

THE LP BULLETIN

NOTES, QUOTES, AND LOST COATS

The LP Bulletin #05
September 15th, 2016

UPCOMING LP EVENTS

Friday, September 16th - Second Grade Curriculum Review - 7:50 am
Saturday, September 17th - Cradles to Crayons - 1:30 pm
Monday, September 19th - Kindergarten Curriculum Review - 7:50 am
Tuesday, September 20th - First Grade Curriculum Review - 7:50 am
Tuesday, September 20th - Girl Scouts
Friday, September 23rd - Field Day - 10:00 am - 2:00 pm.

HEADLINES

On Educational Trends

To paraphrase Teddy Roosevelt, "What is popular [in education] is not always good, what is good [in education] is not always popular."

Over the years, this school has stayed aware of the research and discussions and trends in the wider educational world. We do that by reading publications, by attending conferences, by talking with one another, by networking professionally outside of the school, and, most certainly by exploring the vast number of interesting educational sites on the Internet. Indeed, at our weekly hour long Head Teacher and Intern staff meetings, we regularly 'invite' an outside speaker (from an Internet site) to challenge us with new ideas or to instruct us on new techniques or programs.

We pay close attention to the wider educational world because staying informed is what professionals do. Our learning didn't stop in college or graduate school. So keeping current on new ideas, recent research, innovative techniques and materials, and participating in ongoing discussions about child development and pedagogy are avenues that enable us to continue to learn and to grow professionally. While yesterday's information may remain highly useful to us still, there is always new information that can be useful as well. While yesterday's conversations may have run their course, there are always new conversations about education that can stimulate our own. And while yesterday's research may still be entirely relevant, new research-- particularly on the brain and on learning-- is coming out at a furious pace and will in time, inevitably, inform the way we all teach in new ways.

Yet, midst all of this well spent attention to 'the new and different,' as a school we have been thoughtfully skeptical about many of the winds of change that have swept through American schools in the past 50 years. For sure, we've listened, we've watched, we've learned from others' experiences, we've rejected many 'new ideas' and, of course, we have absorbed and made good use of others. But, along the way, "trendy" is not a word that I have ever heard used to describe The Learning Project.

There are two current trends in education that seem to be receiving a fair amount of press and which I can assure you will be largely ignored by me. One is the growing opposition to homework for elementary aged children and the other is some hysteria (Have I revealed my distain?) for the ancient school tradition of keeping children in

CURRENT 'HABIT OF THE HEAD, THE HEART, AND THE HAND'

Mindfulness

WORD OF THE WEEK

Maneuver
Artifact
Prompt

ATTACHMENTS

[October 2016 Calendar](#)

[Cradles to Crayons Flyer](#)



All of the students are hard at work across The LP and have settled very nicely into the new school year!



from recess as a consequence of their poor effort or horrible conduct. Both of these topics are addressed in that valiant document, The Parent Handbook and if you are interested in the school's viewpoint, I encourage you to start there. Our approach to homework and the rationale are described on pages 26-28, and our approach to discipline and the rationale are described on pages 33-36. The matter of losing recess as a consequence is briefly explained on page 34. I will be happy to explicate either of these approaches further for anyone who is interested.

Several additional notes:

On the matter of homework: Excessive or pointless homework is not educationally sound, and we promote neither. Regarding the current public complaint about homework cutting into children's play and/or outdoors time, a larger factor currently impacting children's active play is the excessive amounts of time that children are now spending in front of screens. There have been several recent articles (some research based) along the theme of children as 'prisoners' in their own homes because of screen obsessions and screen availability. Some children are now spending less time outside on a daily basis than the average prisoner!

On the matter of children missing recess: I would much prefer that they miss a recess or two, or three, than miss the far more consequential life lesson that actions have outcomes which we often don't get to control and that some the results of bad choices are not personally pleasing.

As to the matter of children missing out on needed exercise, the occasional students who are assigned to sit in solemn silence during recess are routinely offered an opportunity to do jumping jacks, run in place, or walk up and down the stairs several times. Most accept that invitation, a welcome respite from just sitting and thinking about the fun one is missing out on.

Not all learning is 'fun and games.'

Field Day

Some, however, is.

Internal planning for Field Day is well underway and, weather permitting, we anticipate a fun day with the children a week from tomorrow, on **Friday, September 23rd**. As before, Field Day will be on the Ebersol Fields between **10AM and 2PM**. These fields are located on the Esplanade across from the Charles River Park and Mass Eye and Ear Buildings along Storrow Drive.

All the classes will be there, and the whole school will be divided into mixed age groups that will engage in a variety of physical activities together--rotating through several stations. The morning hours will be divided into Little All School Meeting Groups and the afternoon will be divided into 1st and 2nd Grades, 3rd and 4th and 5th and sixth. There are also some all group activities. Please note that Kindergarteners will most likely stay for the morning hours only. It is lovely to see the olders helping the youngers, and to see in action the rationale for our electing to be a small school: The children become one group--not seven classes--of widely diverse ages, sizes, abilities and sophistication levels, all having fun together.

Parents are most welcome to drop by to observe, with the usual caveat: Say a quick "Hello" to your child but then send him or her back promptly to play. Also, kindly refrain from bringing dogs to the event because dogs can become a major distraction to our children and pull them away from the work of being on their 'team.'

LP Book Fair, Saturday, October 15th

One consolation to putting away our flip flops is that the LP book fair is just around the corner on **Saturday, October 15th!** Gina Powers (mother of Olivia in 5th grade) will be co-chairing this fun-filled event with Sarah Rabasco (mother of Lexi in 5th grade). It's the first fundraiser of the school year. Many volunteers from years past have already signed up to work with us, but there's still room for you!! The commitment is primarily on the day of the event so it's a manageable obligation. This is a great way to get to know other parents and give back to our wonderful little school. You can also donate items to for the **raffle**. Past items have been gift cards to restaurants, sports/theater tickets, wine and gift baskets. If you are interested, please contact:

Gina at gpowerslaw@gmail.com, cell 617.416.5557

Or
Sarah Rabasco at sarahrabasco@gmail.com, cell 202.302.5953
Or
Maggie Seitz at mseitz@learningproject.org, 617-266-8427

We will be holding our first meeting for volunteers this **Wednesday, September 21st at 8am** in the Ballroom so please join us to learn more!

Digital Media Serving a Social Good

Lizzie Barcay, our third grade Head Teacher and the author of the curriculum which she composed this summer for the school entitled, "Thoughtful and Ethical use of Technology," (I will be telling you more about that at a later date), recently sent me a link to an article about exactly that subject. The article reports on a high school student who invented an app to make it easy for anyone entering a student cafeteria alone to find another student with whom to eat lunch. This may seem like a small matter, but recall for a moment the cafeteria experience of your youth and you will appreciate what 'social good' this student has provided through digital media. She is definitely worthy of the Noble Prize!

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/teen-creates-app-sit-with-us-open-welcoming-tables-lunch-bullying_us_57c5802ee4b09cd22d926463

Mindfulness

Acts such as described in the above video illustrate how mindfulness, which seems at first glance to be 'me-centered,' will inevitably extend outward to include others, and will promote empathic action.

Next week we will be moving on to a new H-4 (Habit of the Head, Heart and Hand-- the abbreviation having been suggested to me by Ms. Michalow, fifth grade Head Teacher.)

We hope, of course, that we are not leaving 'mindfulness' behind, but rather carrying it forward. Over the past several weeks, the children have learned what mindfulness is, they have practiced 7-11 breathing that helps in the process of mindfulness, and today at All School Meeting they will learn a technique called 'Stoplight,' which can facilitate the calming down of emotion and the elevation of rational thought. Your child should be able to explain these techniques to you.

Have any of our words about mindfulness had an impact? Well, we often don't know the answer to that question as fully as we would like-- which is why teaching, like parenting, is mostly an act of immense faith. But occasionally we have a window into the answer. Yesterday, Ms. Cesarz was in the first grade classroom and saw a child seeming to daydream after having worked diligently for about 40 minutes on math. "Are you taking a little brain vacation?" Ms. Cesarz asked. "No," the child replied, "I'm being mindful!"

Quote of the Week

Be happy in the moment, that's enough. Each moment is all we need, not more."

Mother Teresa

Word of the Week: Maneuver

Some words are more elastic than others-- and can be stretched for use in a variety of ways. "Maneuver" is such a word. Try using it as often as you can this week-- as you maneuver the car into a tight parking spot, as you maneuver to get dinner on the table, provide time for homework, organize baths and bedtimes; as you discuss the election at the dinner table.

The more children 'hear' 'mature vocabulary' words being used-- and being maneuvered about in different ways-- the more quickly and effectively they will expand their own vocabularies. Model good usage and you will see it develop in your children.

Noun:

1. A physical movement or series of moves requiring skill and care.
That was quite a maneuver on the monkey bars.
2. A strategy requiring careful planning.
What's our maneuver to get our long list of chores done this morning?

3. A large-scale military exercise of troops, warships, and other forces.

George Washington maneuvered his troops across the Delaware on Christmas night to surprise the Hessian forces in Trenton.

Verb:

1. To move skillfully or carefully

Can you maneuver that chair over to the table?

2. To carefully guide or manipulate (someone or something) in order to achieve an end.

You did a good job maneuvering your knight to protect your bishop.

Admissions Volunteers Needed

Thank you to those of you who have already volunteered for admissions events this fall! We are looking for a few more volunteers, particularly for Meet the Schools nights at Beacon Hill Nursery, Spruce Street, and Cambridge Ellis Preschool. If you are brand new to The LP, don't be shy. These events are a great way to meet people! Please click here to volunteer: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0d4aaca828a6fb6-admissions>.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Cesarz's Blog

You can now benefit from some of Ms. Cesarz's professional wisdom 24/7 by going to her blog at <http://lpparents.weebly.com/about.html> and reading some of the articles she has posted for your consideration, and, because it is a blog, you can share with others your own insights.

This is a wonderful new resource for our community and I thank Ms. Cesarz for providing it.

"I have often suggested to Michael that we should have parent meetings to talk about the joys and challenges of raising children and to share resources with one another. But finding a time that works for everyone is always a struggle. So this summer, I decided to create a parent blog to share information about children and parenting that might be interesting or helpful to parents in our school community. With the wonders of technology (and the help of Mr. Hajj and Mr. Krewson), I can share some of the information that I find in books or articles. I would encourage you to leave a comment or an idea for others who read the blog. Since this is my first venture into "blog communication," I am not sure what to expect. What I would love to see is The LP Parent Blog become a way for parents to learn from the articles that are posted as well as perhaps a way to share some of those "joys and challenges" of raising children with one another. After all, it may really take a "parent blog" to raise a child!"

Martha

Rent-A-Rainbow

The Sixth graders have begun their annual responsibility of fundraising for their April trip to Washington D.C. As is tradition at The LP, we will be doing a year long service project called Rent-A-Rainbow to help raise money for this trip. The sixth graders are offering a list of services, which you can hire them to help you with! The following list of potential jobs was generated by the sixth graders. Equally, they are open to any other suitable chores or tasks you might have in mind.



Party help, car washing, baby sitting, pet sitting, dog walking, walking children home, watering plants, shoveling snow, helping with recycling and trash, lawn mowing, carrying groceries, helping at yard sales, catering, raking leaves, tutoring/homework help, wrapping presents, stuffing envelopes etc., etc., etc!

The McCords will Be Away

Extending a two year practice into a third, Elisabeth and I will be taking 'summer vacation' in early October. We will be doing our third Rick Steves tour--this one in Southern Italy--and leaving the school in the capable hands of our staff, and the Kindergarteners who all know exactly what to do, how to do it, and when.

If you need to talk to one of us before we leave, we are here for the next two weeks.

Cradles to Crayons

Cradles to Crayons volunteer opportunity is this **Saturday, September 17th from 1:30-3:30**. Many LP children and families did this last fall and had a wonderful time together packing up clothing and toys for lower income families. Please let Maggie know by the end of today if you are interested in helping. It will certainly be ok if you are unable to stay the entire time. Please see the attached flyer (found in the attachments box on the first page of The Bulletin) for more information.

Fall Chess Club

We are sorry to say that Igor most likely will not be teaching Chess Club this fall. The good news is that even if he is unable to teach this fall, he is 100% sure that he will hold a winter/spring session of Chess Club. Igor will know more next week, and we'll be sure to keep you posted.

Incentive Opportunities for The Learning Project

Over the years, our school has been the beneficiary of hundreds of dollars from commercial promotions that require very little effort in general. These promotions may, at first, seem of insignificant value and too much of a nuisance, but the nuisance is small (mostly you just have to 'sign up) AND those pennies, or nickles or box tops add up quickly to 'real money' that helps the school. Here is a summary of those opportunities prepared by Maggie Seitz.



Box Top For Education

Find the Box Top symbol on thousands of products (see image above.) All you have to do is clip it and send it into The LP with your child. Each Box Top is worth 10 cents, and when we have 118 families clipping, it adds up!

<http://www.boxtops4education.com/>

Amazon Smile

Amazon Smile is a simple and automatic way for you to support The LP every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the shopping experience the same as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to our school. Learn more at

<http://smile.amazon.com/gp/aw/ch/about>

Stop and Shop A+ Rewards

This program runs from October 9th - March 17th. A+ School Rewards are points that supporters earn with each purchase made using their Stop & Shop Card. At the end of each month, the points earned are used in a calculation to determine The LP's cash total, which is then automatically credited to our account. Customers can support up to two schools to benefit from their A+ School Rewards that accrue. Just register your Stop and Shop card, and donations become automatic; even if you use Stop and Shop's Peapod delivery service. Learn more at

<http://stopandshop.com/savings-and-rewards/rewards-program/aplus/>

Target

When you go online and designate The LP as the recipient of your Target Red Card purchases, they will automatically donate up to 1% of your purchases to our school. <http://www.target.com/redcard/benefits-target-rewards>

We are looking for a parent volunteer to take charge with organizing our Box Top efforts this year. The parent who assumed this role for the past few years has moved onto another school and we would appreciate the help! Please contact Ms. Seitz if you are interested-- mseitz@learningproject.org

Adventure Trip I

A reminder that 4th- 6th graders are invited to join our fall adventure trip-- a canoe excursion down the Charles River, led by Mr. Rob. Sign-up forms went home a few weeks back and are due tomorrow, Friday, 9/16. Please contact Ms. Mellen with any questions!

ARTISTS OF THE WEEK

Painting to Music

For this project, the students focused on line, an element of art. We read "The Straight Line Wonder" by Mem Fox and learned that lines can be straight, zig-zagged curved, spiraling, and dotted. The students examined the work of Wassily Kandinsky and noticed that he used lines and colors to represent music. We listened to different kinds of music (classical, techno, and jazz) used a wax-resist process to create visual responses to what we heard.



Eva Napoli, Kindergarten

Line Design

For this project, the first graders reviewed the different kinds of lines by singing a song about them and acting them out with their bodies. They then got to work using oil pastels to draw four different designs and patterns using lines. They completed their abstract compositions by cutting their designs into many overlapping pieces and collaged them together.



Matthew Williams, First Grade

Visual Texture Print

For this project, the fourth graders studied the difference between tactile texture (the way something feels) and visual texture (the way something looks as if it might feel). They examined images of animals and were careful to include examples of visual texture in the drawings of their chosen animal. They also added background and border design elements to their drawings. Once their drawings were complete, the students then etched their work onto printmaking foam. They then painted designs with watercolor and printed their animals on the paper using printmaking tools and techniques.



Carina Fujimoto, Fourth Grade

Contour Drawing Based on Observation

For this project, the sixth grade students reviewed the concept of a contour drawing (a general outline that an artist uses to begin a drawing or painting). They learned that while a contour drawing shows the basic structure of an object, it can be very detailed and realistic. The students

used one of their shoes as a model, studied it closely, and created a thorough, observational contour drawing of it.



Stefan Rosenfeld, Sixth Grade

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