



Garden School Newsletter



Richard Marotta, Ph. D., Headmaster

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"Cultivating Success in Every Child"

Friday, October 4, 2019

Thoughts for the Week

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

One of the most hotly debated topics among educators in recent days has been what is the future of independent schools, what shape will they take within the next decade and what indeed will education look like ten or twenty years from

now. Clearly this discussion centers on how technology will change the classroom. This is nothing new. In Ancient Greece, which consisted of primarily an oral environment in which a teacher, i.e. Socrates, led his students into enlightenment by development of their reasoning skills through a complex and direct series of questions. From here to the medieval universities, where lecture dominated the educational scene, where reading was very limited because of the scarcity of texts and where orality continued to direct the educational process. The invention of the printing press with its consequent effect of broadening literacy cause a significant shift in how we learn. Texts became available and paper become (while expensive) accessible. Books have been the model method of learning ever since - but times are changing.

All of these events and developments have shaped the learning process. I remember the stir the development of the ballpoint pen caused when I was in grammar school. Until then, we wrote with pencils or fountain pens, with all of the consequences of messy ink in a classroom. The ball point, which was both hailed as a marvel and decried as a step down from the elegance of using ink, changed the way we wrote and learned.

With computers the face of education went through an almost volcanic change. The way we wrote changed; the way we communicated with each other expanded to include email, text, Instagram and all of the other wonders of this rapidly moving technology. Books are now available online, and we can easily carry textbooks not in a backpack but on an Kindle or a Nook. Schools rushed to embrace this 'advance' in technology as the future of education and of our cultural paradigm. There are even online schools and universities, where a student can pursue an education or a degree from home.

Online learning is wonderful; yet it, like testing, focuses solely on one thing: academic material. What it doesn't provide is the social and emotional interaction with others, which is not a 'side line' benefit but a central aspect of human life and culture. We have learned that emotional intelligence has significant value, as much as academic intelligence. Online learning, which we have all used as a way of doing research without having to travel across the world to examine a text, has significantly shifted the availability

of academic material. To me, this is a significant leap in our ability to do scholarly work. When I was writing my dissertation, if I wanted to read an article in a scholarly journal, I had to physically find that article in some college library or ask my college librarian to 'borrow' a copy from another library. This could take weeks and was a cumbersome way of doing research. Now, anyone can go to JSTOR and read any articles thousands of academic journal from the comfort of one's home. This is clearly an advantage.

However, what the physical school provides cannot be duplicated by technology and instant access; the communal aspect of learning engages and uplifts. Schools create a community of learners whose diverse approaches to learning create an interactive environment in which learning takes on a social and cultural meaning that sparks relevance, dynamism and understanding. The learning environment cannot be duplicated by a computer screen (despite Skype and FaceTime); the learning environment fosters the humanism that emerges from what the Middle Ages called the collegium, the college, or 'reading together.' The word "college" means "reading together," which enforces the idea that learning results from a sense of communal cognitive activity. The beauty of this process is that schools have learned how to blend the idea of reading together as a community of learners with the conscious commitment and endorsement of the individual within that communal model. Schools, not technology, have solved the paradox of being both a member of a community and an individual without sacrificing the important of either. Schools, whatever they may evolve into in the future, are indeed the future.



International Night

is Thursday

October 17 from 4:30 to 7:30

in the Garden School Gym

Tickets are \$10 at the door (\$25 for families of three)

Come feast with us around the world!!

There will be music and all-you-can-eat food from around the world!

The **gym** will be transformed to represent the diverse cultures that make up our school!

We need hot food donations! Please see your child's homeroom teacher to sign up for a donation! Or see Mr. Melara, Mrs. Ahfeld, Mr. Gomis, or Mr. Roselli



REMEMBER
FOREVER

Dates to Remember



- Wednesday, October 9th — **No School** — Yom Kippur
- Friday, October 11th — Pumpkin Farm Field Trip
- Monday, October 14th — **No School** — Columbus Day
- Thursday, October 17th — International Night (From 4-7 PM in the gym)
- Friday, October 18th - **No School** - Faculty Workshop Day

It's not too early to purchase [an advanced copy](#) of the Garden School Yearbook. Get it!

How Much Yuan Would That Be? Counting Money and Learning to Tell Time in Mandarin Chinese by [Kelly Yang](#) (Mandarin Teacher)

The Ninth grade students had a chance to learn real Chinese currency, both paper money and coins. The student were also able to do some simple math in Chinese by doing basic calculation like adding and subtracting, especially with Chinese money. And the end of the lesson, students were be able to make their own Chinese money and use it to buy school supplies and other things like food and drink at the market.

Our Eighth grade students have learned school subjects by using certain basic and useful sentence patterns, vocabulary, and time expressions. As a result, students are now able to express their likes, dislikes, or favorite subjects together with time expressions. The teacher may recycle the vocabulary and structures from previous units, such as calendar, greetings, and classroom expressions.

Sixth Graders Work on Science Lab Skills by [John Hale](#) (Science Teacher)

Sixth Graders have spent their lab periods learning how to work Calipers, Triple-Beam Balances, and Graduated Cylinders. Working with US Coins, the have been measuring each coin as accurate as they can. This week and next, they will be comparing their measurements to the accepted values published by the US Treasury Department and then the students will calculate their percent error.

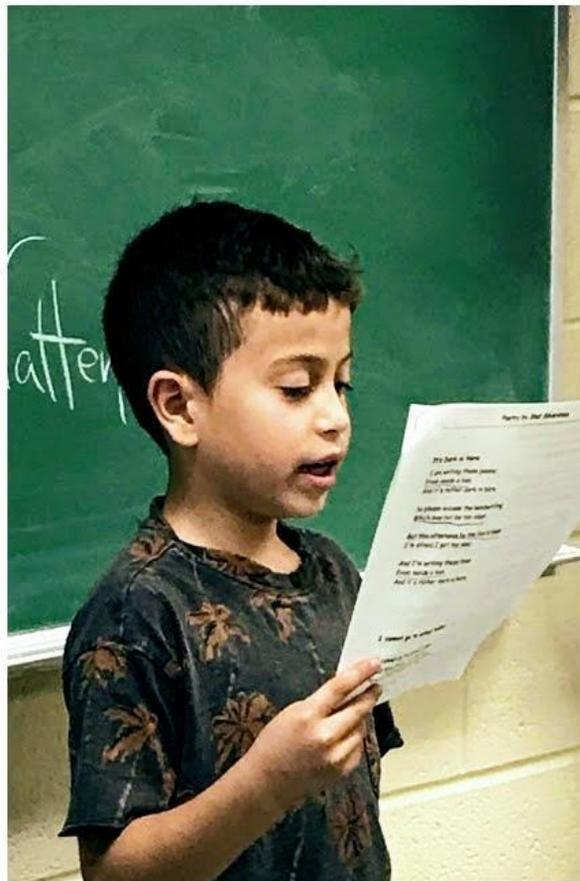
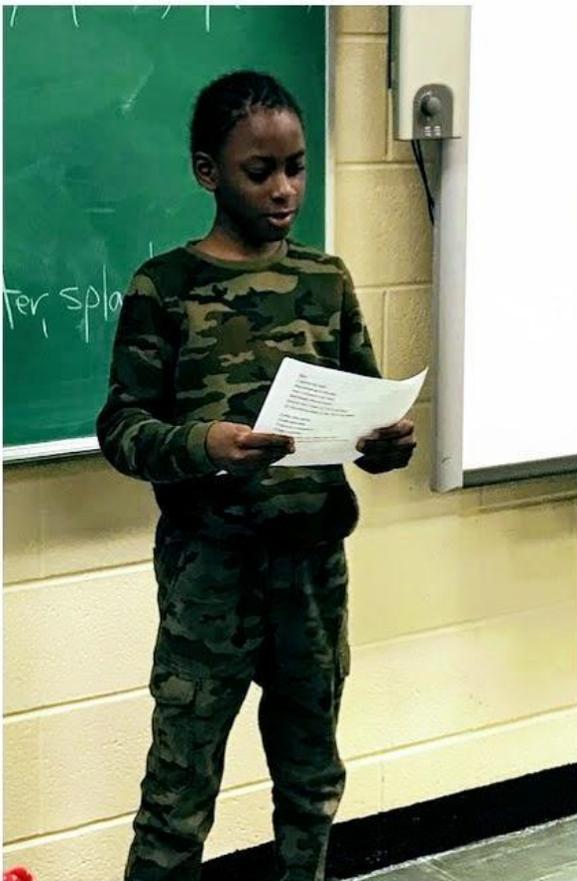


“Fun With Poetry!” by [Rachel Vidal](#) - Third Grade Lead Teacher

The third graders have begun working on a new genre in Language Arts – *poetry*.

The children have been learning about the literary elements and techniques of poetry. They have been experimenting with rhyming words, noticing how words can rhyme even when the words are spelled so very differently. Words like goose and juice, laugh and calf, and power and sour rhyme because of their vowel-consonant sounds. The children have been reading narrative and rhythmic poetry from a variety of sources; from our Treasures Reader to collections of poems in our classroom library to Shel Silverstein (which the children love!). They have been learning how to read a poem aloud, and how to use their voice in different ways to convey a feeling. Here, Ayden R. is reading Shel Silverstein's "Rain", and Antoine G. is reading Shel Silverstein's "It's Dark in Here!"

When children recite rhythmic poetry, it helps them to understand pitch, voice inflection, and volume. Reciting poetry helps place emphasis on the sound and the rhythm of language, thus building a child's phonemic awareness. In poetry, not only are the words used to give a meaning to the poem, but the voice, volume, inflection, pitch, and pauses contribute to the entire experience. In so doing, the poem is brought to life. Next week, the third graders will write their own poems and will be reciting them to the class. I have noticed that their creativity is limitless!

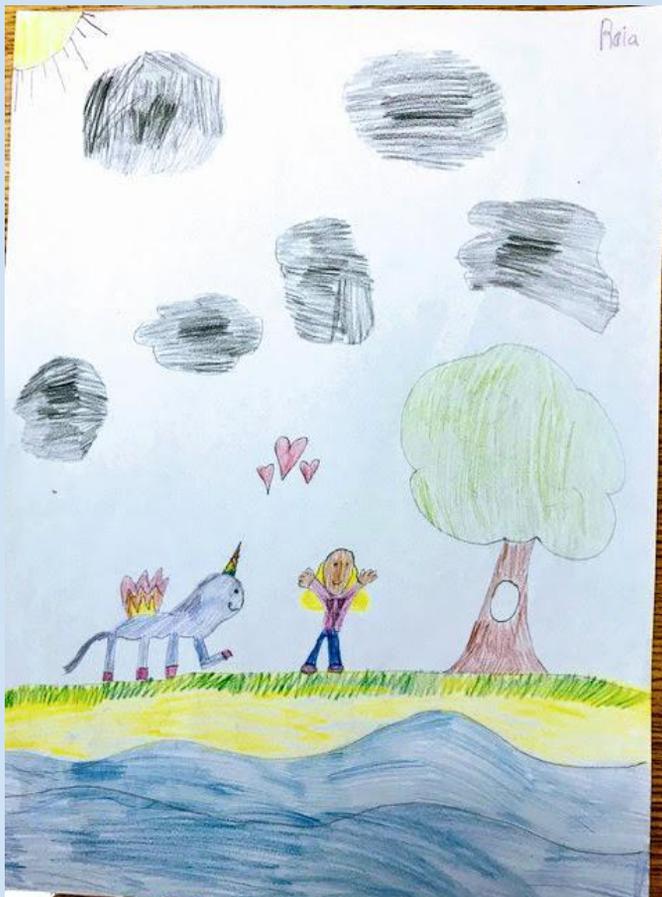


Antoine G. and Ayden R. in Third Grade do a poetry recitation in front of the class for Ms. Vidal's Third Grade Language Arts poetry study unit.

Students in Second Grade are Daily Writers by [Paula James](#) - Second Grade Lead Teacher

Students in second grade have been writing every day! Each morning, they have an opportunity to practice creative writing in their journals. The children also have composed short stories about a memory from summer vacation, and a wish that they hope would come true. We also have been focusing on adjectives, and working to incorporate them into our writing. The students participated in an activity where they worked in small groups to improve sentences by adding adjectives. What a difference a describing word can make! As our writing progresses, students will work toward following a five-part paragraph structure (introduction, three details, conclusion).

We are not limited to writing only in the classroom. Students are also using their creative journal entries in the computer lab. Each week the second graders select a journal entry from their notebook, and they type and illustrate their writing. This work provides them with an opportunity to practice creating a Word document, search for appropriate images, and build keyboarding skills. All this practice will prepare us for writing our first research papers at the end of this quarter.



Raia H. in Second Grade has created cover art for her writing sample on unicorns entitled “What Would you Wish For?”.

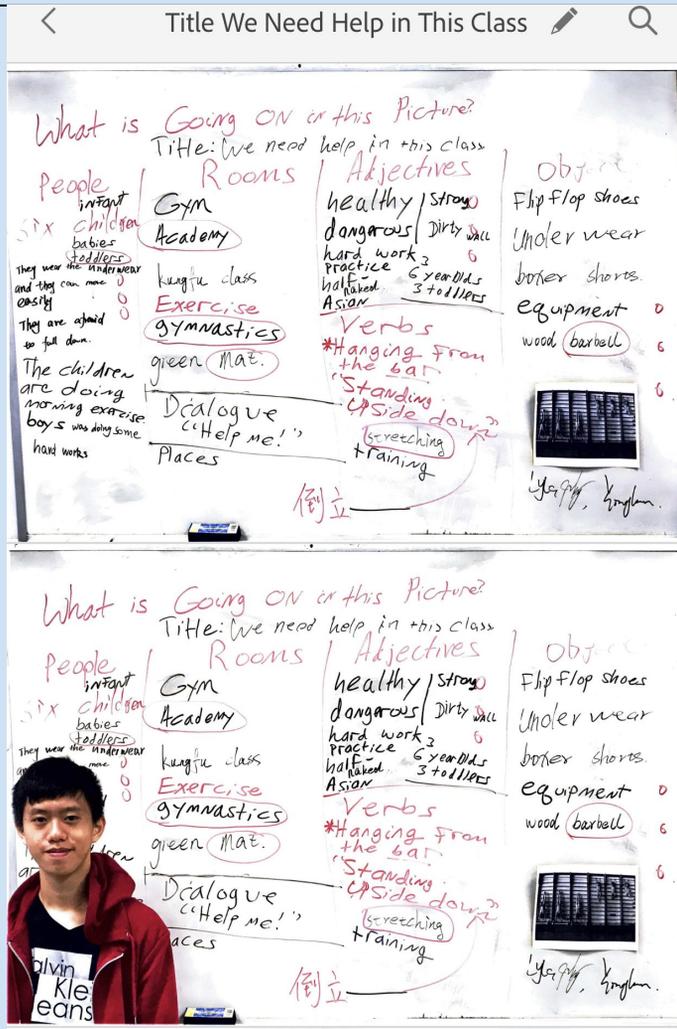
In Fourth Grade We Are Comparing Animal and Plant Cells by [Marlene Dapice](#) (Science Teacher)

Students have been studying cells and comparing how animal and plant cells are alike and different. Each student prepared his/her own wet mount slide of onion skin and focused it under the microscope. Everyone felt a sense of accomplishment at mastering these skills and each looks forward to more investigations involving the use of microscopes. We discussed the importance of classifying organisms and students were afforded an opportunity to observe the similarities and differences among a sample of beans/seeds. We are beginning our exploration of animal adaptations and discussing how environmental changes impact the ability of organisms to survive.

“Garden School Starts its First Mu Alpha Theta Chapter” by [Lauren Little](#) (Math Teacher)



I am very excited to announce that Garden School now has a Mu Alpha Theta chapter! Mu Alpha Theta is a national mathematics honors society for high school and two-year college students. Having this chapter will open doors for our students to participate in new mathematics competitions and gain access to new scholarships. I would like to congratulate our inaugural members: Cyrus J. (12), Abba A. (11), Arib M. (11), Wilson W. (11), and Tsewang S. (10) and Juky C. (9). Any students who are interested in joining Mu Alpha Theta are encouraged to talk to Mrs. Little.



English Language Academy: Juky in Ninth Grade poses in front of a word wall he and his classmates made.

In First Grade, Students Are Learning to Write to Communicate by [Kristen Ahfeld](#) (First Grade Teacher)

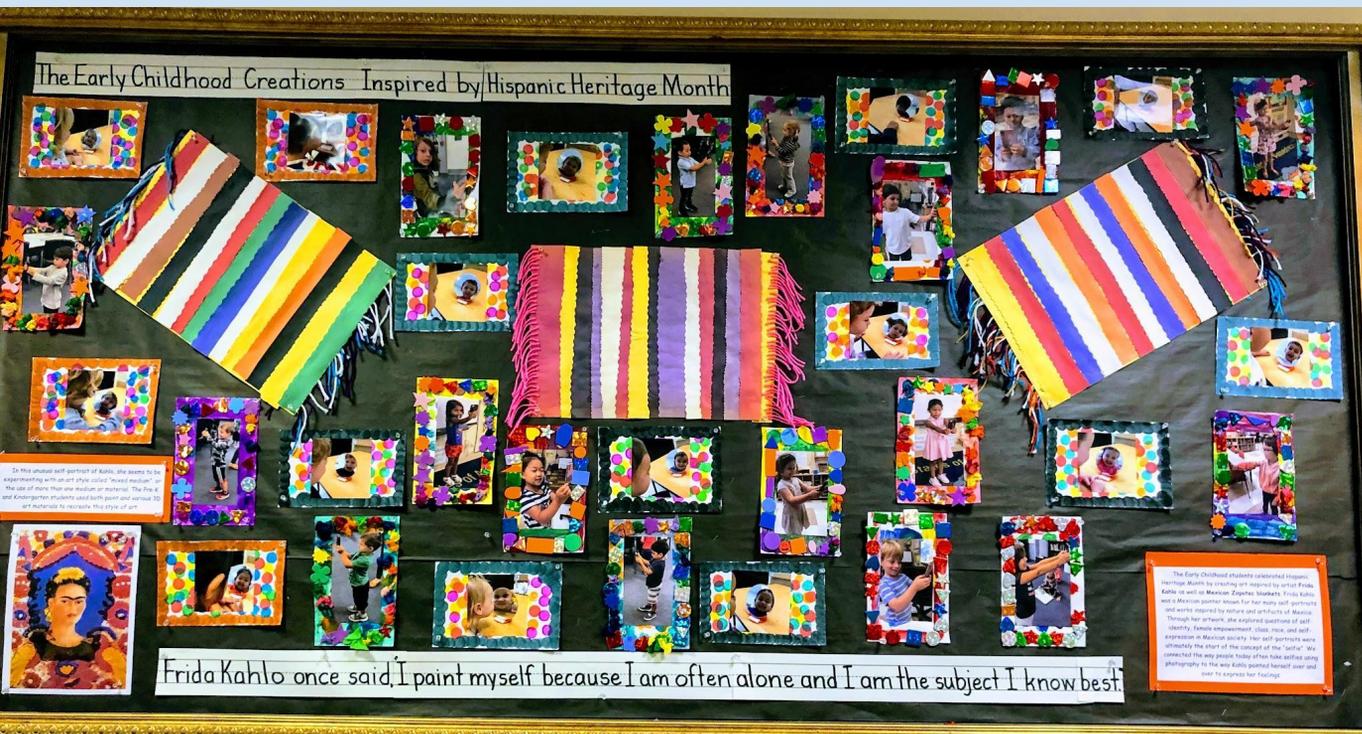
In first grade, students are learning to write to communicate. There are three kinds of ending punctuation marks we are learning to use in written sentences: period, exclamation and question marks. Punctuation marks are used to help convey meaning to written material. It tells the reader where to pause, breathe, raise or change voice. They are powerful little marks that we are learning to incorporate and use properly while reading and writing. Knowing how and when to use basic punctuation marks allows the writer and reader to understand clearly.

To motivate the students, we read the story "The Day the Punctuation Came to Town" by Kimberlee Gard. The creative and funny story illustrates the important role punctuation plays in language, and how it's used to express appropriate meaningful sentences. In addition, the students paired for a scavenger hunt to find punctuation marks in our classroom. They they hunted through books magazines, newspapers to find punctuation and practice reading sentences with appropriate tone of expression. The students are writing everyday to express their thoughts with new punctuation learned.

Kindergarten is Shaping Up! by [Lauren Yandow](#) (Kindergarten Teacher)

This week in Kindergarten, we wrapped up our unit on shapes. Students have been learning about different 3D shapes such as the cube, cylinder, and rectangular prism as well as how to draw triangles, squares, rectangles, and circles correctly. How many sides do these shapes have? How many corners do these shapes have? We also used our pattern blocks to discuss how a group of small shapes can be combined to make a bigger shape. For example, we practiced creating hexagons using trapezoids, diamonds, and triangles. We discovered that it takes a combination of two trapezoids, three diamonds, or six triangles to make a hexagon! Students were also exposed to shape words including rhombus and parallelogram! Utilizing these math manipulatives is a great way to make such a concept both visual and tangible for the students. We look forward to beginning our new math unit on patterns next week and incorporating what we are learning about apples in science! Who's ready to make apple patterns using real apples and paint?!





The Early Childhood Hispanic Heritage art hanging in the Early Childhood showcase in the main hall **Starring Kindergarten - Lauren Yandow, Pre-K - Eileen Reyes, and Nursery - Joanne Vogel --** Early Childhood students celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month by creating art inspired by Frida Kahlo as well as Mexican Zapotec blankets. Frida Kahlo was a Mexican painter known for her many self-portraits and works inspired by nature and artifacts of Mexico. Through her artwork she explored questions of self-identity, female empowerment, class, race, and self-expression in Mexican society. Her self-portraits were ultimately the start of the concept of the “selfie”. The students connected the way people today often take a selfie using photography to the way Kahlo painted herself over and over to express her feelings. Creating this



art also connected with the Early Childhoods first topic of All About Me.

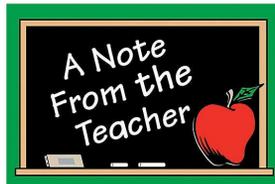


Frida Kahlo perfected the art of the selfie before the iPhone was even invented!



“French in Action at Garden School” by [Gabriel Gomis](#) (French Teacher)

French students in Seventh Grade are a little bit irregular. Can you conjugate *avoir* or what about *boire* or *être*? Our students are excited to get into these irregular conjugations - especially since they are so common and often used.



Students in [Mr. Melara's](#) Spanish class have a fun moment with Mr. Roselli and join in for a group photo.

Students in Mr. Melara's Spanish class give and the whys of learning Spanish.

~~Nina Sanchez~~
Nina Sanchez

Spanish is import because it makes you speak a language that you don't know. It is wonderful to speak a language that is a different culture than ours. Many people speak it, and I would like to understand what they are saying. I have been taking French a long time, but Spanish is like a different form of French and English. There are many Spanish words that look/sound like English. Mr. Melara is doing a good job at teaching us, and it fun. That's why Spanish is important.

Spanish is important to learn because it is commonly used all over the world. Translators use Spanish to help people that don't English. Airplane flight attendants can explain the flight protocols to people who don't speak English. Teachers like Mr. Melara translate Spanish for foreign exchange students. Or simply teach kids Spanish. Spanish is one of the most used languages in the world. - Sophia M.

I can talk to my cousins and uncles that speak Spanish. - Sebastian

Learning Spanish could enable you to live or work in other countries - Luca F.

Spanish, as well as English, is a major language of the world. Claire O.



Ninth and Tenth Graders Have Started Our Volleyball Unit by [Flance Dervishi](#) (P.E. Teacher) We are learning the rules of Volleyball and the proper ways of getting the ball over the net and playing with each other. The first thing we worked on is rotating on the Volleyball court. Rotation, if not fully understood, can be very confusing for the students. Positions are numbered, one through six, starting with the server in the back-right corner. Then going in a counterclockwise direction while rotating. We worked on the proper way of bumping and setting the ball and did a full week of drills. Learning how to serve over the net can be very challenging for many students but we are doing well so far and will continue to work on the serve. We have created six teams of six players and every team are having rallies back and forth with each other with very close games. Here are a few pics of the students working very well and hard in class. ***

Mrs. Reyes's Pre-K Math Corner for October

Learning shapes helps students identify and organize visual information. It also helps them learn skills in other curriculum areas. Learning shapes also helps children understand other signs and symbols. The Pre-K classroom has many shape materials to help make learning shapes fun. To help reinforce shape recognition, the students made shape collages and played fun shape games on the Smartboard. Over the next couple of weeks, the Pre-K math center will be filled with materials such as: shape Bingo, shape blocks, magnetic tiles, shape buttons, etc. Sorting, building, matching, and pattern making are just some of the ways these math materials will be explored. Mouse Shape by Ellen Stoll Walsh, The Greedy Triangle by Marilyn Burns, The Shape of Things by Dayle Ann Dodds, and City Shapes by Diana Murray are some of the books we will be reading.

Announcement from Our Climate Change Awareness Initiative on Recycling by Michelle Bruzesse and Sarah O'Sullivan)

On Monday October 7th we will commence our Recycling competition. All home rooms have recycling bins which will be used for the recycling of plastic bottles. We will be collecting the bottles every day and keeping a tally of bottles to home room. This contest will end on America recycles day which is November 15. The home room with the most recycling will get a pizza party!

