

THE LP BULLETIN

NOTES, QUOTES, AND LOST COATS

The LP Bulletin #28
March 16th, 2017

UPCOMING LP EVENTS

Friday, 17th March - 1st Grade Special Friends - 8:05- 9:30
Tuesday, 21st March - Science Club
Wednesday, 22nd March - 5th Grade to Otis House
Thursday, 23rd March - 2nd Grade Play
Friday, 24th March - **Early Dismissal** - 12:15 (Professional Development)
Tuesday, 28th March -6th Grade Keyboard Recital. 6th Grade Parent Meeting. Girl Scouts.
Wednesday, 29th March - 6th Grade to Lowell Mills
Thursday, 30th March -1st Grade Play
Friday, 31st March - Stuffed Animal Day. 6th Grade IRS. LP Auction

HEADLINES

The Ides of March

Bad things are supposed to happen on the Ides of March, and so it played out yesterday. Ms. Hill slipped on the ice coming to school and broke her elbow. When she arrived--in considerable pain--Ms. Toker immediately provided first aid and her unique brand of comfort, and counseled a call to the doctor. The doctor advised Ms. Hill to come in for an examination and so off she went. A later x-ray indicated a bone chip requiring surgery, which Ms. Hill will undergo on Tuesday.

I talked to her just moments ago and she sounded chipper, though in some pain and said she couldn't sleep well. I think she is looking forward to getting the surgery behind her, as any of us would. After Tuesday, she will be home for several days and then expects to be able to return, but she will be taking one day at a time. She, of course, asked the doctor when could she play the piano and she was told there really would be no reason she couldn't as soon as she felt she could move her arm comfortably.

We are all, of course, distressed that this happened to our splendid colleague and friend. Certainly, yesterday, it could have been any one of us. I know we all wish Jan well and a speedy recovery. And in the next week, while the piano downstairs is largely silent, we will be looking forward to hearing soon again the sounds of her glorious playing.

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

Wonder

WORD OF THE WEEK

Devour
Emancipate
Suffrage
Vacate
Accumulate
Kerfuffle
Demonstrate
Farewell
Affirm
Curtail
Advocate
Flourish
Compromise
Apply
Concede
Responsibility
Indulge
Predicament
Dawdle
Germinate
Tarnish
Flounder
Maneuver
Artifact
Prompt

ATTACHMENTS

[April Calendar](#)

[After School Changes Form](#)

[March Goals Calendar](#)

Teach Like A Champion: 49 Techniques That Put Students on the Path to College

This is the title of a book that was first published in 2010 and written by Doug Lemov, a charter school educator working in the Uncommon Schools network. At the time of publication, this was a network of 16 college preparatory schools in high-need districts in New York City and New Jersey. It is now a network of 49 schools in Boston, Camden, Newark, New York City, Troy and Rochester.

It was about five or six years ago that I first read the book and soon after I introduced it to the faculty and it became our summer read. While our teachers, even six years ago, were already using some of the techniques described in the book, there were others we weren't using, and truly none with a level of school-wide consistency and uniformity. Over the years, the book and its techniques have become an important part of our professional development conversations-and also of our orientation for the Interns and new Faculty. We now have a list of 15 techniques, which we train new people on, and which we regularly review and discuss at Faculty Meetings. Perhaps more importantly, we actively use these techniques in our teaching, and also as standards for evaluating and strengthening our own professional performance.

Since these techniques have applicability at home and can also crystalize better parenting as they crystalized for us better teaching, I am going to share them with you-one at time-over the next year or so in this publication. And if that pace is too slow, buy the book, or borrow (for a few weeks, only) one of the multiple copies we have here around the school.

NB. Where Lemov has used the word 'students,' I have substituted the word 'children' to facilitate the application of the technique outside of the school setting.

Technique #37: What To Do

"Telling [children} *what to do* [and how to do it] instead of telling them what *not* to do is not only far more efficient and effective but it refocuses us, even in moments that are about behavior, on teaching. It expresses the belief that teaching can solve problems."(I especially like this final observation!)

Lemov also writes that simply telling children what to do is often not enough and mentions four important characteristics of good instructions:

1. They should be **specific**, focusing on "manageable and precisely described actions" that children can take.
2. They should be **concrete**-and he gives this example: "If I tell my student to pay attention, he may or may not know how to do that, but if I tell him to put his feet under the desk, I have asked him to do something [he] cannot misunderstand or not know how to do." I am sure parents can think of examples applicable to home life.
3. They should be **sequential**. Commenting that 'a complex skill like paying attention is rarely equated with a single action,' Lemov expands on the example above suggesting he might say, "John, put your feet under your desk, put your pencil down, and put your eyes on me. . . When I write it on the board, you write it in your notes." Again, I am sure parents can think of examples where sequencing the instruction will better enable a child to

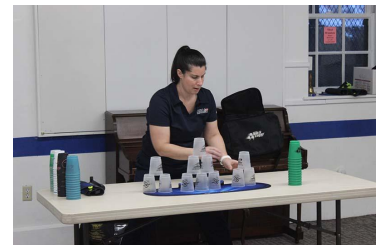
WHAT'S DUE?

3rd Grade Special Friends
Information - Due by 3/28

After School Changes - Due
by 3/20

GIRL SCOUTS SCHEDULE

March 28th
April 11th
April 25th
May 9th
May 23rd
June 6th



Lisa Berman, former Teacher Intern at the LP, and now a Physical Education Teacher and competitive speed stacker, visited our school on Wednesday to teach younger grades!



succeed.

4. The action based on the instruction should be **observable**--you, as a parent, should see the outcome. There should be 'little wriggle room' in terms of accountability. (This is the problem with the vague instruction, "Pay attention;" it is hard to observe, whereas the instruction defining the preconditions of paying attention are observable.)

Early in the section on "What to do," Lemov makes the observation that "some portion of [child] noncompliance . . . is caused not by defiance, but by . . . [children] misunderstanding a direction, not knowing how to follow it, or tuning out in a moment of benign distraction. I like the generosity of spirit behind that statement, and now it more often than we may realize describes the situation leading to poor conduct. And when we work with this premise in mind, and give "What to do" instructions that are *specific, concrete, sequential* (as needed) and *observable*, we enable children "who wanted to do as asked to do so easily," and we may also enable the recalcitrant ones to more successfully, if even reluctantly, achieve reasonable compliance. And that, for the most part, is the minimal goal of most of us as parents!

Two Visitors this Week

It is always a pleasure to have 'old friends' return for a visit to the school. This week, Sam Dang, LP '02, who is now finishing his Masters Degree in Elementary Education, came by to see math instruction in the fourth and fifth grade classrooms. He was astounded at what he observed and could not believe the depth of engagement of all of the students during an hour-long work time, the fact that they were working at a variety of levels, and the ability of the teachers to meet quickly one-on-one or in very small groups to introduce new concepts, review areas of difficulty, or lay out new challenges. He saw two children learn the concept and formula for the circumference of a circle in five minutes (they were ready for it) and said that would have taken a week of work in his classroom.

Another visitor this week was Lisa Berman, who was in our Intern Program in 1996-97. After that, she worked for three years teaching at the South Shore Charter School where she was promoted to a Level Coordinator. Then she and her husband moved to St. Louis where they live with their two children and where she teaches PE part-time at her children's school. The other thing she does is work for the World Sport Stacking Association overseeing all the competitions in the US, which is one of the reasons she came to Boston. She was pleased to learn from Mr. Rob that the children, here, also have an opportunity to learn this skill in PE class (along with many other skills) and she spent part of Tuesday Morning doing some stack classes with three PE groups.

It was great to see both of these educators back in a place that influenced their lives at important junctures in their growth.

The LP as a Bargain

When I think of 'bargain' I often think of Filene's Basement. It wasn't a particularly elevating environment, but the deals were attractive.

I certainly do not want The LP to be considered a 'bargain basement' kind of school. We're not a fancy place (and deliberately so,) but I rather fancy that we offer a very *high quality* line of 'educational clothing!'

And here's something else that is true: not only do we offer that line at a cost far lower than most independent schools, but we also do many more hours of schooling per year than many of our peers. That's been true for a while, and a quick recent comparison with the calendars and hours of another area private school against our own calendar and hours confirmed this interesting fact: A parent who selects The LP for Kindergarten and who stays with the school for seven years, gets an eighth year of school 'for free!'

Now that, too, is not a bad 'deal.'

Our Habit of the Head, Heart and Mind: Wonder

We have had several quite thoughtful messages at Monday Morning Assembly about 'Wonder', which has been described several ways:

1. Thinking or speculating curiously-as in, "I wonder how a brick is made.'
2. Being filled with admiration or awe-as in "What a wonder-filled class discussion we just had on the origins of the universe.
3. Having some doubt about something-as in, "Is it possible that global warming is *not* impacted by green house gasses?"

There is a time and place for each of these kinds of wondering and surely a school should be one of the chief places where wondering happens *constantly*. All three are important, but I find myself often drawn to seek those experiences of awe that I find often in nature, in the printed word, in the visual arts and music, and in the accomplishments of human beings (including the youngest among us) when they overcome adversity.

Here are two quotes about wonder as awe that work quite nicely in tandem:

"The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and all science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead: his eyes are closed." --Albert Einstein

"We wake, if ever at all, to mystery." --Annie Dillard

Michael.

Word of the Week: Devour

To eat up greedily or ravenously.

To use up or destroy as if by eating - We are devouring the world's resources.

To prey upon - devoured by guilt.

To enjoy avidly - he/she devours books.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Taco Tuesday - Re-Do

Worry no longer - Due to our Snow Day, we will be holding the ever popular Taco Tuesday for 2nd, 4th, and 6th grades on Monday, March 20th! No need to pack a lunch that day for your 2nd, 4th and 6th graders.

School Team Chess Tournament - April 9th.

On Sunday, April 9th, the LP will again have teams participating in the state-wide team chess tournament in Boxboro, Massachusetts. Students in Kindergarten through 5th grade are welcome to be part of The LP teams -- we have room for everyone who wants to play! No prior chess tournament experience is necessary (though the student must know the rules of chess.) If you have a student interested in participating, please contact Louis Tompros (ltompros@gmail.com) for more details by March 31st.



ARTISTS OF THE WEEK

Flower Prints

To create this project, the first grade class made several observations about the upcoming spring season. We noticed that many flowers are starting to bloom across Boston, and thought it would be nice to celebrate this sign of spring through art. We examined the work of Georgia O'Keefe and were inspired to create close-up drawings of flowers. We then transferred these drawings to foam and printed them in various colors. A beautiful garden background was then created using oil pastel and watercolor.



Relief Sculpture Still-Lives

The second graders created this project by examining the difference between relief sculpture and sculpture in-the-round. They learned that relief sculpture protrudes from a flat surface and gives subject matter a sense of three-dimensionality. Building upon their knowledge of the color wheel, the students used a variety of colors and brushstrokes to create a background for their still-life. They then used paper cutting techniques to give their subject matter a sense of relief.



Darian Nasseh, Second Grade

Dara Scully-Inspired Narratives

This project is a continuation of the Fifth Grade study of Greek mythology and story-telling through visual images. The students were introduced to the contemporary artist, Dara Scully, and examined her use of superimposed images to represent a narrative. The students created stories or myths about her work, and brainstormed narratives they could tell through their own artwork. The students used photography and a mixed-media process to relate a story in their compositions. Can you tell what their artwork is about?

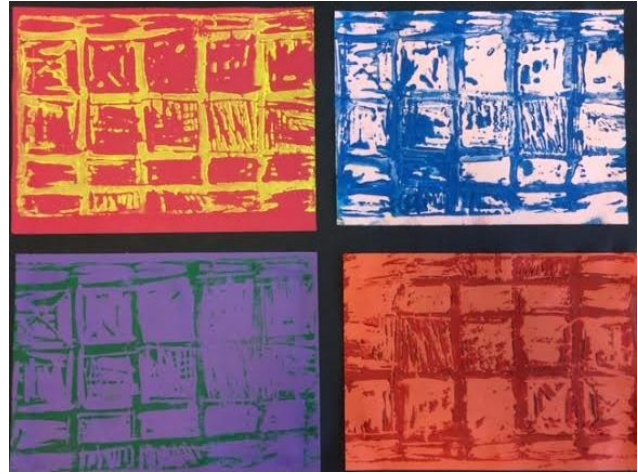


Edgar Torres, Fifth Grade

Linocut Prints

For this project, the students reviewed the concept of visual texture and relief printing. They examined the detailed work of contemporary artist Steve Prince, and noticed that he uses a linocut printmaking process to depict intricate, highly textured images.

To create their linocuts, the students did several sketches showing visual texture and transferred their completed chosen sketch to a piece of linoleum. They then carved the image using various carving tools, and used a brayer and printmaking ink to print their piece multiple times.



Nicholas Carlson, Sixth Grade

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