



Garden School Newsletter



Richard Marotta, Ph. D., Headmaster

Volume 97: Number: IX "Halloween Edition"

"Cultivating Success in Every Child"

Thoughts for the Week

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



One of the most important aspects of being in an independent school, or any organization for that matter, remains reciting the 'story' of that institution. All institutions have a story to tell, a story about its past, its present and future, its beliefs, its culture — all of those elements that constitute its identity. This remains true today as telling one's story has an increasing importance in a world seemingly devoted to false stories that are self-serving rather than a true revelation of the nature of the institution's identity.

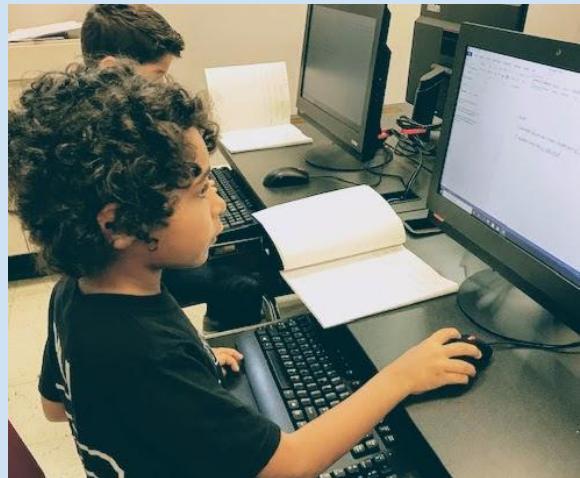
There are many stories being told in the media marketplace that are quite astonishing. We hear of car companies that build their cars out of love; we learn that some products do it all for us; other products will give us the self-esteem to live our lives; some products, apparently small trucks, are patriotic and embody the American spirit; some drinks made with a monstrous amount of high fructose corn syrup are the real thing. 'Stories' told by brands create a *mythos* around their product which helps convince the buyer that this is the product to have. Storytelling, just as it is in literature, needs to embody a truth. Fiction only fails when it eludes the truth rather than representing or exploring it in creative ways. When a writer tells a story, we as readers, expect that there will be some truths in that story worth knowing and that will act as a guide for us to examine our own lives. Without this, those fictional works are as empty as a husked stalk of corn, or as the great American writer John Gardner once said, nothing but 'pyrotechnic husks signifying nothing'. The same holds true for telling



Maheen's mother and sister tell the story of Rapunzel - a Halloween costume is certainly a way to tell a story! Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your hair!

story of a school. All schools have a history and a story to tell. Our school is no different. Our story goes back to 1923 and has evolved with each generation of teachers, parents, students, administrators and trustees who have the responsibility to care for it over the years. Each generation adds to the story of our school by revising it a small ways to reflect the changes that reshape it as a reaction to changes in the culture of society and education.

Yet at the core of our school's story, remains a narrative of service to children and their families, of a dedication to a high level of academics and of thought, of recognizing each child and each family as a special and integral part of the school community, of supporting teachers in their quest to educate students in creative and supportive ways, of an open environment that welcomes the interaction between families and administrators, of treating students as individuals worthy and deserving of respects, of creating an environment where to teach is to learn and to learn is to teach. This is our story. For ninety-seven years, our narrative has been unfolding within our community and has become a strong and dynamic environment for learning and teaching. Every school's story has similarities but also significant differences. It is those differences that create the heart of the institutional narrative and identity. Our story is not for everyone; it is for those who have the clarity of vision to see what is being offered, how that message becomes a reality in support of education for a child to become a life-long learner, a socially committed and active citizen, and a strong advocate for diversity, justice, and equity. Every book has different readers; our book is for those who value truth, tradition, diversity and a fearless approach to the future.



At Garden School we educate children in creative and supportive ways in an open nurturing space.



Dates to Remember



- **Saturday, November 1 - ACT Practice Test for 9th - 11th Graders (see [Mr. Battaglia](#))**
- **Friday, November 8 - End of the First Quarter Marking Period**
- **Thursday, November 14 - Report Cards Distributed in Homeroom**
- **Friday, November 15 - Reports Cards Signed and Returned to Homeroom Teachers**

Garden Academic Pages

Go Griffins!



"You Say You'll Change the Constitution ..."

by [Richard Kruckek](#) (History Teacher)

Grade 11 - AP US History

We have read and dissected the Constitution and the first ten amendments, otherwise called the Bill of Rights. We also took a deep look at the pros and cons of the state constitutions and Articles of Confederation that came before it. The questions were lively, the students were engaged. They can now understand our nation's bylaws, and the intricacies within. *Ex post facto? No problemo.* Bill of Attainder? Couldn't be plainer. They are now more aware of their nation's bylaws than the majority of adults in this country. It was wonderful to witness.



After School Club Calendar

- **Model UN** - Meets on Mondays
(see [Mrs. O'Sullivan](#))
- **Daniel Webster Society**
Meets on Mondays
(see Mr. D'Anna or [Mr. Kruczeck](#))
- **Diversity Club** - Meets on Tuesdays
(See [Mr. Melara](#))
- **Radio Club** - Build Fridays
(starts next week - see [Mr. Hale](#))
- **Japan Club** - Meets on Fridays
(see [Ms. Blakeley](#) or [Mr. Heineman](#))
- **Yearbook Club** - Meets on Wednesdays (see [Aliyah Mohammad](#) or [Dr. Marotta](#))
- **Drama Club** - Meets on Mondays
(see [Mr. Vallario](#))
- **Math Club, Lego Robotics, and Key Club**
Meets on Wednesdays!

Let's Play a Little Game . . . Grade 12 - Economics

by [Richard Kruckek](#) (History Teacher)

The students are currently studying about cartels, OPEC, game theory, the "prisoner's dilemma" and the Nash Equilibrium as part of our section on Oligopoly. Oligopoly occurs when several firms/countries dominate a given industry. When they get together to fix prices, that's a cartel, the most nefarious of which is OPEC - especially if you have a suburban commute. Game theory revolves around the likely vs. the optimal outcomes for a given situation where two parties are involved. For a closing game, I'm pondering Pin the Tail on Adam Smith . . . Having already studied perfect competition, the last one remaining will be monopoly. This will carry us roughly two weeks into the second quarter.

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**Maheen and Hudson
brainstorm possible
interview questions to
ask each other in Mrs.
James' English Language
Arts lesson.**

Interviewing Our Friends in Second Grade by Paula James

It's so exciting to learn about friends we spend so much time with, and this week the second grade students began learning the art of interviewing during Language Arts. To begin with, they watched a Scholastic News interview of the author Mo Willems, who wrote *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus*. It gave us a good starting point to see what kind of questions we could ask to find out more about each other. Once we got our questions together, students were paired off and began the process. The students did very well making notes of their classmates' responses and learned interesting facts about new and old friends. We practiced writing skills and composed a story to present to the class.

This exercise gave us an opportunity to continue building our wonderful classroom community, and increase our understanding of what makes each person special. The students also practiced their presentation skills by introducing the classmate they interviewed and sharing their story. There were so many extra questions to answer, as well as drawings to discuss. Stop by the second grade room to check it out and learn more!

9 & 10th Grade Soccer Fans by Michelle Ferreira (P.E. Teacher)

The students have started a new unit which is soccer. We always start every class with warming up by doing 4 laps around the gym and go right into stretching for about 5 minutes. The first week we did just basic skills like dribbling, passing, trapping, defending and shooting. Afterwards for another week we have games that involve you tying those skills all together like monkey in the middle, steal the bacon and soccer tennis. During those weeks we walk around the class correcting what each student is doing incorrectly and fixing it. We are also observing their level of skill for soccer so that each team we create is fairly put together. Then for the last two weeks of the unit, we create soccer teams and then go into playing soccer tournaments, having playoff rounds and the championship around. They seem to be enjoying themselves during this unit. New this year we provide another outlet for students at the beginning of each new unit if they don't want to participate in it they can opt to do yoga and weight room instead.

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Pre-K Teachers Spend a Day Learning How to Include Play in Early Childhood Instruction



“Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children play is serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood.”

- Fred Rogers

On Wednesday, October 30th the Garden School PreK For All staff attended a Professional Learning in the library that was facilitated by the NYC Department of Early Childhood Education. The purpose of this PL was to partner up with other NYC Early Childhood Education Schools within Queens and develop teaching teams to further enhance children's Play-Based Learning in the classroom.

Staff focused on the idea that Play-Based Learning should be fun, flexible, voluntary and intrinsically motivated. They worked together as teams within our two sites and with other educators in the PreK For All NYC Program; to define what play based learning is, the importance of it and ways that we as educators can make connections between our classroom practices to the DECE's Early Childhood Framework for Quality.

There are many types of Play-Based Learning which consists of child-initiated play, guided play and teacher-initiated play. PKFA incorporates in its daily routine at least 2 hours and 10 minutes of Center time that allows the enhancement of Play-Based Learning. This time allows children opportunities to extend thinking and communication skills through intentional interactions.

Grammar Central in First Grade by Kristen Ahfeld - This week the first graders are working on identifying nouns. To introduce our lesson we watched Jack Hartman's catchy noun on song on the Smart Board. The student sang and named nouns as a person, place or thing. In our follow-up activity the students categorized nouns on the board. Students took turns placing Halloween themed nouns into the correct grouping of people, places or things. Their favorite nouns included spooky places, such as graveyards and haunted houses. We all enjoyed the spooky grammar lesson.

Mrs. Ahfeld's First Graders learn the fundamentals of grammar.



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The Second and Third graders Visited the Alley Pond Environmental Center on Thursday by Rachel Vidal (Second Grade Lead Teacher)

The children participated in the Seasonal Adaptations Program, complimenting what they have been learning in science with Mrs. Buzzese. Zach, our educator, began by asking, "What is an environment, and what does adaptation mean? He discussed the seasons and what causes the seasons. They learned about how different plants and animals adapt to the seasons. The children were introduced – up close and personal – to three very different creatures: a corn snake, a domesticated rabbit, and an elderly dove. The kids were able to gently touch them (not everyone wanted to touch the snake, though). After which, we walked around the center to visit other creatures. The rain held off just long enough for us to enjoy a nature walk around the property. We walked over a platform where some local snakes lay their eggs! We saw homes to other local creatures within the roots of large trees. The children also spied some poison ivy, which struck terror in some.

Back at school, we discussed some of things they had enjoyed and learned. George said his favorite part was seeing the frogs during our nature walk. Isa's favorite part was petting the rabbit. It amazes me how much they all remember! They all remembered the names of the three creatures that they had met: Cheddar the snake, Quinn the rabbit, and Snow the dove. They also remembered how to identify poison ivy. They were all surprised to learn that two of the animal pelts that Zach showed us were both from a deer. One was much furrier than the other. We learned that deer grow more fur during the winter to adapt to their environment. When we returned, we took a vote. Nine out of nine third graders loved the trip and would recommend it to a friend. I would too! What an amazing place!



Alley Pond Environmental Center in Queens



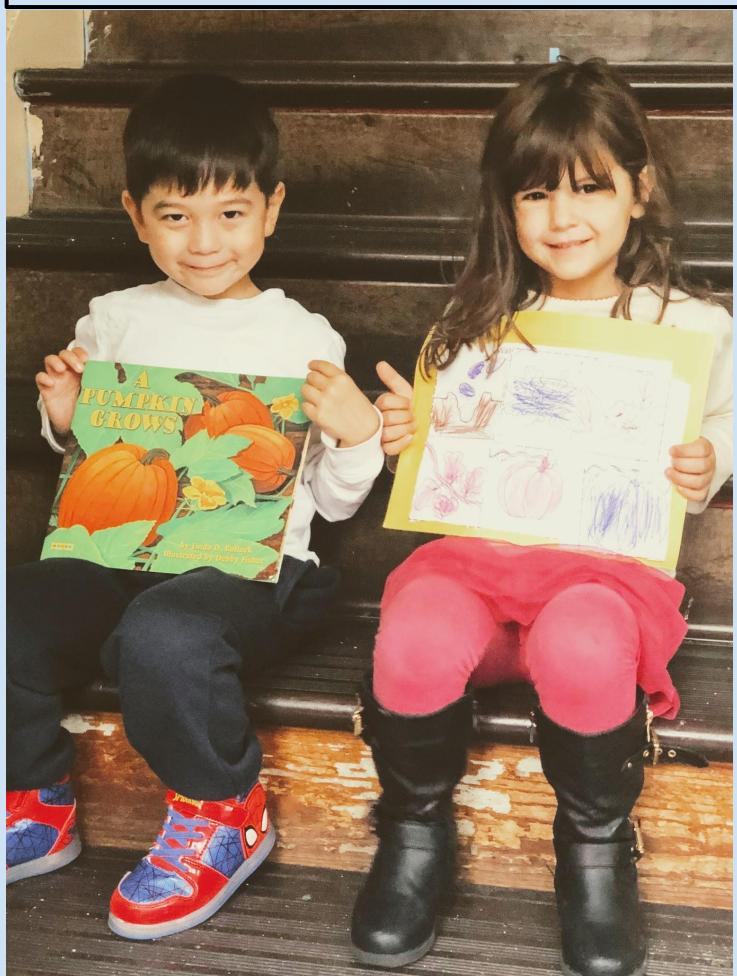
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In Pre-K Ordering Our Day is a Natural Way Children Learn Sequencing by [Eileen Reyes](#) (Early Childhood Lead Teacher)

Sequencing occurs naturally in the day to day routines of children. The Pre-K students have been practicing sequencing skills since the first day of school. It all started with the daily schedule. We have morning meeting first, then whole group lesson, centers comes next, etc. Color patterns were made using the concept of sequencing and then again when apples were used to create patterns using red, yellow, and green apple prints in a variety of sequences. Sequencing cards were added to the math center that showed how to grow apples from a seed to a tree. Each child individually practiced placing the cards in order using logical thinking as they predicted what should happen next. Sharing these predictions in small groups helped to develop oral language skills. The children also colored, cut and glued their own sequencing cards of how to grow a pumpkin. They colored seeds, sprouts, vines, flowers, buds, and pumpkins and glued them in sequential order. *A Day at the Apple Orchard* by Megan Faulkner, *How Do Apples Grow?* By Betsy Maestro, *A Pumpkin Grows* by Linda D. Bullock, *Seed, Sprout, Pumpkin Pie* by Jill Esbaum, and *Pumpkin Pumpkin* by Jeanne Titherington are some of the books we read to support this math topic of sequencing.



Fourth Grade Science Scholars Love a Good Tundra by Marlene Dapice (Science Teacher)

Students are learning about different ecosystems, discussing the living and nonliving parts of each, and exploring how energy and matter travel through ecosystems. In keeping with our school-wide theme of climate change, the class was asked to choose one ecosystem to explore further. They chose the tundra. Students contributed questions to research about the tundra. Where do we find these ecosystems in the world? What is the climate in the tundra? What organisms are found here? How has the tundra been affected by climate change? Are any organisms now on the endangered species list? Have any become extinct? They are going to use this information to formulate a plan to help save this ecosystem and, further, tell what they can do to help prevent further destruction.

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Go Griffins!



We're all in the count!

by Mrs. Joanne Vogel, Nursery Teacher

Numbers are, and therefore mathematics is, all around us. Numbers are in our songs, our calendar, our stories, our snacks, our lunches, and our walking. Our nursery students are talking more, and singing about numbers in both English and Mandarin. Think back to all those little ditties and rhymes we all learned by rote as young children. Five Little Monkeys Sitting on the Bed!

Songs and movement set the tone for the beginning of class. Numbers on the calendar foster a beginning sense of time, movement, and order. Counting our friends around the carpet creates community and a beginning sense of “moving forward” as if with a number line.

The journey of one-to-one correspondence is just beginning around the age of two. Each child sits in a chair, has a snack, or uses a napkin. One child, one object, one-to-one correspondence. Pairing children, whether on line, as partners, or sitting together creates comparisons, and begins the notion of “more than.” We take every opportunity to create “number sense.” And we hear this from parents, too, as children come to school and count the number of steps up or down the staircase, mostly “one, two, three.”

Continue this “number sense” with your child during daily home activities, simple counting, pairing, “more,” “less;” and very quickly you might become involved in patterns, and what comes next. Enjoy your child’s world, and the growing “sense of numbers.”

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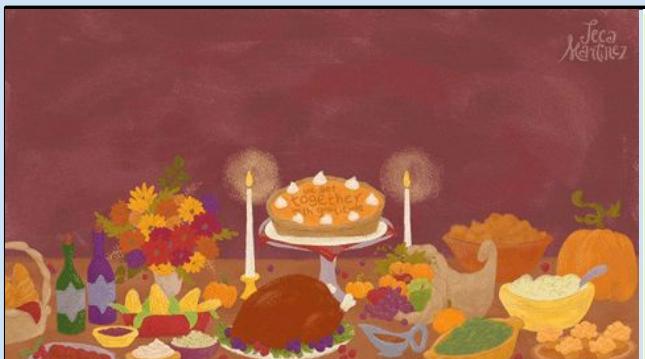
Go Griffins!



Eighth Grade French Students Are Highly Irregular by Gabriel Gomis (French Teacher)



Students completed the most common irregular verbs in French language (*aller, etre, avoir, and faire*). They are familiar with their use in the present tense and their expressions. We also briefly introduced the future tense.



PTA Annual Thanksgiving Pie Sale Begins Today! [Click this link](#) for an order form.

Seventh Graders Want to Know: “¿Hablas español?” by Mr. Melara (World Languages Lead Teacher)

The Seventh Grade Spanish class has taken a significant step in their language acquisition process: they have learned how to conjugate verbs ending in -AR. This category is particularly important because most verbs in Spanish end in -AR. Combined with vocabulary learned earlier in the school year, students in seventh grade can now formulate complete thoughts such as, ¿Hablas español?; Nosotros estudiamos en la biblioteca; and, Los estudiantes usan la computadora. Moving forward, students are encouraged to practice verb conjugations outside of the classroom in order to reinforce this concept.

SPANISH VERB CONJUGATION HABLAR (TO TALK)

Singular Pronoun	Verb Conjugation	Plural Pronoun	Verb Conjugation
YO	hablo	NOSOTROS/AS	hablamos
TÚ	hablas	VOSOTROS/AS	habláis
ÉL	habla	ELLOS	hablan
ELLA	habla	ELLAS	hablan
USTED	habla	USTEDES	hablan

Just One More Picture, Please



HALLOWEEN PARADE

Garden School joined the Jackson Heights Beautification Group for their 29th Annual Halloween Parade down 37th Avenue. About twenty Garden students, moms, dads, guardians, and teachers walked in the parade! Here are some pictures from the parade. Can you identify the participants?