny." They are more skilled with the violin now, learn faster and very often prefer violin to theory. During theory lesson, the students wrote dictations in C, G, and D major.

Music, 2nd & 3rd Grade - Karina Butterworth



This month, the children learned the beginning level of harmony, combination of three chords in C, D, and G major, Tonika (chord on 1st step), Subdominant (4th step), Dominant (5th) and Dominant seventh. They wrote the chords, played them on the piano and decoded them while I was playing them on the piano. By mastering these chords, the children will be able to play accompaniment to any simple song. They will also hear and understand these chords in their piano songs. During violin ensemble, the students learned all three parts of *Mazurka* by Baklanova. They also learned few new simple songs and repeated some old songs.

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

After spending a good amount of time practicing rhythmic dictations, the students were ready to take a hearing test. I was delighted with the results. No one failed, in fact the class average was 95%, with many students handing in perfect dictations. Well done.

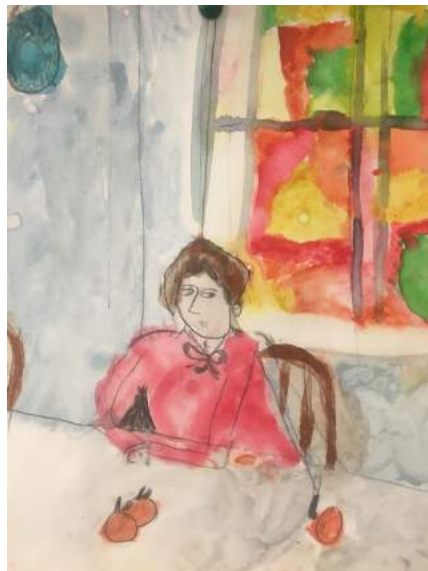
After the President's Day break, it was time to shift gears and we did a review on the major chords and how to find them. We will have a test on Friday, March 1st. If all goes according to plan, we will learn about inverting the major chords next.

I am also planning a mid-trimester piano performance class soon, where the students will have the opportunity to showcase their progress in piano.

Art, Kindergarten & 1st Grade - Karina Butterworth

This month the girls copied two pictures from the Tretyakov gallery in Moscow, "Girl with the Peaches" by Valentin Serov, and "Alexander Nevsky" by Pavel Korin. Those pictures have a clear composition, making them easy to draw step by step. The students also drew a still life with ukulele. We also repeated the lesson in perspective that objects in front appear lower on the paper and objects behind look higher on the paper. The students had a chance to do some free drawing when they made Valentine's Day cards.

Art, 1st Grade - Karina Butterworth





This month the children copied a picture from the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow called “Girl with the Peaches” by Valentin Serov. This picture has clear composition, and easy to draw step by step. The students also drew still lifes, “Kitchenware”, “Lunch Box” and “Ukulele.” We also repeated the lesson in perspective that objects in front appear lower on the paper and objects behind look higher on the paper.

Art, 2nd & 3rd Grade - Karina Butterworth



This month the children drew still life with “Lunch Box” and still life with “Glass Bottles.” We also repeated the lesson in perspective that objects in front appear lower on the paper and objects behind look higher on the paper. They copied a picture from Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow called “The Lace-Maker” by V. Tropinin. We repeated how to draw $\frac{3}{4}$ face. The students had a chance to do some free drawing when they made Valentine’s Day cards.

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



This trimester has been an interesting transition from drawing mediums to color. We had finished charcoal and unveiled the oil pastels. Many may have seen the students bringing(or dragging, dropping) their pastels home. These little color sticks have the opportunity to produce some beautiful effects, if the little color stick users are diligent to use them as instructed. We have worked primarily on still life arrangements, except for one design piece, which goal was to help to understand a bit more about design and patterns. We are presently having an emphasis on reflected color. This is seen everywhere, but unknown to most of us. Learning these discernment skills should help each student to be more discerning, not only of color in the natural realm, but more discerning in life itself. Our next venture in early March will be Acrylic paints. This will certainly bring the color challenge to another level. Brush handling and color mixing!

Hands-On Skills - Adam Darer



This month in Hands-On-Skills, the students have been hard at work learning woodworking skills. The Kindergarten class is building a dollhouse and the 1st-3rd grade classes are building gates for the garden. The students are learning how to use a hand-saw, hammer, measuring tape, square, and clamps and have developed great teamwork skills while working on these projects. We also started tapping sugar maple trees (2nd and 3rd grades) to collect the sap to make maple syrup!

Modern Hebrew, 4th Grade - Tal Gutman

Our main Topic in February was traveling. We learned new vocabulary and read texts about a 4th grade class field trip. This topic exposed the students to new structure of impersonal phrases with infinitive forms related to instructions - what is allowed and is not allowed to do during the trip. For example: **אסור** לקטוף פרחים בשדה. **מוותר** לקחת ממתקים בתרמיל. **אסור** לצעוק. באוטובוס.

In English the sentences contain the words – forbidden / allowed: it's not allowed to pick flowers in the field / it's allowed to bring snacks to the field trip / it's not allowed to shout on the bus. In our discussions, we practiced this pattern according to conduct in school - what is allowed and forbidden to do at school. The students also enjoyed describing their dream school in which everything is allowed. Through this unit, we review the verb "to be" in the past tense (was/were). This verb does not exist in the present, so the students had to rewrite nominal sentences without a verb in the present to verbal sentences in the past and did it well. This is not an easy concept to implement!

This month we also spent time expanding the knowledge about exceptional words in Hebrew, that don't behave according to the rules of forming feminine or masculine words. The students

learned strategies to match those words with the correct form of the adjective in gender and number. We also practiced cardinal numbers problems in which we had to choose the correct form of the number (feminine or masculine) which agrees with the gender of the word.

A topic that was favored among the students was learning other languages and countries' names. We discussed which languages are spoken in which countries and the students were curious to learn about Arabic in Israel which is spoken by over 20% of the population. They asked to see the Arabic Alphabet and I also said a few sentences I know in Arabic. I explained to the students that Arabic and Hebrew are sister languages and there is a lot of similarity between them. They were very excited about Arabic and asked to learn also Arabic in Hebrew class. 😊

In the last part of the lesson we usually review past vocabulary through games, competitions, or whiteboard activities. I let the students compose some of the tasks by themselves and to present the questions to the class. The students liked to create category questions in which there are four words: three from the same category and one unrelated and did great a great job using a wide range of categories studied in the past: rooms in the house, furniture, weather, food, professions, holiday symbols and more. Time and time again I enjoy watching their growth in Hebrew and their engagement with the language!

In March we will celebrate Purim with our annual costume party on March 22 and we are all looking forward to this. Additional details will be provided to parents by email.

Modern Hebrew, Kindergarten - 2nd Grade - Jacob Feeley

Students continue to review and learn Hebrew folk songs. They are working on creating illustrated alphabet books. On occasion, they listen to children's stories by Israeli authors.

Judaic Studies, K-2 - Asya Sigelman

In Judaic Studies this month we have delved into the study of *sofiot* – pronominal suffixes which can be either **possessive** (my, your, his, her, our, their) and **objective** (me, you, him, her, us, them). By now, the children have studied all ten of the suffixes which correspond to the singular and plural, masculine and feminine pronouns. This is very rich material and it will take students a while to internalize it. Our book, *Lehavin u Lehaskil*, provides extensive review of this new grammar (as well as review of grammar covered last term), so you can expect your children to bring home many worksheets on suffixes (*sofiot*) in the course of the next month. We have also been focusing on identifying the suffixes in our daily prayers. For example, in the first half of the *Shema*, Hashem repeatedly addresses the Jewish People in the second person singular – *levavecha* (“your heart”), *beitecha* (“your house”), *yadecha* (“your hand”). In the second part of the *Shema*, the text switches back and forth between the singular and the plural second person (e.g., *levavchem*, “the hearts of all of you”). Similarly, in *Ashrei*, the composer (King David) sometimes addresses Hashem in the second person singular (*malchutcha*, “your kingdom”), sometimes speaks about Hashem in the third person singular (*yado*, “His hand”). We have also

continued reading short excerpts from *Parshas Noach* as well as from the book of stories about King David.

Judaic Studies, 4th Grade - Jacob Feeley

Students continue to read and parse biblical verses from Genesis, after tefillot. In addition, they are learning about a fundamental halakhic text: the mishna. Students are reading and discussing selected chapters from tractate Baba Kamma that deal with the question of liability in cases of injury to one's person.

Christian Studies, Kindergarten - 2nd Grade - Frank Chilbert

The Christian studies department has been joining forces in order to prepare a short presentation at the Mardi Gras French Festival (Sunday, March 24th). The younger and older students have been meeting in one room to learn more about the richness of the upcoming Lenten Season. They have been developing images for the spiritual journey that takes us from Mardi Gras, through Lent, and toward Easter. Most of these images have to do with themes such as "journey", "struggle", "patience" and "rest". We hope to use these images as metaphors as we, ourselves go through our own spiritual journeys, waiting for Christ to conquer sin and death.

We are also excited to offer an opportunity to go to an Ash Wednesday service at the Church of the Redeemer in Bryn Mawr. If you did not receive an email with details, please contact me.