

## English, Kindergarten, 1st, & 2nd Grade - Frank Chilbert



In English, we have continued our exploration of literature with Ancient Near Eastern, Ancient Greek, and Medieval myths and legends (see below for grade-by-grade list of our readings). We have also continued with our study of poetry, delving into Rossetti, Frost, Stevenson, and Cowper, taking time to appreciate their language, themes, and imagery. Take for example a stanza from a kindergarten memory poem:

Who has seen the wind?  
Neither I nor you.  
But when the leaves hang trembling  
The wind is passing through...

(Excerpt from “Who Has Seen the Wind?” by Christina Rossetti)

We discussed how Rossetti uses beautiful rhyme and meter to express the mysteriousness of something as common and familiar as the wind: it is both seen and not seen, detectable and undetectable. This observation has given us much to talk about--especially during these beautiful fall afternoons.

Here is a list of poems and stories we have covered this month grade-by-grade:

### *Kindergarten:*

#### Poems:

“Who can see the Wind?” by Christina Rossetti

“By the Seaside” by R.L. Stevenson

“Fire and Ice” by Robert Frost

#### Stories:

## *The Epic of Gilgamesh*

### *1st Grade/2nd Grade:*

#### Poems:

“A Chill” by Christina Rossetti

“The Lord Will Provide” by William Cowper

#### Stories:

*The Iliad* (1st Grade)

*Tales of King Arthur* (2nd Grade)

We have also been enjoying learning new phonics sounds and sight words that have helped us all become more confident readers. First Grade is working through “A is for Apple” vol. 1 while 2nd grade is finishing “A is for Apple” vol. 2.

## **History, Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, 3rd & 4th Grade - Frank Chilbert**

### **Kindergarten & 1st Grade - Early American History:**

In Early American History, we have been telling great stories about great Americans. We have learned about William Penn and how he came to the New World after being put in jail twice for his religious beliefs. As a Quaker, he believed that political religious tolerance was necessary for a good society and made sure that Pennsylvania was able to become a land of many creeds. We also talked about the great city of Philadelphia that he founded.

We also learned about another great Philadelphian by the name of Benjamin Franklin. We learned that Franklin taught himself many things. He made many discoveries and inventions in the field of science including glasses, the lightning rod, and the Franklin Stove. We learned that Franklin was able to discover so much because he 1) didn't waste time 2) read good books, and 3) saw things for himself.

Redirecting our attention to the south, we learned about Thomas Young from South Carolina, who with one little bag of seed rice brought a new food crop to America. This gave many poorer Americans a cheap way to make sure they had food to eat every day. We also encountered Eliza Lucas from South Carolina who brought the Indigo plant to the southern plantations that made a beautiful and previously expensive dye. With her efforts, more people were able to make and wear beautiful clothing.

Make sure to ask your students if they know the 13 colonies--you might find yourself listening to a sweet song!

## 2nd, 3rd, & 4th Grade - Ancient Greek History



Who was responsible for the burning of the great city of Troy? Was it Odysseus, whose cunning idea it was to create a false prize to his enemies? Was it young prince Paris, who selfishly took something that was not his? Was it Aphrodite, the goddess of love who gave a misleading promise? Was it Eris, the goddess of discord, who caused a jealous feud between the gods that eventually spread to the human world and manifested itself in human conflict? This is one of the many questions that we have asked (and not necessarily yet answered!) in Greek History this month. We have watched while the Greeks sailed against Troy in their one thousands ships, and how some of the gods supported them while some did not. We have closely examined the internal conflicts on both sides of the ten-year war, giving special attention to the Greek warrior, Achilles, who, full of wrath against the Greek leader Agamemnon, convinced Zeus, the king of all gods, to fight against his own Greek army in order to prove a point. We watched as Troy, after many acts of honor and hubris, was at last burned to the ground as a result of what took place during the last moments of the ten-year war.

In addition to studying the Trojan War, we have also given our attention to various Greek heroes such as Jason and the Argonauts, Theseus, and others. We have also been memorizing the Ancient Greek alphabet. Here are the letters that students have learned so far:

Alpha, beta, gamma, delta, epsilon, zeta, eta, theta, iota, kappa, lambda, mu, nu, ksi, omicron, pi, rho, sigma, tau, upsilon... (only four more!)

## **History, 5th & 6th Grade - Graham Gormley**

We concluded our brief overview of Egypt this month in preparation for our studies of ancient Greece. Apart from considering how certain key pharaohs fared, such as Menes, Amenemhat I, Thutmose, Ramses II, and Amasis II, we reflected on the influence of early Egyptian academics, such as Imhotep. Not only is Egypt important in respect to our inquiry into ancient Greece, because Persia (who later attacks Greece in the Persian Wars) ends up subsuming the former and absorbing her power, but ancient Egypt and Greece also had a notable intellectual rapport. Among other Greek savants, Archimedes, Pythagoras, Euclid, and Thales studied there.

The children were most interested in our discussion of the battle of Kadesh, when Ramses II engaged with the Hittite Empire. There is an undeniable appeal to military strategy with students at this age and it will come more to the fore as we progress to Greece's wars with Persia and again with the Peloponnesian Wars.

As we progress into discussing the rise of Persia as a "superpower" of the ancient world, we've begun reading from Herodotus' *Histories*, which is especially exciting for the children and for me. In the *Histories*, every anecdote filled with intrigue and wonder; moreover, Herodotus forces us to consider how much and in what way we are dependent on fortune, as opposed to our own intellect and cunning.

## **English, 3rd, 4th, 5th & 6th Grade - William Walter**

What does a popular candy bar have to do with one of the best essayists of the 1700s? That is a question I asked the 4th graders last month to pique their curiosity about a well-respected, but not so well-known (at least among 4th graders) literary figure. The question was intended to connect the familiar with the unfamiliar, the academic with the non-academic, as when a student's school and personal life are integrated, they experience exciting "Aha! moments." Personally, one of my special joys as a teacher is to connect the dots and make sense of it all, such as when in one of my fourth grade classes last month (September) I related Medieval Danish history to modern bluetooth technology in going over the narrative of the Danish king Canute. This month (October), in discussing Joseph Addison, I connected the Neoclassical essayist to something that most children are familiar with—the Kit Kat candy bar. Before reading one of Addison's famous *Spectator* essays, I told them how Addison started a literary/political club in London at Christopher Katt's tavern. There the literary circle was served a delicious

meat pie, which was called a Kit Kat. (Kit is a nickname for Christopher.) The name began to be used for any delicious food, and was adopted by an English candy company in the early 1900s.

Last week I “connected the dots” for the fifth grade students when going over traditional English ballads. There is something for all different kinds of students in a ballad, as it combines poetry, drama, narrative and folk music. The students read “Sir Patrick Spens,” “Willie and May Margaret,” and “Robin Hood and Allen-a-Dale.” “Sir Patrick Spens” and “Willie and May Margaret” are typical ballads in that they have tragic endings, an eerie mood and evil foreshadowings. Contemporary ballads are no different. Some make the top music charts in popular music, such as Gordon Lightfoot’s “Edmund Fitzgerald” and Peter, Paul, and Mary’s “Ballad of Springhill,” both of which were written explosion in a Kentucky coal mine. The fifth grade students (with the fourth) will be writing a ballad about a contemporary event—an adventure narrative in the style of Robin Hood or a tragic narrative in the style of “Sir Patrick Spens”—in a poetry contest.

This past month the 3rd grade students read a biographical story about Jonathan Swift and his little poem “On Vowels.” Swift is mainly known as a satirist, so in addition to enjoying the poem, the students learned about satire, which I defined simply as “making fun of something bad.” I then read one of Swift’s great satirical poems, “Elegy on the Late Famous General.” The general referred to in the poem is the Duke of Marlborough, who achieved personal fame and fortune in the War of the Spanish Succession (1702–1714). Though tens of thousands of English soldiers had died, England gained nothing by the war. However, Marlborough was given various titles and the opulent Blenheim Palace for his military “contribution” to the country. When the duke died, Swift felt no compunction in writing his funeral “elegy,” excerpted below:

Behold his funeral appears.  
Nor widow's sighs, nor orphan's tears,  
But what of that? his friends may say,  
He had those honors in his day.  
True to his profit and his pride,  
He made them weep before he died.

The students were all able to appreciate the humor of the poem—one of the hallmarks of great satire.

## Math, Kindergarten - Yulia Shpilman



Welcome to another month of kindergarten math! Our kindergarten math classes are structured in a similar way most days:

1. **Counting routine** - aimed at promoting number sense and number literacy in the children. In October, we are learning to love the number line - and one that doesn't start at zero! It is important for students to see that numbers don't begin and end at any particular point and to practice counting forward and backwards starting at different points. Most five year olds can easily recite the numbers from 1 to 100+, but actually recognizing various numbers and associating them with specific quantities takes time and practice.
2. **Arithmetic practice** - our arithmetic practice is currently focused on basic addition within 20 and is always done in a form of a game. One example (our favorite) is 1-2-3-peek-and-see. Each student has a set of numbers 1-10. I put a few gemstones in an old chocolate box and open the box for a few seconds to give the kids a peek. Then they have to figure out how many stones they saw. This is an amazing game to develop mental math skills. This is because there is no way to quickly count more than 3-4 stones. Thus, students have to remember the "picture" that they saw and do the math in their heads. For example, if they know that a full row of stones is 8, and they see a full row plus two more stones,



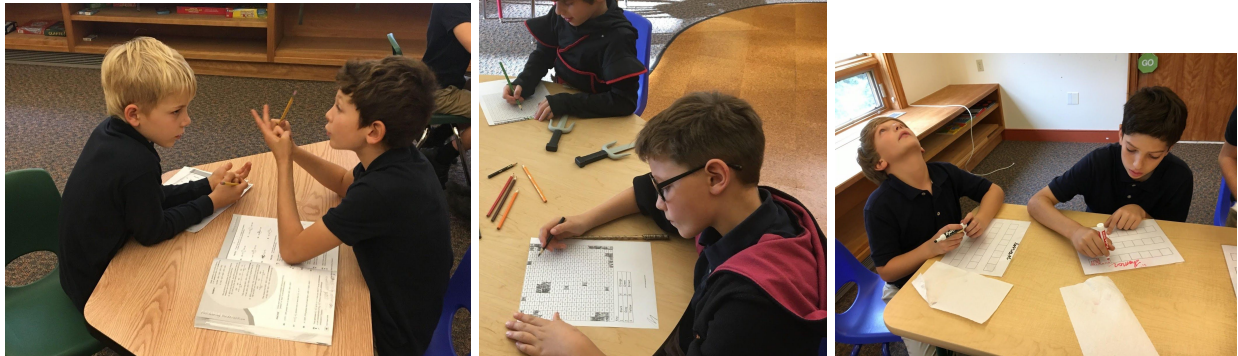
they can figure out that there are 10 stones in the box. This game can get increasingly rich and complex, so expect us to keep playing a more complicated version of this all year long, as we work to master addition and subtraction of one and two-digit numbers.

3. **Special topic** - this time block includes many a range of non-number oriented topics. This month, we spent time learning about 1) making charts, 2) building 3-d structures based on diagrams, 3) attributes of objects and 4) coordinates. We will often do a worksheet on the special topic during this time slot of the class. All these topics are rich and multi-faceted and we will continue to explore them throughout the year.
4. **Game time** - in case you were worried that we don't play enough, we usually spend the last few minutes of class playing a proper game. Games bring a lot of joy to the classroom and help build important non-mathematical skills such as playing fair, waiting for your turn, paying attention. Among the games we play are Blink, Swish, and Tiny Polka Dot Memory. Ask your kindergartener about their favorites!

Looking ahead to November, we will continue to tackle two-digit numbers, because while all our students can easily count up to 100, many don't consistently recognize two-digit numbers and most can easily confuse 12 and 21. Coordinates will continue to be our special topic for another week. We will also explore large numbers (e.g., 1000 vs. 10K vs. 1 million vs. 1 billion), discuss the notion of order of magnitude and start practicing estimating small and large quantities.

### Math, 1st, 2nd, 3rd & 4th Grade - Sasha Fradkin





This month, the focus of first grade math was largely on interpreting word problems and drawing pictures to help solve them.

Here is a sample problem:

“Alice lives on the third floor from the bottom and the fifth floor from the top. How many floors are in Alice’s building?”

The students very quickly found the answer - it was 8. And they didn’t need to draw a picture, they insisted, they can add  $3+5$  without it. But after I convinced them to draw those pictures after all, they discovered that somehow the answer was 7. For the next two problems, many more of them were willing to draw pictures and not just rely on their intuitions.

Knowing how to draw useful pictures and diagrams will help them solve problems throughout school and beyond.

Second graders continued deepening their understanding of place value. How can we quickly add 1, 10, or 100 to a number? What number is the same as 77 tens? What about 77 ones?

They solved many such problems using base-10 blocks (blocks of sizes 1, 10, and 100) to build their intuition and then solved many more without them.

All of these questions and explorations are building the foundations for developing good number sense and coming up with efficient computation strategies.

The third graders have spent the month of October skip counting.

“When you skip count by 5’s, you only say numbers that end in 0 or 5,” we read in the guide book.

“That’s not necessarily true,” challenged one of the students. The student received many surprised looks (including mine).

“Well it’s not true if you start at 1 or 2,” the student explained. Wow!



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.

When do we need to know an exact answer to a computation and when is an estimate good enough? How do we quickly obtain a reasonable estimate when an exact answer is not needed or not possible? These are the sort of questions that the fourth graders have been working on this month.

If I add two 3-digit numbers and get a 6-digit result, is that reasonable or should I be concerned? What if I had multiplied the two 3-digit numbers?

Being able to quickly get ballpark answers is helpful in checking the sensibility of the results of mathematical computations and is also a useful life skill.

### **Math, 5th & 6th Grade - Tatiana Ter-Saakov**



More work on fractions was done by students in October. Fractions is an excellent example of a topic in which just pure memorization of procedures and recipes to perform calculations is not the best path to follow. So numerous pizzas and baguettes were mentally cut while working on fractions. We made sure each step we perform is meaningful, for example converting both fractions to the same denominator corresponds to cutting pieces to the same size, and definitely is needed before we starts counting how many pieces are there. At this point, students are able to perform all four operations on fractions, explain the meaning of their actions, and apply their understanding of fractions in word problems. We'll definitely review fractions multiple times in the future, but for the time being we moved on our next topic: 3d geometry. The

students found this to be very exciting, as we get to build polygons with a “Polydron” set, and even play a game on creating cube nets. We’ll move to calculating the surface area soon, which will allow more practice on multiplication, as well as testing the newly acquired understanding of 3d objects.

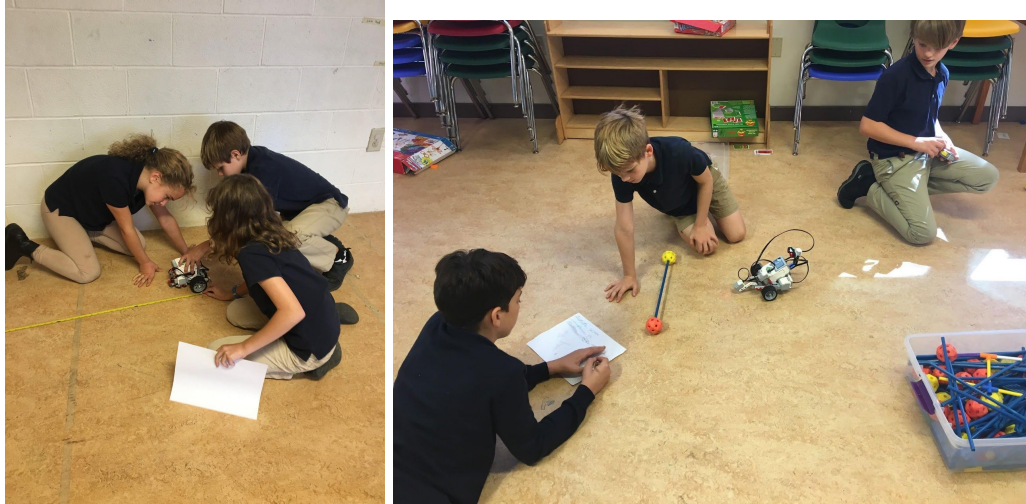
### **Science - Tatiana Ter-Saakov**

Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd and 3rd graders were working on the properties of water. Students easily came up with names of quite a few substances that can dissolve in water. 2nd and 3rd grade students performed a lab dissolving increasing amounts of sugar in given volume of water. We discovered, as more and more sugar was added, that it takes longer and longer mixing time for all of it to dissolve completely. At some point, one is not able to make it all dissolve no matter how long one stirs. Students did an excellent job recording their work. Then we asked ourselves: why do we pay so much attention in science to what substances can dissolve in water? In our next experiment, conducted in all classes (K-3), students mixed some baking soda with dry lemonade powder. Many were familiar with “volcano” reaction, so expectations were that a chemical reaction will follow. However, nothing happened...Until we added water!

After that little introduction to chemistry, we turned back to physics and explored the buoyancy of various objects. Second and third grade students did an amazing job calculating the density of various objects. Students worked in pairs to measure the weight of objects using a simple spring hanging scale. Next came the tricky part of determining the volume of some non-regular shapes. Students submerged the objects under water, and measured the volume of water displaced. Finally, we used the data collected to calculate the density, and discovered that objects with density higher than density of water sink, and those with lower density float. The whole process required a lot work, and students were rewarded this week by making “lava lamps” in which they get to observe colored water bubbles carried up through the layer of oil as tablet of Alka-Seltzer is dissolved.

Fourth, fifth and sixth grade students explored the structure of an atom. They enjoyed creating models of certain elements by turning themselves into electrons, protons and neutrons. We had the periodic table in front of us as we worked, and took notice of how atomic structure changes along the lines of the table. Currently, we are transitioning to how compounds are formed, with the help of exciting board game called “Ion: a compound building game”.

## Robotics, Computer Programing - Tatiana Ter-Saakov



Right now we are going through the most laborious stage, when the robot is put together, and we now have to “teach” it to move forward any distance it’s given. We have a command that will make the wheels move given number of rotations at our disposal, but to convert those rotations into more conventional measuring units like inches require some extensive data collecting, and non-trivial use of proportions. Students have been very patient, and have finished creating their “my blocks” that will allow them to just plug the number of inches in from now on. November is going to start with “Park your robot in the garage” contest to check our work.

## French, Kindergarten - Betty d’Herve



In October, we learned the following songs:

- Meunier tu dors ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P\\_-LTIrkjSs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P_-LTIrkjSs))

- Tourne, tourne petit moulin ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dpde\\_6W39h8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dpde_6W39h8) )
- Brousse, brousse ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMgi\\_Mdan9Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sMgi_Mdan9Q) )
- Vieille sorcière (to the tune of *Are you sleeping, Brother John?*)
- L'alphabet
- Au jardin de ma grand-mère
- Le facteur n'est pas passé (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QL12CDQEVWc>)

Every day, we reviewed different French songs which we had learned previously. The children also did a great job making French sentences with the words learned from the beginning of the year and then reading their own sentences out loud one by one. We also studied lessons 6 to 10 in the book *Mes Premiers Pas*. These lessons introduce two new characters: Gérard and Sylvie, and colors (bleu, vert, rouge, jaune). We studied the placement of the adjective in French most of the time after the noun. We continued to work on numbers 1-20 and making sentences. Orally, we answered the question "combien de ... il y a ?" ("how much/many... is/are there?") and we made sentences combining the numbers and the colors. Lesson 9 introduced a new verb - veut (wants). We made sentences using this new verb and all the vocabulary learned. In lesson 10 of our book *Mes Premiers Pas*, we used the adjectives of colors (jaune, vert, bleu, rouge) with a new noun "l'ours" (the bear).

We studied the names of some animals and made sentences with them, combining the vocabulary from our book. Often, we use our individual white boards to work on numbers, and on spelling the beginning letters of the French word. Each student reads several times individually to the teacher the French sentences from our book. We continued to play games (memory games, speed games...) about the colors, animals, numbers, and new vocabulary.

#### Vocabulary:

du gâteau (some cake)  
 la pomme (the apple)  
 Sylvie  
 Gérard  
 veut (wants)  
 l'ours bleu (the blue bear)  
 l'ours vert (the green bear)  
 l'ours jaune (the yellow bear)  
 l'ours rouge (the red bear)  
 un ballon rose (a pink ball)

un ballon violet (a purple ball)  
un ballon gris (a ball)  
un ballon orange (an orange ball)  
un ballon blanc (a white ball)  
un ballon marron (a brown ball)  
une balle (a small ball)  
un feutre (a marker)  
un crayon (a pencil)  
il y a (there is/there are)  
l'éléphant (an elephant)  
la tortue (the turtle)  
le pingouin (the penguin)  
le léopard (the leopard)  
le poisson (the fish)  
le poisson rouge (the goldfish)  
l'hippopotame (the hippopotamus)

### **French, 1st & 2nd Grade - Betty d'Herve**

In October, we learned the songs :

- La jument de Michao
- Meunier tu dors
- J'ai du bon tabac
- Compère Guilleri
- Au jardin de ma grand-mère
- Vieille sorcière (in tune of *Are you sleeping, Brother John?*)

We continued our routine about date, weather and season. We also started a new routine with numbers. We have studied the lessons 4, 5 and 6 of the book *Mon Monde* as well as practicing the "dictée" exercise. We completed evaluations covering lessons 1 to 5. We started lesson 6 with the new vocabulary: écrire/écrit (to write/ writes), le sac/un sac (the bag/ a bag), dans (in), il y a (there is, there are). We practiced answering some questions orally with "qui" (who) and "combien de...il y a?" (how much/many... is/are there?). We introduced the conjugation of the present tense of the verbs with "je, tu, il, elle". Conjugation is a difficult notion and we will continue to work on it during the year.



It took time to work on the French spelling of all the vocabulary. We have used our individual white board a lot in order to practice memorizing French spelling as well as introducing French sounds (ain , on,...).

Meunier tu dors ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P\\_-LTIrkjSs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P_-LTIrkjSs))

J'ai du bon tabac ( <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NWzeca6NzLg> )

Compère Guilleri ( Les choristes <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJ0qHAThhWQ> )

La jument de michao ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iJPI1ohl\\_q8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iJPI1ohl_q8))

Vocabulary:

chez Alain (at Alain's)

chez Brigitte (at Brigitte's)

à l'école (at the school)

l'école (school)

les frites (French fries)

le croque-monsieur (grilled ham and cheese sandwich)

la télé (TV)

le chien (dog)

le sac (bag)

dans (in)

prends (takes)

le cahier rouge (red notebook)

le cahier bleu (blue notebook)

le crayon (pencil)

le crayon bleu (blue pencil)

le crayon rouge (red pencil)

le crayon vert (green pencil)

le crayon jaune (yellow pencil)

écrit (writes)

il y a (there is/are)

### **French, 3rd, 4th, 5th & 6th Grade - Betty d'Herve**

In October, we learned the songs:

- La jument de Michao
- Meunier tu dors
- J'ai du bon tabac

- Compère Guilleri
- Au jardin de ma grand-mère
- Vieille sorcière (to tune of *Are you sleeping, Brother John?*)

We continued our routine about the date, weather and season. We also started a new routine about the numbers. We studied lessons 21, 22, 23 and the beginning of lesson 24 of our book *Gérard et Ses Copains*. Throughout these lessons, we studied the expressions “c’est/ce n’est pas” and reviewed the possessions with “de” in French. We also use the verbs “écouter” and “regarder” (which do not use a preposition in French), and we conjugated the irregular verbs “devoir” and “pouvoir” (following by the infinitive). We wrote a lot of dialogs using these new verbs and the students took an evaluation describing pictures to the teachers one by one orally and also by writing. We started to answer questions about a short text. We wrote complex sentences with “mais,” “parce que/qu,” and “pour”.

Vocabulary:

avoir faim/ soif/ chaud/ froid (to be hungry/thirsty/hot/cold) être

être fatigué(e)/ content(e)/ grand(e)/ petit(e) ( to be tired/ happy/ tall/ small)

c’est (it is)

ce n’est pas (it is not)

de/d’ (of)

écouter (to listen to)

j’écoute (I listen)

tu écoutes (you-singular- listen)

il/elle/on écoute (he/she/we listen)

nous écoutons (we listen)

vous écoutez (you-formal or plural- listen)

ils/elles écoutent (they listen)

écouter de la musique (to listen to some music)

écouter la radio (to listen to radio)

regarder (to look at)

regarder la télé (to watch TV)

regarder un film (to watch a movie)

pouvoir (to be able to, can)

je peux (I can)

tu peux (you-singular- can)

il/elle/on peut

nous pouvons (we can)

vous pouvez (you-plural- can)

ils/elles peuvent (they can)  
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)

Meunier tu dors ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P\\_-LTlrkjSs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P_-LTlrkjSs))

J'ai du bon tabac ( <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NWzecA6NzLg> )

Compère Guilleri ( Les choristes <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJ0qHAThhWQ> )

La jument de michao ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iJPI1ohl\\_q8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iJPI1ohl_q8))

### **Latin, 4th, 5th & 6th Grade - Asya Sigelman**

In Latin class this month we wrapped up our review of the basics of English grammar and delved into our first encounter with Latin nouns and verbs, steadily building our word bank of Latin vocabulary. Thus far, we have been practicing third person singular and plural present indicative verb forms of the first conjugation. For example:

auscultat = he/she/it listens

auscultant = they listen

We have also learned the verbs which mean “to work”, “to carry”, “to put”, “to love”, “to stand” “to wash”, “to look”. We discussed that in Latin, unlike in English, the subject of the verb is present inside the verb, so that, for instance “portant” is a full grammatical sentence which means “they are carrying”. However, a verb *can* have an explicit subject attached to it, e.g., “equi portant” = “the horses are carrying”. We noted that Latin, unlike English does not employ helping verbs, so that “portant” can be translated as “they carry”, “they are carrying” or as “they do carry”. We also discussed that while every sentence (in any language) *must* have a subject and a verb, some sentences also have a *direct* object, which we put into the accusative case, e.g., “equus portat dominum” = “the horse carries the master”. We practiced these more elaborate sentences with some of the new first- and second-declension feminine, masculine, and neuter nouns we learned this month. Ask your child how to say “star”, “arm”, “word”, “deed”, “danger”, “horse”, “servant”, “son”, “daughter”, “girl”, “master”, “friend”, “earth”, “moon”, “sailor”, or “water” in Latin. Thus far, we have studied the nominative and accusative singular and plural of these nouns. Finally, we also compared and contrasted the importance of word order in the English sentence with the importance of proper case-endings in the Latin sentence, and we spent some time learning how to break up a Latin word into syllables to identify its proper accent and pronunciation.

We are continuing to read the story of Vergil’s *Aeneid*, which both introduces students to the rudiments of Roman culture and also echoes Homer’s *Iliad*, a retelling of which students were reading earlier this fall in History with Mr. Chilbert. We are currently up to the famous Book IV of the *Aeneid* wherein Vergil lays the mythic foundations of the hatred between Rome and Carthage and of the historic Punic Wars. We are reading about Aeneas landing on the shores of Carthage and meeting beautiful Queen Dido, a rare but wonderful example of a powerful female leader in the ancient world.

### **Music, Kindergarten - Karina Butterworth**

The children learned the songs “Over in the Meadow,” “Once Three Little Kittens,” “Magic Man,” and the song “C is for Cookie” which we used like a tongue twister. The students improved their coordination between the ear and the voice and now sing much cleaner. When listening to music the children are able to recognize minor and major, ABA form, and they are very creative when describing the music. In music theory, they learned duration and were able to write rhythm dictation. We have started to write real musical dictation where the children must recognize melody, three notes in different combinations, and rhythm and then write it properly. During the violin ensemble, the

students are still playing songs on open strings, however, it takes less time to put them all in good playing position and they play more synchronically. During the piano performance, we have started to prepare for our December concert. Almost all the children are able to play their songs by heart or very well with notes. We want the children to play by memory during the concert, but while practicing at home they may need to use the notes. The children have also played songs on the xylophone while reading notes.

### **Music, 1st Grade - Karina Butterworth**



The children have been singing the songs “Counting is Wonderful,” and “C is for Cookie,” which we use like a tongue twister. Their coordination between the ear and voice is much better. The students have learned how to write music dictations: five to six notes songs with rests and sharps. The children play a few songs on the violin on open strings, and have started to use 1-2 fingers. During the piano performance, we have started to prepare for our December concert. Almost all the students play their songs by heart or very well with notes. We want them to play their songs by memory for the concert, but while practicing at home they may still need to check the notes.

### **Music, 2nd & 3rd Grade - Karina Butterworth**

During the violin ensemble, the children are still working on learning how to correctly hold the violin and the bow. They learned two songs using all four fingers. In music theory, the students are writing musical dictation in major and minor with six notes, rests and sharps. We also added solfeggio and the children were able to easily switch from ABC to Do, Re, Mi. We also learned two songs: “Counting is wonderful” from Sesame



Street, and “Because” by The Beatles, which we sing in two parts. During the piano performance, we have started to prepare for our December concert. Almost all the students are able to play their songs by heart or very well with the notes. We want them to play their songs by memory for the concert, but while practicing at home they may need to continue to check the notes.

### **Music, 4th, 5th & 6th Grade - Karina Butterworth**

During the violin ensemble, the students learned three songs using all four fingers. They understand how to play violin on this level and have fixed their position and intonation. The children are now writing musical dictation with six notes in major and minor with rests and sharps, and we have started to add some understanding of harmony. We added solfeggio and the children are able to switch easily from ABC to Do, Re, Mi. We have been singing “Because” by The Beatles, which we sing in two parts. During the piano performance, we have started to prepare for our December concert. Almost all the students are able to play their songs by heart or very well with the notes. We want them to play their songs by memory for the concert, but while practicing at home practicing they have may need to continue to check the notes.

### **Art, Kindergarten & 1st Grade - Karina Butterworth**



In art class, the children learned how to sew a difficult buttonhole stitch. They used that stitch to sew a teddy bear and a Tooth Fairy bag. They also learned how to thread a needle and make a knot. The students finished their still life with pumpkin and started to draw vases with flowers. When they draw, they are able to show the horizon line and perspective by themselves. Their pictures look brighter and more finished.

### **Art, 2nd & 3rd Grade - Karina Butterworth**

During art class, the children learned to show perspective, draw objects from different angles, and to draw correct composition. We also worked on drawing the proportions of a human face and shading to make the face look 3 dimensional. This month, we drew topics such as: "Portrait of Miss Betsy," "Miss Betsy plays flute," "Still life with garlic," "Street in corner perspective," copy of "Madonna Benoit" by Leonardo da Vinci, "Still life with pumpkins," and copy of "The Three Bogatyrs" by Viktor Vasnetsov.

### **Art, 4th, 5th & 6th Grade - Karina Butterworth**

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### **Art History, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade - Asya Sigelman**

In Art History this month, third grade has continued its study of Renaissance art and of the biography of Leonardo Da Vinci. As we read about the specifics of the great master's career, we stopped to discuss how these specifics illustrate broader patterns in the way art was studied, practiced, and financially supported in the olden days. For example, we spent some time discussing the notion of apprenticeship, and how aspiring artists, rather than taking art lessons (the way we do these days) undertook essentially indentured service in the workshop of an established master, starting out with menial tasks (such as sweeping the floor and running errands), progressing to more complex assignments (e.g., learning to mix paint), and finally to the rudiments of drawing, painting, and sculpture. We discussed that these artistic skills were practiced not on a couple-times-a-week basis, but constantly: young apprentices would be expected to sketch and re-sketch multiple versions of a plaster cast, examining over and over again the forms of individual body parts, of animals, of the folds of fabric, and of items and buildings in perspective, to name a few. We talked about young Da Vinci's master Verrocchio and we looked at the famous painting *Baptism of Christ* (ca 1475), which was painted primarily by Verrocchio but to which young Da Vinci contributed one of the

angel figures in the background. This discussion also lead us to observe how in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance the very notion of authorship was different from ours: it was common for masters to have their apprentices complete significant portions of their paintings, and for this reason present-day scholars of art sometimes struggle to identify whether a painting was executed by the master or by his students. We also spent some time studying and reading about Da Vinci's *Annunciation*, *Adoration of the Magi*, and *Madonna of the Rocks*. Da Vinci never completed the *Adoration*, leaving it in the intermediate stage. This, however (we discussed) does not detract from the beauty of the painting and in fact allows us a "sneak peek" into Da Vinci's multi-step process of painting: after transferring the "cartoon" (final version of drawing) onto a permanent surface, the artist applied darker earth tones to create a 3-D effect. The next stage (to which the *Adoration* never progressed) is to apply more vibrant colors, such as red, blue, and green. We also noted *sfumato*, a blurring or softening technique, famously practiced by Da Vinci in his depiction of faces and backgrounds. Finally, we read about Da Vinci's move from Florence north to Milan, to the court of Ludovico Sforza the "Moor", and discussed the importance of guilds, patrons, and commissions in the career of a Renaissance artist.

### **Art History, 4th & 5th Grade - Jessica Todd Harper**

In art history we have continued our study of medieval illuminated manuscripts. The children enjoy recounting how Charles the Bald (who was actually quite hairy, so his name was a joke of sorts) asked the monks of St. Denis to put as many sapphires and emeralds as they could fit on the gold cover of the Codex Aureus. They know that this is because his grandfather, Charlemagne, passed on to him his belief in the spiritual powers of these gems. We are starting to be able to identify some common iconographic elements in medieval art such as if you see four men who look like they are writing, they are likely to be Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The children have learned that these men told the same story four different ways, each with his own style. So while the start of Matthew is rather boring in their opinion, (lots of so and so begetting so and so, for generations upon generations), the monks who created the Book of Kells took this long list and turned it graphically into a fascinating network of repeated patterns culminating in the spectacular Chi-Rho (Christ's initials in Greek) page, which is thought to be the single most labor intensive page of illuminated manuscript existing today.

We are also starting to study The Morgan Crusader's Bible, which has an adventurous provenance, that starts with St. Louis, who became king at age 12 with his very attentive and loving (some thought overbearing) mother ruling for him. When Louis later

heads off to the Crusades, he takes 36 ships, 15,000 men and - surprising to the students- his wife and children with him. Apparently he thought his wife was safer there than with his mother. After an auspicious start, Louis and his troops all got dysentery and had to retreat, allowing him to get captured. The ransom paid to his Muslim captors was so large it "took 2 days to count" and always fair, Louis corrected his officers when they tried to cheat, forcing them to pay it in full. Humbled by these experiences and concluding that God had allowed him to fail so miserably because of his own sins, Louis returned home with his family and decided he would turn his energy toward helping the poor and "seeing to his own house". He systematized customary law, recorded cases as precedents, and replaced trial by combat with the examination of witnesses under oath. He fed the poor, he and his sons washed the feet of beggars, and he was generous to the widows of the crusaders. He has what is now known as "The Crusaders Bible" made in Paris and it is entirely a picture Bible, with highly detailed and dense battle scenes. We looked at David being sent out to fight for Michal's bride price from the Book of Solomon, and all the characters are decked out in 13th century crusaders outfits. The book disappears for centuries after St. Louis' death and then reappears in Krakow, where it is picked up by the Pope to take along on a visit to Shah Abbas the Great, which he is making to secure tolerance toward Christians. While making his case, he presents as a gift The Crusaders Bible, which the Shah is recorded to have valued a great deal. There are Persian notes in the margin, where Islamic viewers have worked out details of the stories, next to Latin notes made by some earlier Christian cleric. Though it seems an ironic gift to Modern audiences, The Crusaders Bible was apparently enjoyed by the Shah until he came upon the story of Absalom, at which point he had those 3 pages removed. Any mention of "bad sons" he did not want his own sons to be exposed to! That is where we stopped the story in our last class, but the students will next learn that this act of caution did no good, and the Shah's sons were all executed for treason. Sometime later, perhaps when the Afghans conquered Isfahan in 1722, the royal library and treasury were looted and eventually the manuscript fell into the hands of a Persian Jew, who added Judeo-Persian notes. It looks like he knew some of the Old Testament stories better than the Christian cleric or the Persian scholars, since he corrected them! Then somehow the book ended up in Cairo in the 19th century where an English Lord had the remarkable good fortune to buy it from an Arab for 3 shillings. Today, it is at the Morgan Library in NYC.

The students have all been given books with blank pages, on which to write about and draw the pictures they have been given to study. The pictures themselves are glued into the books. On each cover is embossed in gold: "Truth, Beauty, Goodness", and in gold and silver on the back, are the students' names. An underlying theme to all our study so far is how medieval artists pursued Truth, Beauty, and Goodness, in spite of

the hard life, the continual interruption of Viking raids, and the lack of material comfort. When the students watched the movie "The Secret of Kells" over break, they saw the story of a boy and his illuminator monk mentor struggle to complete The Book of Kells and share it with the world despite the Vikings who raid the monasteries and steal the gold jewel encrusted cover of the book. The mentor makes clear from the beginning of the film that the gold and jewels aren't the valuable part of the manuscript. The movie repeats many times that "this is the book that turns darkness into light". The Irish monks have been credited with "turning darkness into light," not only with respect to the light of the gospel, but also in helping to preserve the light of classical learning through the Dark Ages. "If there were no books," exclaims an elderly brother in the movie, "all knowledge would be lost forever!"

### **Hands-On Skills - Adam Darer**

This month in hands on skills we continued to work in the school garden. The students planted peas and garlic and harvested raspberries! We also weeded the discovery trail. We began our unit on nature identification and spent the last two weeks learning how to identify trees by their leaf shape and animal footprints by their track marks. We then put these skills to use by walking around the school properties and matching the tree leaves to our field guide. Go ahead and see if your child can identify any of the trees at home!

### **Hebrew - Tal Gutman**

#### 3-4th grades

This year I am thrilled to see that after almost two years that this group has been studying Hebrew together diligently, each lesson now involves a variety of vocabulary and topics that the students are able to work with and speak about! In each class we have a long discussion in Hebrew about different topics, such as schools subjects and lessons they had that day, countries and languages, food, their family and a lot more.

In the past month, we focused on an intensive studying of verbs, prepositions, adverbs and demonstrative pronouns. The students always ask to build independent sentences as part of their practice and they especially like to build humorous and imaginative sentences, which indicate a high confidence in Hebrew. For example – one of the students created the sentence in Hebrew "I live in China and I speak Chinese" and the rest of the students replied with their own preferences of countries and languages. Another enjoyable activity was during the study of the verb "buy" which we practiced



with a shopping list of groceries that the students want to "buy" and then had a role-play simulation of shopping.

In November, we are going to study the professions which will be combined with our grammar and syntax studies. The topic will include job titles and tools each profession uses (brushes for hair stylists, fishing rods for fishermen) and verbs describing their work.

### Kindergarten -1<sup>st</sup> Grade

In this group during October we continued to practice vocabulary and short sentences related to animals, colors, numbers and pencil case items in a variety of methods such as bingo games, matching games, clips, stories and drawing. We also studied new vocabulary related to hot/cold, like/don't like (water, Bamba, apple, banana) and I have/I don't have + pencil case items. The kindergarten practiced recognizing and naming the Aleph bet letters. The first grade practiced writing and reading from our vocabulary. In our conversations, the students like to change the meaning of sentences and make humorous conversation. For example, in introducing a conversation: "I am not Sara, I am Dana" or – "I don't like water, I like coffee".

In November, our main topics will be family and food.

### Vocabulary for K-1<sup>st</sup> Grades

Cold/It's cold	kar	קר
Hot/It's hot	cham	חם
I have a ...	yesh li	יש לי...
I don't have a...	en li	אין לי...
Love (feminine)	ohevet	אוהבת
Don't love	lo ohevet	לא אוהבת
Love (masculine)	Oheve	אוהב
Don't love	lo oheve	לא אוהב

## Christian Studies - Betsy Bashore

This month has been full of challenging passages! In the Old Testament we learned the stories of Cain and Abel and Noah and the flood. The students were amazed by God when he followed Adam and Eve out of the Garden to continue His relationship with their entire family. When God disapproves of Cain's sacrifice we see God continuing to reach out to man asking, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it" (Gen. 4:6-7). Here we see God counsel Cain as a Father would counsel his child.

One student asked, "Did God really regret making us?" He had read ahead to the story of the flood. This passage can be better understood if one pays attention to two things. First, the language of God's regret is one of heartache, showing God's love for His people. Secondly, as the students know, when scripture repeats something 3 times it is important. In the story of the flood, scripture talks about the violence and wickedness of man 7 times, symbolizing perfect hatred. God's original plans for us now have to be adjusted to fit the fallen world. While God did bring the flood we also see how God saves everything He can: Noah's family, two of every animal, and food from the ground. Further, He gives Noah the same commandments: be fruitful and multiply and eat! Thus demonstrating God's desire to save everything He could from the creation. The students were particularly excited in the flood all of the fish lived!

The necessity to discuss God's justice alongside His patience is necessary when discussing the story of the flood. In order to do this I gave the analogy of being in a courtroom asking, "Imagine someone murdered your family and the judge said that he would be gracious and let the murderer go. Would you call that judge good?" The students very somberly said no. They could see in that moment why part of God being good is being just. Further we discussed the time in between the story of Cain and Abel and the flood. Depending on traditional or liberal dating it was likely between 1600 or 5600 years. I'm not sure about you, but I have never waited for anything for 1600 years! God withholding judgment for that long was an act of divine patience.

When studying out the gospel of John we learned about the story of Jesus cleaning the temple, his first interaction with Nicodemus and John the Baptist declaring that he must decrease so that Christ can increase. Jesus begins to challenge the Jewish religious leaders in the temple by claiming authority for Himself with God over the temple. How ridiculous must Jesus have looked to the leaders at the time! The Gospel of John presents people with a choice: life or death. God is continually offering life to all. He presents the choice to all who want it.

