Dear families,

I have been going through the responses that many of you sent in to the question “What do you want our children to be like as adults?” There are definite themes in your responses. One that stands out prominently is the hope you have that our children will have a strong connection to their community. Every single response from you has a word or phrase that relates to empathy for others and a commitment to one’s community. It is moving to look at your responses and see such a strong expectation for our children to be thoughtful of and caring for those around them. Arts & Letters needs to and wants to do more to grow this kind of engagement with the world in our young ones.

On November 24th, Arts & Letters is going to have our first whole school service day. We want every young person at our school, be they four years old or thirteen, to participate in some activity that helps our larger community. We believe that committing this time and energy at least twice a year will leave lasting impressions on our young people about how good it feels to help out, give back and connect with people or places around us. We also hope that over time we will be able to make stronger and more substantive relationships with some organizations that will enable us to introduce service into our academic studies. If we can find community-based organizations doing the work of the big essential questions that drive units of study in Arts & Letters classrooms, any service that our young people can do with these places will deepen their intellectual growth. The experiences can also be a powerful motivator to learn more and help students be more community minded.

We are really excited to be getting into this work with our students. I know that in time, with practice and with more contacts, it will strengthen the learning here at Arts & Letters. Carefully facilitated service learning experiences will develop the empathy for and connections to our communities that we want in our young ones.
To make November 24th work, we need to establish twenty five to thirty connections with organizations around Brooklyn that could use some support from a group of kids. We have been calling around and have set some classes/advisories up with some service projects. We need more spots though and we need your help in finding these places. If you know someone or are someone who works in a community-based organization that could use some service from young people, please contact us. We are looking for a broad range of opportunities from clean up tasks like painting, raking, trash disposal, to preparing food for the hungry to spending time with the elderly.

We want to make this first service day a special one for our kids and our community. We are open to ideas from you. We also hope that some of you will find a way to join us on the 24th. If you have ideas and or know someone that we should talk with please contact either myself, Meg, Pia or Kristen.

-John

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**CELEBRATIONS FOR 10.16**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5th Grade</td>
<td>Shane Charles- SHoW</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Alex Sabatini- SHoW</td>
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<td></td>
<td>TJ Edgar- Courage</td>
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<tr>
<td>6th grade</td>
<td>Jaziel Leana- Clarity</td>
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<tr>
<td>7th Grade</td>
<td>Chelsea Smalls- SHOW</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ruby Apton- SHOW</td>
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<tr>
<td>8th Grade</td>
<td>Isaiah Syville- Confidence</td>
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<td>Justin Rogers Dennison- Confidence</td>
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**Staff:** Ms. Ballantine- Confidence

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**Thursday’s Book Talk with Ms. Ballantine**

**Horowitz’s Horror: Stories You Wish You Never Heard**

By Anthony Horowitz

Welcome to a world where everything seems normal. At least, at first. But the sinister and truly terrifying lurk just beneath the surface. Like a bathtub with a history so haunted, no one dares get in it. . . or an ordinary-looking camera that does unspeakable things to its subjects. . . or a mysterious computer game that has terrible consequences if you lose. . . .

From the creator of the blockbuster Alex Rider Adventures and The Diamond Brothers Mysteries, Horowitz Horror is a wicked collection of macabre tales sure to send shivers up your spine.
6th Grade Humanities
with Ms. Visich

All things Egypt! The sixth graders have been transported to the ancient civilization of the Nile by studying our whole class historical fiction novel entitled Pharaoh's Daughter. Students have been practicing the reciprocal teaching strategy by writing haiku chapter summaries, making predictions based on evidence, asking debatable questions, and stopping to clarify characters and figurative language. Rich conversations are developing around important quotes in the text centered around topics such as acceptance, identity, relationships, and change. These topics will later be transformed into important themes argued in a literary essay.

We also took our first sixth grade trip of the year by visiting the Egypt exhibit at the Brooklyn Museum, accompanied by the Conservatory and Botanical Garden. Students’ sparked their curiosity by seeking out artifacts related to the ancient Egyptian afterlife and religion. Inquisitive questions were asked such as, “How was this civilization able to thrive for so many years without being disturbed?” Later in the unit students will create their own Egyptian artifacts comprised of clay and paint that will be displayed in a classroom museum. Tours will be given for the lower grades!
This past week Clermont Kindergarten began our Snail Study. We first spent time examining our snails and making observational drawings of them. We then discussed what we noticed about the snails. Many friends noted that they left a trail of slime wherever they went. We also saw that they had four wavy stalks sticking out of their head, and that their shells had really pretty swirly patterns on them.

The next day we read a book about snails and looked at a poster about snail anatomy. We learned that the slime helps the snails slide along on their one big foot, and we found out that the wriggly things on their head are called tentacles. Two of the tentacles are topped with eyes that snails can suck back into their body for protection. After we learned all about the snail’s body we put our learning into practice by making snail models out of clay. We made sure to try and include all of the parts of the snail’s body. We are so excited to continue our snail exploration!
During Math Workshop, 3rd Grade is working on deepening our thinking through discussions. “Mathematician’s Forum” is a place to exchange ideas, share strategies, and provide input on answers to the Problem of the Day.

This past week, students used their knowledge of place value to create number patterns. They wrote patterns with 2-, 3- or 4-digit numbers.

S 1: Here’s my pattern: 7,242, 7,262, 7,282, 7,300, 7,301

T: Is this a number pattern? Agree or disagree?

S 2: I agree that it’s a pattern, but then something happens: 7,242, 7,262, and 7,282 is definitely a pattern. But then something happens.

S 3: You change the tens, but then you get to 7,300. I think you should put a 2 in the ones column.

T: Why?

S 3: Because the pattern is adding 20, and the ones stay the same.

S 1: Oh, I meant to do that. Oh, and then the last number is 7,321.

T: Do we have a number pattern?

S 4: Yes, we do. The numbers go up by 20. And now they all go up by 20.
Presently the seventh graders are investigating the essential question: “Did the benefits of colonization outweigh the consequences?” They read articles and watched documentaries about the colonization of the Americas. They read and discussed the articles in reciprocal reading groups and collected evidence about both the negative and consequences of the Columbian Exchange. Each student has now chosen a side and is in the final stages of their argumentative essay. This Friday they will have a chance to articulate and defend their side in a Socratic seminar. Parents and teachers are welcome to come and watch our Socratic Seminar in room 205. Flushing will be going between 9:15 and 10:05 and Gates will be going between 10:45 and 11:30.

At the same time we are also reading *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Alexie Sherman, and learning about Native Americans in the United States today. We are also exploring how the setting in a novel impacts a character’s life, attitude and choices. As we read further into the book we will begin to explore the theme of identity. The seventh grade students are truly enjoying reading this novel. They have engaged in such thoughtful conversations about the novel. Ms. Timmins and I look forward to reading the rest of the book with them!
PTA Book Sale 10.16.15

PTA General Meeting- Guest Speaker from Ackerman Institute for the Family
A&L Rookstars Medal at Chess in the Schools Tournament

5th Grade Hosts Guest Speaker (also an A&L Parent) from Innocence Project
The Recess Corner-

8th Grade Science Research