

Our GT Advocate

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2015 NJAGC Conference

Ice, snow, and freezing temperatures did not keep three Livingston teachers away from the New Jersey Association for Gifted Children's Annual Conference, Full STEAM Ahead, on Friday, March 6th. In fact, it did not keep away the many passionate educators of the gifted who gathered to hear speakers, attend workshops, and enjoy the professional collaboration with other educators who share a common passion for gifted education.

Dr. Jim DeLisle, one of three keynote speakers, addressed the audience with his presentation entitled: *Dumbing Down America: The War Against America's Brightest Young Minds*, summarized the salient points from his book of the same title and solidified what educators

and parents of the gifted have been struggling over these past decades. He discussed the major battle between Equity and Excellence in his statement that our legislation focuses on equity for all...except gifted children. He pressed the point that giftedness is not something you do, but someone you are. DeLisle quoted gifted educator Kathi Kearny when he said, "Schools need to be as accessible intellectually as they are to those with physical disabilities."

How can we reverse this alarming national trend? Dr. DeLisle wants us to take a step backward. Gifted education should regress 30 years so that we can return to a national focus on developing the gifts in our gifted children. Our schools need to focus on communication with

students who are gifted rather than on curriculum.

Dr. DeLisle's call to impose a three-year national moratorium on high-stakes testing drew applause from the audience of educators and parents. He quipped that an African man once commented on our country's emphasis on testing, "If we want an elephant to grow, we feed it, not measure it." The following was his rationale for this moratorium: \$1.7 billion is spent annually on testing; an average of nine weeks is spent on assessment; and gifted students are forced to sit through test prep that they do not need. Dr. DeLisle emphasized the powerful message in his book, "If we want our nation to prosper, we must pay attention to its most intelligent youth."

Continued on page 2

Our GT Advocate

Our GT Advocate is produced through the efforts of the Livingston School District's Gifted/Talented and Enrichment Department. The goal of this newsletter is to provide the general public with information on both the GT and enrichment programs offered by the district, as well as some outside enrichment ideas and helpful resources.

We reserve space in each issue of **Our GT Advocate** for student input. If you would like to be a contributing member, please contact Sharon Handley at (973) 535-8000, Ext: 6920 or shandley@livingston.org

Our GT Advocate can be found posted on the Livingston District website at <http://www.livingston.org> below the drop down menu: District

Departments, Gifted and Talented, and click the link on the left for **Our GT Advocate**.

If you would like to have **Our GT Advocate** emailed with each new publication, go to the district website <http://www.livingston.org> and click: "Subscribe to LPS News" and check the box for **Our GT Advocate**.

NJAGC Conference Continued

(Continued from page1)

Speaker Stephanie Tolan, a Newberry Honor-winning author of more than two dozen novels for children and young adults, gave her keynote on: *The Power of Whole Mind*. She spoke about the social, emotional, and spiritual needs of gifted individuals and how our culture largely treats intellect as synonymous with "mind." This focus has unwittingly led us to limit our children's access to the full power of their own minds. Through stories and examples from her work with gifted children, she discussed what she labeled, "Aspects of Mind."

- Imaginary: existence only in the imagination; unreal
- Imaginal: actual existence, but consisting entirely of thought.

She drew examples from her book, [Change Your Story, Change Your Life](#), which is available for free

download at www.storyhealer.com to emphasize how we can begin to understand the "mind" in order to expand our vision so that we can help children develop and use the power of the mind for their own and society's benefit.

The two afternoon sessions provided educators with multiple choices of workshops to attend ranging in topics from *Object Based Inquiry: Cultivating Curiosity and Igniting Passion* to *Teaching Game Design*. To round out the afternoon, educators finished the day with expanded question and answer sessions in a conversational format at "Round Table Discussions – Meet the Experts."

"Excellence is doing ordinary things extraordinarily well."

– John W. Gardner

Bringing all these ideas and recommendations home, it is gratifying to be in a district that places emphasis on the education of its gifted and talented students. Livingston schools offer programs for academic, artistic, and musically gifted students. You can read more about our "Arts" programs and view our photo gallery on pages 8 - 9.



GT/Enrichment Teachers:
Karin Pinto, Lenore Argen
and Sharon Handley

Livingston Students Win NJAGC Contest!

Each year, the New Jersey Association for Gifted Children (NJAGC) offers several contests in the areas of writing, drawing, and/or poetry for gifted children to enter.

This year's theme for the NJAGC Conference contest was: "STEAM from Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math." Several of our Livingston students submitted their work and two received ribbons from NJAGC. When interviewed, each student was asked, "Why did you decide to enter the contest?" and "What inspired you to create the piece you did?" Here are their responses:

I wanted to see how well I could do writing on this topic. I thought it

would be a challenge. My parents encouraged me to enter the contest; my dad is an engineer and I knew it would make him happy.

Avery Li (Grades: K-2)
2nd Place: Writing



Because I thought this was a fun opportunity to test out my essay skills. The thing that inspired me most was just how humans have evolved as a species.

Cindy Liang (Grades 6-8)
2nd Place: Writing

Congratulations to Avery and Cindy on their second place wins!

"Writing is an extreme privilege, but it's also a gift. It's a gift to yourself and it's a gift of giving a story to someone."
– Amy Tan

Local Enrichment Opportunities

Interesting trips for Academic GT students during the summer.

Princeton University Art Museum

Painting on Paper: American Watercolors at Princeton

June 27, 2015 – August 30, 2015

Watercolors are a distinctive amalgam of painting and drawing, in which color and line combine to produce effects of unparalleled nuance and suppleness. The Princeton University Art Museum's holdings of American watercolors are distinguished by their quality, breadth, and the duration with which they have been collected.



Collecting Contemporary, 1960–2015: Herb and Lenore Schorr
June 27, – September 20, 2015

"Collecting Contemporary" are from the Schorr Collection that will feature prints, paintings, drawings, and photographs acquired by Herb, Graduate School Class of 1963, and Lenore Schorr over the last forty-odd years. Created by such pioneering artists as Jean-Michel Basquiat, Justine Kurland, Nick Mauss, Elizabeth Murray, James Rosenquist, and Andy Warhol, these works serve as double portraits. [Princeton Art Museum](#)

The Philadelphia Museum of Art:

Discovering the Impressionists:
Paul Durand-Ruel

June 24, - September 13, 2015

Discovering the Impressionists examines the critical years from 1865 to 1905 when Durand-Ruel both inspired and sustained artists like Claude Monet, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Édouard Manet, Camille Pissarro, and Edgar Degas. Tickets go on sale April 14, 2015

[Philadelphia Museum](#)

Looking for
something to do?

Franklin Institute
The Art of the Brick

Now - September 6, 2015

The world's largest gallery of LEGO® art and a "top 10 must-see exhibit" according to CNN. This art gallery features over 100 creations, assembled from more than one million LEGO bricks. The gallery consists of eight different sections, each containing Sawaya's unique and well-crafted pieces. *The Art of the Brick* includes an assortment of concepts using various themes of life and human emotion, as well as some more familiar concepts such as a 20-foot-long Tyrannosaurus Rex made from over 80,000 LEGO bricks! Also on display are interpretations of historic works such as Leonardo Da Vinci's Mona Lisa, Vincent Van Gogh's Starry Night, Edvard Munch's The Scream, and Auguste Rodin's The Thinker—all painstakingly pieced together to look exactly like the originals, and all made entirely of LEGO bricks!

Due to popular demand, space is limited and sold on a timely basis. Please purchase tickets in advance online and chose your date and time. [Franklin Institute](#)



Duke Farms is a huge estate in NJ with diverse woodlands, extensive bike and walking paths, and gardens. www.dukefarms.org

This **EagleCam**, located on Duke Farms allows viewers an up-close and personal view into the lives of a pair of bald eagles as they breed, incubate, and raise young. During the month of February two eggs were laid that will soon hatch into eaglets.

[Eagle Cam - Duke Farms NJ](#)

The Aviation Hall of Fame of New Jersey

Founded in 1972, the Aviation Hall of Fame & Museum of New Jersey is dedicated to preserving the Garden State's distinguished aviation and space heritage. The museum offers visitors a view of historic aircraft, air and space artifacts, photographs, fine art, and an extensive model collection. The Library has more than 3,000 volumes and hundreds of aviation videotapes. The museum's custom-built "Fundamentals of Flight" interactive aerodynamics exhibit is now operational in the Great Room.

[Aviation Hall of Fame](#)

"The most important thing people did for me was to expose me to new things."
– Temple Grandin

Spend the day together....

New Jersey State Aquarium

<http://www.njaquarium.org/index2.html>

Battleship NJ

<http://www.battleshipnewjersey.org/visit/>

Extensive sites: NJ art museums

http://artcollecting.com/nonprofits_nj.htm

NJ Museum and Zoo sites

http://www.metrojersey.com/museums_zoos.htm

The Bronx Zoo

<http://www.bronxzoo.org/>

Fun things to do in New Jersey

http://www.funnewjersey.com/Fun_with_Kids.asp

Spring Academic GT Clusters

Elementary

“Somewhere, something incredible is waiting to be known”. - Carl Sagan

The G.T. students are exploring numerous paths to knowledge by participating in a variety of spring clusters.

Curious Minds

This cluster provides students with various opportunities to examine, make predictions, and draw conclusions while examining the unexplained. Students are investigating and exploring the branches of science and how each may view a particular enigma differently. The students will use their deductive reasoning skills, forming a hypothesis, collecting and analyzing data, and finally drawing conclusions. Some of the “mysteries” may include Easter Island, Columnar Basalt, Sailing Stones, and the Bermuda Triangle.

Other students in the Curious Minds cluster are busy solving crimes. These detectives are using such tools as matrix logic puzzles, charts and graphs. They will follow clues, suspects, and alibies. Several of the crimes to be solved may include “*The Chocolate Caper*” and “*The Mystery at the Mall*.”

Tessellations

The connections between art and mathematics are strong and frequent. The Tessellations cluster provides students with the principles, concepts, and methodologies required to better understand how geometry and patterns are interrelated to form works of art.

The students will also draw conclusions as to how works of art are used to express cultural values, beliefs, and traditions. The students may begin by determining

if a geometric shape has reflection and/or rotational symmetry. They will create a design using pattern blocks and then analyze the design to determine its symmetry.

After a study of M.C. Escher, the students will create a unique work of art using tessellating shapes. Finally the “historians” in this cluster may compare the earliest known tessellations found in Islamic art circa 3000 B.C. to examples from medieval European art.

Archaeology

This is a popular spring cluster for many of our G.T. students. It is a base for understanding our studies of ancient civilizations. Archaeology is the key to understanding what we know about human civilization. It is exploring the mysteries of history through science. Students may see the hieroglyphics from Egypt, cuneiform in Sumeria, and the character of Chinese writing, but they need to see “the big picture” that humans need to communicate in writing.

The interpretation of various artifacts and their locations helps the students discuss and explain lifestyles, beliefs, and cultures of past civilizations and how they can affect our actions and futures. The students incorporate chemistry, biology, geology, and zoology in their group discussions. The “archaeologist” begin with an understanding of stratigraphy. They may accomplish this by “layering” artifacts in undisturbed soil. They practice record keeping and site gridding using a square field plan. Now students are prepared to participate in a simulated archaeological “dig”.

Each student is responsible for documenting their findings in a journal. When this is completed, the group will interpret the excavated artifacts and determine what significance they had in that particular culture. Some students will participate in an underwater “dig”. They will hypothesize, dig with

gloves, draw, measure, and record findings before students draw their conclusions. They may also create individual “digs” with a story behind it for others to excavate.

Finally it is time for them to determine if they themselves have the personal character traits necessary to be an archaeologist. The children must painstakingly reconstruct a piece of pottery from shards, hopefully having the patience and perseverance to do so. This cluster is guaranteed to kindle the fires of enthusiasm in our G.T. students.

Structural Design

In this spring cluster, our engineers as well as architects design much of our world from buildings to bridges. The students must consider ways to strengthen weak materials. They will see how changing the shape or position of materials affects its strength. The students may begin by learning the importance of the “base” by making playing card houses. They will experiment with the importance of having “support” by constructing a water tower.

All students will discuss the “vocabulary” terms of architecture including supports, eaves, beams, cantilevers, arches, and domes. Some students will construct a geodesic dome using only newspaper and tape, others will design and build a bridge.

Inventions/Innovations

All inventions begin as someone’s idea. Some are for things that do what no one else has ever done before. Others innovate and make old ideas better. In our Inventions/Technology cluster the students begin by asking themselves, to what extent do inventions/innovations solve a problem or the needs and wants of a society? As they research and explore various inventions they will

Spring Academic GT Clusters - Continued

question how they have influenced the local community and the global impact.

Our budding inventors may design a "Rube Goldberg" gadget or construct a Marble Moving Machine. Some students will research Buckminster Fuller and how his desire to construct inexpensive housing led to his design of geodesic domes. Our students are full of innovative ideas just waiting to become a reality!

These spring 2015 clusters may encourage and inspire a future M.C. Escher, Howard Carter, Sherlock Holmes or Frank Lloyd Wright. They will certainly use their intelligence, imagination and creativity as they progress through each exploration

Middle Schools

Debate

One of our most popular and competitive spring Academic GT cluster choices at the Middle School Level is Debate. Working with a partner, students research

both sides of an assigned issue and prepare formatted speeches. Each student must deliver his/her own speech during an in-house competition and add on "attacks" to rebut their opponents' statements. The speakers with the top scores will then travel to the NJ Consortium for Gifted Education's regional competition being held at the College of St. Elizabeth on Friday, May 29, 2015. This year's topics: JV (Grade 6) Be it resolved that the use of animals in laboratory research should be banned. Varsity (Grades 7-8) Be it resolved that students in the United States should be granted two years of free tuition to a community college. Look for the winners on our GT and Enrichment district website in June. Good luck to all of our competitors!

Theatre Improvisation

Participants experience the craft of acting using improvisational exercises. To improvise is to compose and perform or deliver without previous preparation. Students must be creative, focused, and ready to respond to prompts and/or take on a

character at a moment's notice in the exciting activities within this cluster. As the culminating activity, students take part in a preparation and presentation of a problem solving activity where their improvisation skills are shown off and put to the test.

Curious Minds "The Unknown"

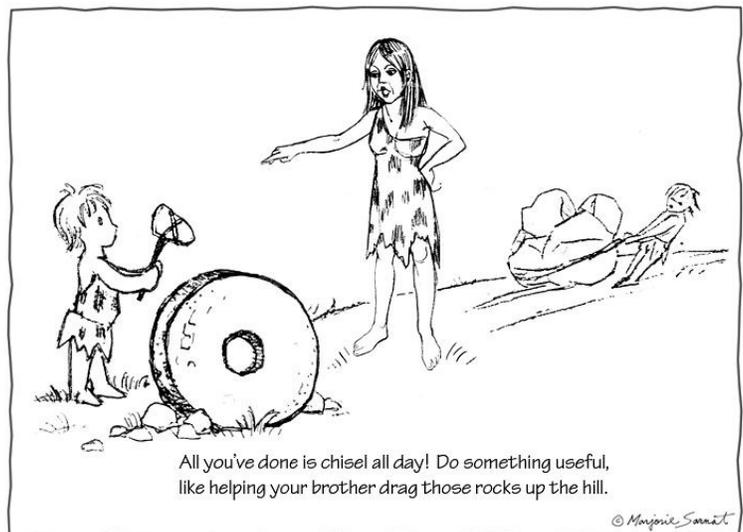
Students take a critical look at mysterious phenomena and legends from around the world. Topics such as UFO's, the Jersey Devil, Stonehenge, and the Bermuda Triangle are broken down into a theory-based format where the growth from legend to "reality" can be seen and understood. As the culminating activity, students choose a "mystery" to research, become an expert on that topic, and formulate an original theory. Students then create a point/counterpoint-style presentation in order to teach fellow classmates what they have discovered, break down the variety of existing theories, and defend their own.

Cartoon

Corner



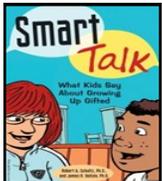
*Do you think this youngster
is a graduate of the
Inventions/Innovations unit?*



GT Resource Suggestions

Books Suggestions:

Smart Talk: What Kids Say About Growing Up Gifted



By Ph.D. Robert A. Schultz and Ph.D. Jim Delisle

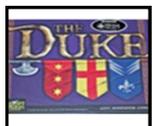
When you really want to know what it is like to grow up gifted, ask gifted kids. Based on a survey of thousands of young people around the world, this candid, refreshing book helps gifted kids know they are not alone and they are definitely not "weird." Brief biographies provide insight into challenges gifted children face, like trying to fit in, dealing with adults' expectations, being bored in school, and making mistakes.

Kids Who Are Changing The World by Anne Jankeliowitch

The inspiring stories of 45 young heroes who have made an impact on our planet. Forty-five young people from around the world (including twelve from the U.S.) are doing something every day to make the world a better place. With skills ranging from singing, drawing, and painting, to public demonstrations, and events, they have fought climate change and pollution, and worked to protect animals and their natural habitats

Menza Winning Game:

The Duke



Move tiles around the game board and flip after each move. Each tile's side shows a different movement pattern. End movement in opponent tile's square to capture it. Capture Duke tile to win.

For 2 players age 13+

"You know all those things you've always wanted to do?
You should go do them."
- Anonymous

Books for Young Female readers:

Girls Think of Everything: Stories of Ingenious Inventions by Women by Catherine Thimmesh and Melissa Sweet

In kitchens and living rooms, in garages and basements, girls have invented ingenious innovations that have made our lives simpler and better. Their creations are some of the most enduring (the windshield wiper) and best loved (the chocolate chip cookie). What inspired these women, and just how did they turn their ideas into realities?



Girls & Young Women Inventing: Twenty True Stories About Inventors Plus How You Can Be One Yourself by Frances A. Kames, Suzanne M. Bean, and Rosemary Wallner

In these first-person stories, readers discover the problems and frustrations of 20 young inventors and learn what motivated them and how they solved their problems.

Gutsy Girls: Young Women Who Dare by Tina Schwager and Michele Schuerger

In exciting, inspiring first-person stories, 25 young women tell of daring feats, from extreme sports to their ground-breaking achievements. Includes resources, advice, and activities on how readers can build their confidence and set goals to strive for their dreams.



Apps:

ipad/iphone/ipod



Khan Academy (ipad)

A convenient way to watch Khan Academy videos.... not the full Khan Academy experience (free)

Minds of Modern Mathematics (iPad/iPhone/iPod Touch)

Takes you on an interactive journey that spans nearly 1,000 years. It tells the story of mathematics and how it has impacted almost every aspect of human progress, from science to music, art, architecture, and culture. (free)

BananaGrams (iPad/iPhone/iPod Touch)

Award winning game that will drive you bananas! Just like the board game, Scrabble without a board, played against yourself in a race against your opponents or the clock. (paid \$0.99)

Simple Physics (iPad/iPhone and soon, Android)

Design complex structures for everything from tree houses to ferris wheels and then simulate your design with a sophisticated physics engine. (free)

GeoBee Challenge (iPad and Android) by National Geographic

In the multiple-choice round, answers come from more than 1300 National Geographic Bee questions. In the map challenge round, zoom, pinch and tap your way to find spots on an interactive map from a catalog of 1000+ locations. For an added challenge, bonus rounds include photographs and you have to locate what's in the photo on the interactive map...but you don't know where the photo was taken or what is in the picture! The faster you answer, the more points you get... For grades 4-8 (\$1.99)

Model United Nations Winners!

We are thrilled to announce that the HMS Junior Model United Nations Team has returned from the 2015 Regional Competition once again victorious! Students **Ethan Wong, M.K.**, and **John Bailon**, who represented United Arab Emirates earned the distinction of *Outstanding Delegation* for their discussion of *Global Pandemic Response*. The students representing Kazakhstan, **Menglin Guo, Ryan Lee, and Dina Brustein**, earned *Best Resolution* for their discussion of *Global Pandemic Response*. HMS students representing Russia, **Sunny Chen, Jennifer Zhang, and Bella**

Brodsky, earned the honor of *Best Resolution* for their viewpoints on *Terrorism*. **Ethan Markon** of Uruguay was declared *Best Delegate* for his discussion of *Climate Change*. The delegations for Belgium and Uruguay also gallantly defended their resolutions. Congratulations to all Model United Nations Members!



Education and The Arts

Cally Flox, one of three keynote speakers at the NJAGC Convention and Program Director for the BYU ARTS Partnership, led an engaging workshop entitled - *Using the Arts: Helping Students Show What They Know*.

Typical of attendees, we settled in our chairs with notebooks or laptops ready to listen and scribble down information. The presenter stood before us and asked that we put everything down on our seats and stand up. Suddenly, the music went on and we all had to dance and create movement while listening. This went on for over ten minutes, and most of us shared that we were pleasantly surprised at how much we really "felt" the rhythm of the music in our minds and bodies.

We were also asked to interpret paintings like a text, comparing inferences to what is real. When looking at a piece of art we shared: What I see... What I think...What I wonder...and to empathize with what was happening with one of the characters in the art work. The many different interpretations were based on personal experiences.

Ms. Flox's presentation focused on incorporating the arts in a school's curriculum and about what it

intrinsically does to develop a child's overall education.

Eliot Eisner sums it up best with: **Ten Lessons the Arts Teach**

1. The arts teach children to make good judgments about qualitative relationships. Unlike much of the curriculum in which correct answers and rules prevail, in the arts, it is judgment rather than rules that prevail.

2. The arts teach children that problems can have more than one solution and that questions can have more than one answer.

3. The arts celebrate multiple perspectives. One of their large lessons is that there are many ways to see and interpret the world.

4. The arts teach children that in complex forms of problem solving purposes are seldom fixed, but change with circumstance and opportunity. Learning in the arts requires the ability and a willingness to surrender to the unanticipated possibilities of the work as it unfolds.

5. The arts make vivid the fact that neither words in their literal form nor numbers exhaust what we can know. The limits of our language do not define the limits of our cognition.

6. The arts teach students that small differences can have large effects. The arts traffic in many subtleties.

7. The arts teach students to think through and within a material. All art forms employ some means through which images become real.

8. The arts help children learn to say what cannot be said. When children are invited to disclose what a work of art helps them feel, they must reach into their poetic capacities to find the words that will do the job.

9. The arts enable us to have experience we can have from no other source and through such experience to discover the range and variety of what we are capable of feeling.

10. The arts' position in the school curriculum symbolizes to the young what adults believe is important.

"If art is to nourish the roots of our culture, society must set the artist free to follow his vision wherever it takes him." -John F. Kennedy

Elementary GT Art

In the GT Art program, students are introduced to various high-end materials such as professionally used inks, oil pastels, charcoal, oil, watercolor and/or acrylic paints. The first few lessons of the year are focused toward training students to observe shapes, shadows, and detail. Eventually, they transition into lessons on color theory, where they learn about balance, contrast, and color mixing.

Gifted and Talented Art students use these techniques to bring their individual approach and style to their work. Students refine their skills through the process of critique. Students are repeatedly asked to take a step back and self-assess their work, as well as the work of master artists. Students

are challenged at their individual levels, and with determination they work hard to meet those goals.

Descriptions of Projects:

Egyptian Gods: Students learn about Egyptian culture through this multimedia art project. Using oil pastels and watercolor paint, students depict an Egyptian god of their choice. Through printmaking, students create a background of hieroglyphics.

Abstract Painting: After designing a balanced, geometric composition, students mix tints and shades to create an abstract work of art.

Adobe Houses: Students look at images of Mexican adobe houses

and design their own Mexican villages. They blend chalk pastels to create a vibrant scene.

Tim Burton: This project is inspired by the artist and filmmaker Tim Burton. The artist focuses intensely on character development when they create two characters that juxtapose one another. Students then depict a feeling of depth by shading with a range of values.

Animal Combinations: Students combine two or three animals and work to create an environment for their imaginary creature. Students create dimension in their artwork by applying concepts of color theory and shading.

Elementary GT Music

“All our musical experiences, no matter what sort, ‘educate’ our inner-felt life, refining, clarifying, broadening, and deepening our feelings in a way analogous to how language does the same for our conceptual reasonings.”

-*A Philosophy of Music Education: Advancing the Vision* by Bennett Reimer



Fourth and fifth graders in the Gifted and Talented Music program have been immersed in a variety of compositional experiences. Units of study this year have included the following:

“Moods as Inspiration”

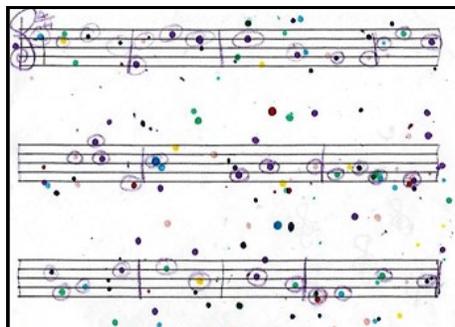
Students chose an emoji and created a short piece reflective of that emotion.

“Aleatory (Chance) Music

Students rolled dice to determine a sequence of musical phrases. This device and similar strategies have been used by well-known composers such as Mozart, John Cage, and George Harrison from The Beatles.

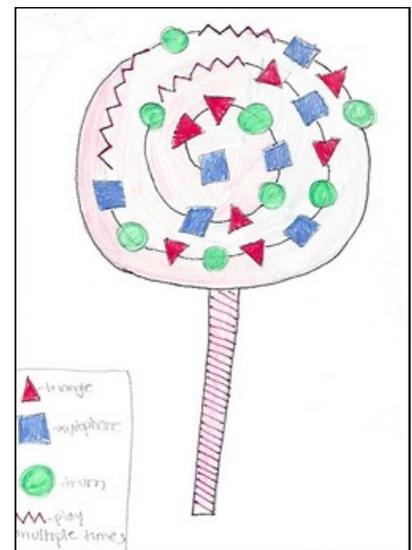
“Winter Scenes”

Students chose from a series of winter photographs and, after reflecting on the main qualities of the image, created a musical

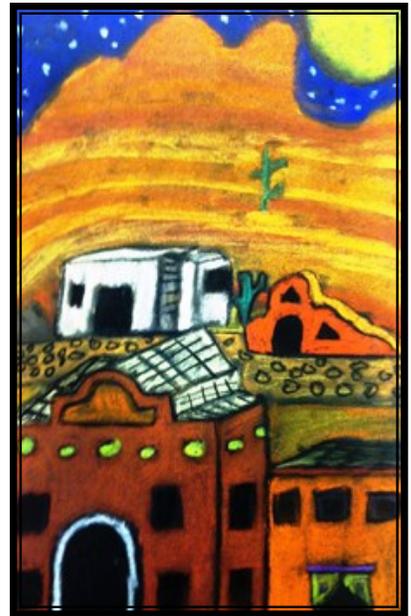
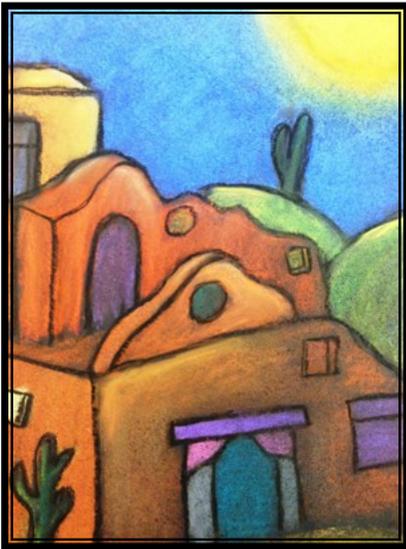


soundscape via a computer music sequencing program.

In addition to these hands-on activities, students have been encouraged to think reflectively about each unit and what they have learned as they explore each compositional technique or device.

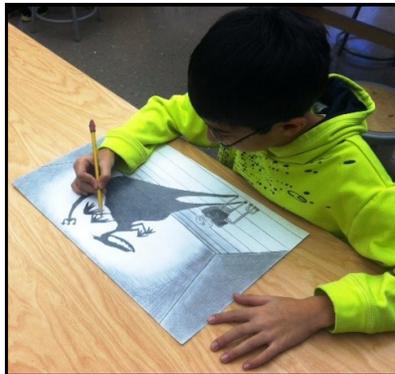


GT Art Gallery



"I found I could say things with color and shapes that I couldn't say any other way—things I had no words for."

-Georgia O'Keeffe



Middle School Spring Enrichment Programs

Oratorical Declamation

Forensics means - *the art of public speaking*. It is offered two different times during the school year and is open to all students in grades 6 – 8 at MPM and HMS. Interpretive Reading is introduced in September and Oratorical Declamation begins in late winter.

Participants are required to deliver from memory a selection originally delivered as a speech by a person before a live audience. Students work to memorize and perfect a presentation of their speech of choice. The speaker is accountable for the reproduction not only of the words, but also of the thought, emotions, and spirit of the original orator.

These enrichment activities have students learn the use of vocal variety and pacing for emphasis; appropriate use of facial expressions and gestures; frequent

eye contact with the audience; clear and correct enunciation and pronunciation; as well as effective voice projection. Speaking in public is a life skill that will serve the student well both in and out of school and throughout life. This activity enables the student to sharpen their speaking skills and become more at ease speaking in public.

Law fair

Law fair enrichment provides students with an introduction into the exciting world of law. Students meet twice a week during their lunch periods to create an original law case focusing on legal issues of interest to students in grade 6. The purpose of this enrichment is to stimulate and encourage students to develop a greater understanding and appreciation of the American legal system.

Basic legal terminology, along with the roles of the various people in the courtroom, is learned throughout the unit. The students are given the opportunity to write out their original case for submission into the New Jersey Law Fair Competition.

Academically Speaking

If you love Trivial Pursuit and Jeopardy, or any other type of brain bowl activity, then this enrichment is for you! This is a challenging, fast paced, academic, trivia-based competition. Interested students take a qualifying test, of which the top scores are chosen to be members of our Mount Pleasant Academically Speaking Team. The students who qualify work together and compete in an Essex County tournament, testing their skill to quickly recall a variety of knowledge.

Middle School Photo Gallery



Students are participating in the "Mystery Party Guest" Improvisational theatre activity at MPM where they must use reasoning skills and subtle clues provided to find out their famous character.

Gabriel and Samuel exchange information at the HMS United Arab Emirates table. Attendees were encouraged to try their hands at weaving. The completed piece was raffled off at the Model United Nations Culture Festival.



Anna and Ishan at the podium running a practice for debate.



Our GT Advocate

GT Summer Opportunities

The summer offerings listed are provided as a reference of opportunities for gifted students outside of the Livingston School District for weekend and summer classes and are neither endorsed nor promoted by anyone associated with the Livingston School District.

Computers:



Apple Camp happens at all Apple Store locations and each workshop is three hours
<http://www.apple.com/retail/camp/>

Computer camp – nearby locations: Montclair, Princeton, and South Orange at Seton Hall
<http://www.internaldrive.com/locations/nj-summer-camps-new-jersey-computer-camps/>



Local area:

Summer Institute for the Gifted: day programs in Hoboken, Princeton, and Lincroft
<http://www.giftedstudy.org>

Gifted Study in Glen Rock, NJ: three separate sessions between June and August
<http://giftedchildsociety.com/>

Montclair State University: Summer daily programs
<http://www.montclair.edu/gifted/>

Triple Threat Theater Camp in West Orange at the JCC: offers 3 and 6 week camps
<http://jccmetrowest.org/ttt>

Storming Robots: For novice and experienced GT students – this offers problem solving and hands-on projects
<http://summer.stormingrobots.com>

Union County Dance Centre: offers a Performing Arts Theater Workshop - enroll 1,2,3,4 or 5 weeks during the summer
<http://www.ucdconline.com/summercamp.html>

Rutgers Summer Programs from Mason Gross School of the Arts: includes an Opera camp, theatre, dance, band, orchestra, voice, and more call Julie Roth, director at 732-932-9360 x 512



<http://www.masongross.rutgers.edu/extension/summer-programs>

Verona Summer Music: music lessons in the morning for beginning and advanced band instruments, guitar, and/or piano and they offer a musical production in the afternoon
<http://www.veronasummertime.org>



Westfield Summer Workshop: students get to create schedules of classes in performing, fine arts, and crafts. There is an extended day program available with the Westfield YMCA for sports/childcare, etc.
<http://njworkshopforthearts.com/>

Fairleigh Dickinson University offers Summer-Fun Camp with activities in science, art, theater, nature and sports
<http://view.fdu.edu/default.aspx?id=94>

Camp Invention offers classes in science, technology, engineering and math - locations in every county
<http://www.campinvention.org>

International Ivy Summer Enrichment Program offers technology, math, science, the arts and sports. Locations in Caldwell, Chatham, Short Hills



<http://www.iisummer.com>

Rutgers Summer Scholars: ambitious and high achieving high school juniors (or younger), may apply and take up to two introductory - level college courses at Rutgers - New Brunswick
<http://summerscholars.rutgers.edu/prepare>

The Writer's Circle: open to children and teens - covers various genres, guest speakers, special events, student readings, and interactive workshops
<http://www.writerscircleworkshops.com/>

HEROES Academy: offers full day Summer Camp for children age 6 - 11 with qualifying NWEA MAP test score — one week summer camp programs will spend half of their day in laboratory science and half of their day in engineering
<http://www.NJgifted.org>

Out of State:

John Hopkins University: Summer programs grades 2 - 12
<http://cty.jhu.edu/>



Outdoor Wildlife Programs:

The Great Swamp in Morris and Somerset Counties - ranges from one hour to weekly summer camp programs in the natural sciences - programs are all hands on, including hikes
<http://www.greatswamp.org/EdPrograms.htm>

Essex County Environmental Center in Roseland, New Jersey
<http://www.essex-countynj.org/p/index.php?section=en/v/o>

How To Parent So Children Will Learn

Dr. Sylvia Rimm, psychologist, author, speaker, and columnist, is also considered a Parenting Specialist and Gifted Children Advocate. She believes that there are many variations of “right” ways to parent, however personal family values are one’s best guide.

In her book, *How to Parent So Children Will Learn*, she emphasizes the supportive concepts that can help parents raise happy, resilient, and achieving children. Her book has been awarded a National Best Book Award by USA Book News in the Parenting and Family category. Dr. Rimm developed a Top Ten List of essential parenting principles to assist parents.

1. Praise moderately to avoid pressure; postpone “super praise.” Praise conveys your values to your children and sets expectations for them. Lack of praise conveys the message that you do not believe in them. Reasonable praise, like “good thinker, hard worker, creative, strong, kind, and sensitive,” sets high, but reasonable expectations that are within your children’s reach. Words like “perfect, the best, natural athlete, most beautiful, and brilliant” can set impossible expectations. Children internalize those expectations, and the expectations become pressures when children find they can not achieve those high, impossible goals.

2. Do not discuss children’s problem behaviors within their earshot. If they hear you talking to others about how jealous or mean they are; if you refer to them as little devils or ADHD kids, if they are constantly described as shy or fearful, they assume you are telling the truth and believe they can not control these problem behaviors.

3. Take charge; do not over-empower your children. They require leadership and limits to feel secure. When children are small, they should only be given minimal

choices, little freedom and power, matched with few responsibilities that go with their small size. As they mature, give them more choices, freedom, and increased power, paired with more responsibilities. Children will feel trusted as they are gradually empowered. If you have given children too much power, too many early choices, and too much freedom, they can be over-empowered before they are ready to make responsible decisions.

4. Build resiliency; do not rescue your child from reality. Although children need protection, overprotection will encourage dependency and oversensitivity. You can be kind without being overly sympathetic. You can do for children without overdoing. Your children will need to learn to recover from losses and failures, without being rescued from reality. Developing resiliency will permit them to triumph over obstacles.

5. Stay united, be willing to compromise, and say good things about your child’s other parent. Leaders in a family that lead in two opposite directions confuse children. Children will not respect parents who show no respect for each other. Describing your child’s other parent as a “dummy” may make you feel good temporarily, but sabotaging another parent will backfire, and your child will no longer respect either of you. This is especially hard after divorce. Parents and grandparents being united is important for children.

6. Hold teachers, education, and learning in high regard. Set your children’s education as first priority. That will become most clear if they hear how much you value learning. Tell them about the best teachers you had and elevate their teachers as well. Set expectations for higher education early so they will assume education does not stop after high school.

7. Be positive about your own

work and that of your child’s other parent. If you arrive home and complain about your work on a daily basis, your children will become anti-work kids. They will complain about their own schoolwork and household chores. Remind them that education provides more job choices. Try to keep a balance between work and family fun.

8. Be a role model of ethics, activity, and hard work. Locate other good role models for your children to emulate. Your children are watching you. When you “get away with” speeding, keep too much change, or are disrespectful to your parents, they will notice. When you are interesting and energetic, they will be equally impressed. You can be a good role model without being perfect. You do not have to do it all. Introduce your children to friends and potential mentors who also will be positive influences.

9. Enjoy learning experiences with your child. Too many parents of 20-year-olds have sobbed in my office because they did not find time for their children when they were growing up. Make time for learning with your kids and they will be learners forever. Enjoy and develop interests together and you will not have regrets, only wonderful memories.

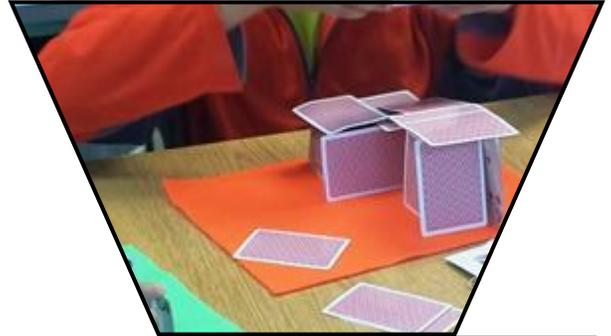
10. Keep a separate fun time and adult status without giving your children adult status too soon. Enjoy some of your personal, adult life without your children; it will keep you excited about life. Give your children something to look forward to. The children can have something to look forward to doing when they mature. Engage in child-appropriate activities with the family. Kids who get adult privileges too soon have power beyond their maturity.

Adapted from “How to Parent So Children Will Learn” (3rd Edition, Great Potential Press, 2008) by Dr. Sylvia B. Rimm, PhD. @sylviarimm.com

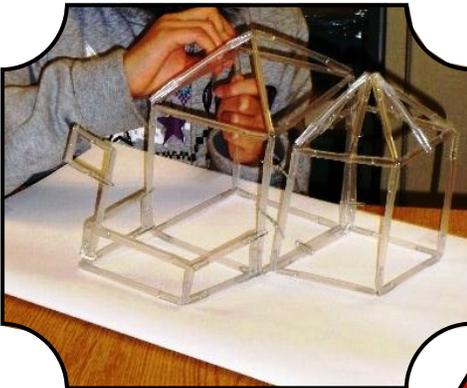
Elementary GT Photo Gallery



Eric, Joshua, and Anushq built a geodesic dome to understand basic structural engineering concepts and techniques. Lots of teamwork problem solving, and fun!



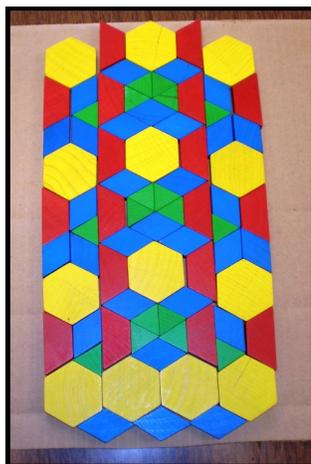
Students in Structural Design attempt to build a "House of Cards" to learn more about the importance of a solid base.



Students designed and built houses out of straws using basic architectural elements: eaves, beams, supports, rafter, truss, and more.



Marley, Alex, and Chase "dig" out artifacts, record findings, piece together urns, and draw conclusions in archaeology. Next, an underwater "dig!"



Above: Creating a rotational tessellation pattern while sitting on a tessellation patterned rug!

Left: Tessellations — symmetry created with Pattern Blocks

"Tell me and I forget.
Teach me and I remember.
Involve me and I Learn."
- Benjamin Franklin

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**2014 —2015
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**“Empowering all to learn, create,
contribute and grow.”**

