

THE LP BULLETIN

NOTES, QUOTES, AND LOST COATS

The LP Bulletin #13
November 10th, 2016

UPCOMING LP EVENTS

Friday, November 11th - **NO SCHOOL - VETERANS' DAY**
Thursday, November 17th - 4th Grade Science Festival and Photo Day

HEADLINES

The Election

Tuesday's election results prompted several people to write--some with ideas about how we should talk with our children, others seeking advice.

One should not assume, of course, that everyone in our community is of a single political persuasion or shares the same concerns about Tuesday's outcome. On the other hand, it is clear that many LP parents, and children as well, were deeply disturbed by Mr. Trump's frequent belittling of people based on their physical attributes or group affinity, and now that he is President Elect, what do we tell our children?

One piece of advice that I received Wednesday morning from an LP parent seemed especially wise, as it contained both historical perspective and optimism. I passed it on to our faculty first thing. She wrote: "I wanted to let you know that this morning in our household we tried to emphasize hope and the power of communities when talking about the election results with the kids, as well as the cyclical/pendulum nature of politics in our country."

I also passed on an article to the faculty that was making the rounds; some of you might have seen it already:

http://m.huffpost.com/us/entry/us_5822aa90e4b0334571e0a30b?

In classrooms, as the election was being discussed, teachers also heard wisdom from the children. One child in second grade, for example, echoed the sentiment expressed by the parent I quoted about the power of community. She told her classmates that she believed that all of them, all of us, need to continue to work --and work even harder-- to challenge prejudice wherever we see it and promote respect for people regardless of our differences. (Her phrasing may not have been quite that 'mature.')

Our third grade teacher, Ms. Barcay, led a discussion about the election in her classroom yesterday morning and, later, in an excellent and thoughtful

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

Citizenship

WORD OF THE WEEK

Concede
Responsibility
Indulge
Predicament
Dawdle
Germinate
Tarnish
Flounder
Maneuver
Artifact
Prompt

ATTACHMENTS

[Photo Day Sign Up](#)



The 4th Grade Players put on a fantastic show during last week's All School Meeting.

We are looking forward to the rest of the performances throughout the school year!

email, she described some of the core ideas that she was trying to convey to the children. I've asked her permission to share her email more broadly:

Dear Third Grade Families,

As you might have expected, the third graders were buzzing about the election as they came in this morning. In an election cycle full of so many bold pronouncements of prejudice, it was important for us to have a conversation about it as a class. At our meeting this morning, we talked about the complicated nature of elections in general, and this election in particular. Of course we strive to remain impartial at school, and we tried to keep this conversation as human (and non-partisan) as possible. The major points we spoke about are the following:

Elections are often difficult times, because we live in a big country, with many different people who have many different life circumstances and beliefs. Those circumstances and beliefs affect how people feel about who should work in the government. When I asked the third graders if it was okay for people to disagree with each other, their response was a clear, "Yes."

I talked about political parties, and how (although there are many,) two parties, the Democrats and Republicans, tend to go back and forth in terms of who has control over the presidency and the government. There are reasons behind the beliefs that members of each party tend to hold, and there are also a variety of beliefs held among members of each party.

The above points having been made, I noted a particular problem this year: a lot of discussions that have come up in this election have resulted in various people (candidates and others) making statements rooted in prejudice and bigotry. We spoke about what those words mean, and how kids should be suspicious of any statement that makes a generalized claim about a large group of people, because no entire group of people is or does any one thing. (We used all boys liking blue as a stereotypical example - it's obviously untrue.)

I clarified that although a lot of these discussions have arisen because of Donald Trump and his supporters, that does not mean that everyone who voted for Trump holds bigoted or prejudiced beliefs. People have many reasons for believing the things they do, and voting the ways that they vote, and it's okay to disagree. It's also okay to be happy or sad about the result of an election. No matter what, though, we have to be respectful to other people (which can be especially hard if we don't think they are being respectful - but two wrongs don't make a right.) An example is not calling someone names because we don't like them (I was hearing a lot of "Donald Duck" this morning, for example.)

Still, it is our responsibility to stand up for what we know is just, and fair, and right - and to stand up against what we know is wrong. At The LP, we talk all the time about our belief that all people are equal; we treat everyone with respect, and we don't judge people for anything they are.



Neither do we tolerate prejudice or bigotry in our school, and we wouldn't want to see it in our community. I told the third graders that they can and should notice, and stand up for what they know is right, when they encounter hate in their world. Any judgment made on the basis of someone's skin color, who they love, where they were born, where their families are from, what religion they practice, etc. is an unfair judgment - and it is their right and responsibility to say so.

Finally, I told them that they should also help keep each other calm, and practice reason (e.g. not spread gossip) in their conversations about the election. I repeated something Mr. McCord says often: never worry alone. I asked the third graders to be sure to talk to an adult if something is worrying or bothering them, or if they have any questions.

....And here is the quote that was our morning message of the day:

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." - Margaret Mead

This was a tricky conversation, and I hope you will feel that I handled it properly. I sincerely hope that you feel comfortable reaching out to me with any feedback - especially if you are concerned about anything we talked about. Please keep me posted about anything you talk about at home that you think might be helpful for us to know here at school.

Thank you very much.

Wishing you all the best in this complicated time,
Lizzie & Mikah

Finally, I would also recommend for reading the speech that President Obama made yesterday which I intend to read to the children at Monday Morning Assembly. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_qg4svvSvU. Ms. Clinton's concession speech was also powerful, <http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/video/hillary-clintons-full-concession-speech-2016-presidential-election-43420615> and may be comforting to children as a model of grace and optimism in the face of a devastating personal set back.

There are always people who are happy after an election and those who are sorely disappointed. Accordingly, it is well to remember what Churchill said about democracy: "Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others." The peaceful transfer of power, if you know your history, is not a matter to regard as inconsequential.

[And yes, I know, Churchill also quipped: "The best argument against democracy is a five minute conversation with the average voter."]

Onward we trudge.

Michael

Word of the Week: Concede

To grant as a right of privilege.
To accept as true, valid or accurate.
To acknowledge grudgingly or hesitantly.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Gentle Reminder I - Arrival Time

Officially, children are able to enter the school at 7:30 am. Staff are routinely here early to prepare for their day and oftentimes welcome children into the school before 7:30 if and when the need arises. We have however, been noticing that children are arriving earlier and earlier sometimes standing in line a little after 7:00 am - this is too early! Thank you for your support in this regard.

Gentle Reminder II: Nearby *Private* Property

We need to be more mindful, as a community, that the properties adjacent to the school do not belong to us and that our children (and babysitters and other adults) should stay off the steps, paths, walls, and fences that are not ours. I see our children, frequently using other people's property as though it were some kind of convenient playground available after they've been dismissed and before they leave. Kindly reinforce for them the distinction between public and private property, and the idea that we do not have a right to trespass on property that is not ours or not in the public domain.

No School on Friday

Reminder - No school tomorrow in observance of Veterans' Day.

Photo Day - Next Thursday

Patty Pingree, who has been taking our school photos for several decades (and the author of the Rising Stars collage in the lobby) will be here next Thursday to take a 'not school school photo' of each child. (She has an uncanny ability to capture most children without that typical school photo 'frozen smile.')

These photos will then be available for purchase at the extremely reasonable rate of \$25.

4th Grade Science Festival - Thursday, November 17th.

A decade ago we settled on a Science Fair/Festival schedule of every-other year for each class. So, annually, grades 2, 4 and 6 present science projects at a Science Festival--first to parents in the ballroom first thing in the morning, and then to their schoolmates.

Ms. Garcia allows the children to select a research topic of their interest which they explore at home using her as a consultant. The core requirement is that they must do research, they must follow the scientific method, and they must present their findings in a manner that will be understandable to an audience of varied ages. Presentation (and neatness) matters, but we are far more interested in the level of engagement of the each child in his/her project, and in their ability to organize a real research project with meaningful results. Science, after-all, is primarily about process, and we are happy to review well-crafted experiments where outcomes were different than anticipated. That too is learning.

LP Auction--Save the Date!

The Annual Learning Project Auction is scheduled for **March 31, 2017 at the Hotel Commonwealth**. Please mark your calendars and join us for this amazing event. In addition, the Hotel Commonwealth is offering block booking rates at the hotel for those attending the event. Below is the booking link so you may begin to make reservations for the event <http://bookings.ihotelier.com/bookings.jsp?groupID=1718023&hotelID=15517>. Additionally, reservations can be made directly at 617.532.5019.

Spartan Fenway Park Race - for Children

Spartan races are obstacle courses that usually take place outdoors (and are fairly rigorous) but this one takes place all throughout Fenway Park and is geared toward children. They have both adult and child events so the whole family can participate. A few LP children participated last year and had a blast. More information can be found at <https://www.spartan.com/en/race/detail/1641/overview?filter=kids>

Potluck Items

We have a few left over items remaining in the kitchen from recent potlucks. If anything sounds familiar, please let Claire know.

- A clear plastic salad bowl and salad serving utensils
- A square plastic bowl
- A multi colored Trader Joe's bag
- A red swissbakers bag
- A green Guy's Farm and Yard bag
- A green canvas bag (Adina & Jeff's wedding)

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.

ARTISTS OF THE WEEK

Textured Underwater Animals

For this project, the students learned about tactile texture. They passed around different objects and described the way they felt using their sense of touch. The students were challenged to create a raised, relief sculpture of an underwater creature showing various textures and designs. They used multiple clay tools and sculpture techniques to achieve their unique creations.



Sadie Hajj, Kindergarten

Illuminated Letters

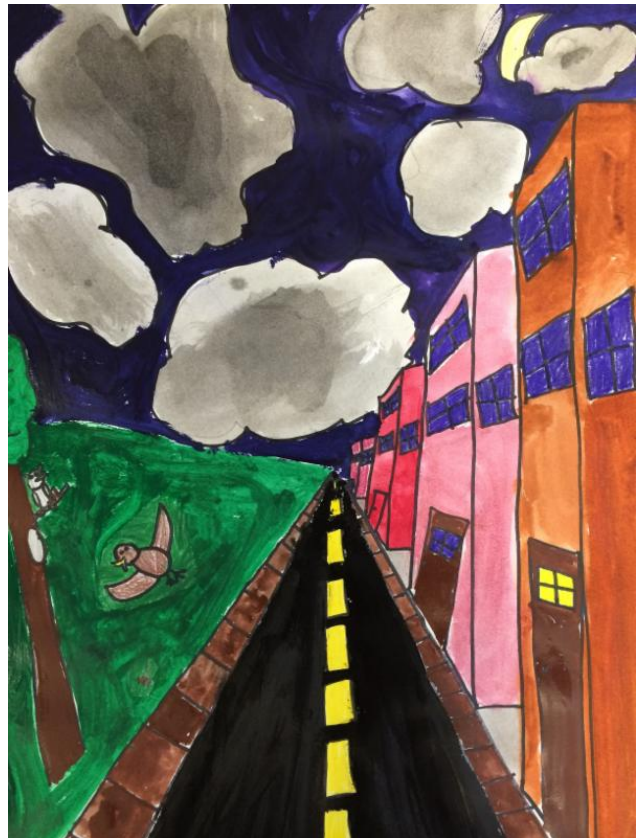
For this project, we examined illuminated manuscripts (texts created during the medieval period) that include intricate, hand-painted images and letters. We watched a video about the *Book of Kells*, a wonderfully preserved manuscript from the 9th Century, which is located at Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland. We used the images we saw as inspiration to create detailed designs of our initials using illuminated letters. Each student uniquely approached each letter and created their illuminated letter composition on metal foil.



Anna Wadlington, Fourth Grade

One-Point Perspective Compositions

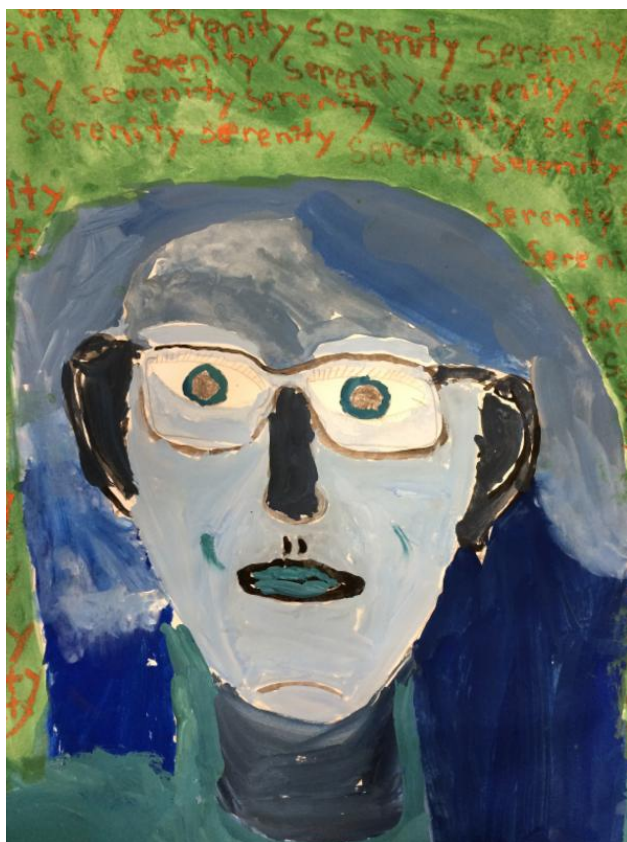
In the Fifth Grade classroom, the students have been learning about the Renaissance. For this project, we examined Raphael's "School of Athens" and the work of Brunelleschi to get insight into how the invention of perspective influenced art during and after the Renaissance. The students learned how to use vanishing points, horizon lines, and one-point perspective techniques to create landscape that displays a sense of space. They then had the option of using their prior knowledge of chiaroscuro to shade certain areas to emphasize depth with graphite or using watercolor paint to give their composition a colorful atmosphere.



Lizzie Marshall, Fifth Grade

What Mood Are You In?

To continue our study of color theory, the sixth grade class discussed how to create mood in our artwork through color relationships. We looked at the color wheel and discovered that certain colors can be used to express certain feelings in artwork, such as the work from Picasso's Blue Period. The students were asked to think about a memory that sparked an intense emotional response. They practiced making emotive facial expressions in the mirror and used pencils to draw the emotion they wanted to represent. They then connected their expression to colors they felt represented that emotion, and used tempera to paint their compositions. They then wrote the emotion they were conveyed in the background.



Niara Dagli, Sixth Grade

The Learning Project Elementary School | | ctoker@learningproject.org | <http://www.learningproject.org>
107 Marlborough St.
Boston, MA 02116

The Learning Project Elementary School, 107 Marlborough St., Boston, MA 02116

[SafeUnsubscribe™ {recipient's email}](#)

[Forward this email](#) | [About our service provider](#)

Sent by ctoker@learningproject.org in collaboration with

Constant Contact 

Try it free today