

Fall 2018

PERSPECTIVES

St. Anne's-Belfield School

& Teaching & Learning

in *rapidly* changing times

What does it mean to teach and learn in modern society? How do current events in our rapidly changing world shape curricula and lesson plans? **Page 12**

the big picture

This summer, the School introduced SummerFest, a series of early education events for our youngest learners to explore side-by-side with their parents/guardians. Events included Slime Time!, Namaste & Play!, and Let's Make a Mess!





IN THIS ISSUE

Community Highlights



PAGE 4

Head of School
David Lourie Opens
109th School Year at
Convocation



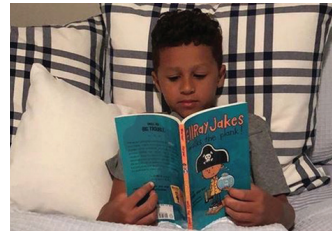
PAGE 10

In the News: Top 2017 -
2018 School News



PAGE 6

The Next Level: Senior
Summer Internships



PAGE 11

#STABSummerReading



PAGE 8

An Innovative Head's
Fund: Faculty Research



PAGE 44

Around the World in
29 Days



PAGE 9

Kudravetz '98 Leads New
Dominion Bookshop Into
Second Century



PAGES 46 & 47

About the School
& Annual Fund &
Campaign Recap

BEHIND THIS ISSUE

Perspectives is published annually by the Office of Communications at St. Anne's-Belfield School, an independent day and boarding school serving Two-Year-Olds through Grade 12 in Charlottesville, Va. Additional School news and alumni class notes can be found online.

St. Anne's-Belfield does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational, admission, financial aid, employment policies, or any other programs administered by the School.

MANAGING EDITOR

Rachel Balsley

EDITORS

Warren Buford, David Lourie, Beth Stefanik

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

J. Robin Albertson-Wren, Kathy Carpenter, Sarah FitzHenry, McKenzie Inigo, Antxon Iturbe, Sara Kronstain, David Lourie, Michele Mathieson, Jared Passmore, Marie Reed, Walker Richmond, Laura Robertson, Erica Roth, John Russell, John Shoup, Rosanne Simeone, Sophie Speidel, Beth Stefanik, Kim Wilkens

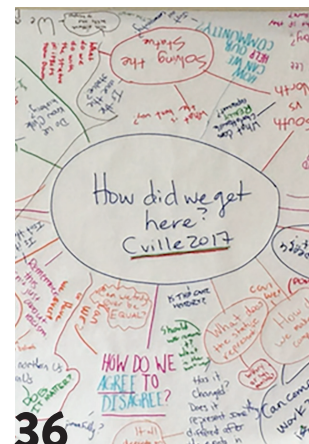
CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

Rachel Balsley, Jesus Pino Aguilar, Jacob Stoner '11

Cover photo by Rachel Balsley

Teaching & Learning in *Rapidly* Changing Times

- 14** Measuring the Immeasurable
- 16** Fostering Empathy and Kindness through the Hurricane Harvey Book Club
- 18** Taking a Risk with Computer Science
- 20** The Power of Design Thinking
- 21** Violent Video Games and Their Impact on Values and Habits
- 22** Problem Solving: The Heart of Singapore Math
- 24** Foiling Fake News with Fourth Graders
- 26** Examining Race, Gender, & Social Justice
- 30** Life Skills: Social Emotional Learning that Transcends the Classroom
- 32** Creating Empathetic Students Through the Interdisciplinary Course of Humanities 10
- 36** Charlottesville 2017: How Did We Get Here?
- 38** Developing Self-Awareness, Resiliency, and Compassion Through Mindfulness in Education
- 40** Why Social Studies in the Pre-School?
- 42** My Child Loved to Read... What Happened?



2018 - 2019 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Frank Edmonds, <i>Chair</i>	Janine Dozier
Karen Moran, <i>Vice Chair</i>	Michael Geismar
Thad Jones, <i>Treasurer</i>	Changdong "East" He '12
Adrian Keevil, <i>Secretary</i>	Tony Ignaczak
Lu Alvarez	Angie Oakey
Chas Cocke	Mike Pausic
Kari Couling	Michael Woodfolk '84
Shaman Douglass '05	Rich Booth, Emeritus

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION

David Lourie, <i>Head of School</i>
Warren Buford, <i>Associate Head of School for Advancement</i>
Beth Miller, <i>Associate Head of School for Academics</i>
Shannon Montague, <i>Head of the Learning Village</i>
Peter Quagliaroli, <i>Head of the Upper School</i>
Dewayne Robinson, <i>Director of Athletics</i>
Diane Schmidt, <i>Associate Head of School for Operations & Chief Financial Officer</i>

Head of School David Lourie OPENS 109TH SCHOOL YEAR AT CONVOCATION

A Bigger Boat

"There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you." - Maya Angelou

"And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom." - Anais Nin

"Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much." - Helen Keller

"You're gonna need a bigger boat." - Chief Brody/Jaws

In the house in which I grew up, my bedroom had ocean blue carpet. My earliest memory of that room was being terrified of stepping on that carpet. I would wake up, peer over the edge of my bed, and look at that blue floor and then call out for one of my parents to carry me to the hallway.

My fear of that blue carpeting is perfectly rational: I thought a shark would come swimming out from under my bed and eat me. That is because, soon after moving in to that new house, at the ripe old age of eight, I watched, for the first time, the movie *Jaws*.

Summer blockbuster movies are nothing new to you students (*Avengers* and *Jurassic Parks* and *The Incredibles*!), but the original summer blockbuster was *Jaws*, in June of 1975, with long lines of people circling city blocks, waiting to buy tickets. *Jaws* became and still is a pop culture phenomenon and is the seventh-highest grossing movie of all time (adjusted for inflation), punctuated by perhaps the most memorable theme music in any film, the eerie duh, duh.

While the impact that *Jaws* had on me - paralyzed in my bed, afraid of my carpet - may have been in the extreme, I am not the only one who felt the intensity of that film for years, and in fact *Jaws* was blamed for drops in tourism to beach destinations for many summers afterwards. While *The Meg* and other shark films try in vain to find the same success, it is *Jaws* that set the standard and remains a milestone in American film.

Jaws holds a special place in Lourie family lore. We are *Jaws* fanatics, captivated by the film itself, yet just as much by the making of the film, with a near endless list of challenges and unanticipated obstacles. That *Jaws* was ever completed, let alone that it became a blockbuster, is a remarkable story in and of itself, and after watching a documentary on *Jaws* this summer, I realized that the story of *Jaws* provides all of us valuable lessons as we all think about the promises and possibilities of the school year ahead.

The story of the making of *Jaws* is about taking risks. Most of the attention surrounding *Jaws* focuses on its young director,

Steven Spielberg.

Spielberg is the most successful director of all time, with a list of films that

includes *E.T.*, the *Raiders of the Lost Ark* films, *Jurassic Park*, *Schindler's List*, *Saving Private Ryan*, and many more. But it was *Jaws* that made these possible; as Spielberg said, it "gave me the freedom to make any movie I wanted to make." But that freedom came only because of the courage to take bold risks back in 1974. Hollywood studio executives took the first risk by hiring Spielberg to direct, just 27-years-old and with two forgettable and unsuccessful films to his name. To put this highly anticipated project, based on the bestselling book, in his inexperienced hands was a huge gamble. And before the cameras rolled, Spielberg took a huge gamble of his own: determined to capture the rugged reality of the ocean, he insisted that *Jaws* be filmed on location rather than in a studio. So cast, crew, and equipment moved to Martha's Vineyard in May of 1974 to film in the frigid springtime waters off of New England's coast. We may say now "what creative brilliance!" and the studio heads may now claim "we knew Spielberg was a genius!" but no one was saying this in 1974, as the 55-day shooting schedule grew to 159 days and the budget tripled, studio executives second-guessed their choice of director just as Spielberg second-guessed his insistence to film on location. Yet despite the doubts and the doubters, they saw these risks through, regardless of the setbacks.

Because of these setbacks, the story of *Jaws* is about finding success from failing forward. Or for our fourth graders, about finding the fortunately in the unfortunately! The most famous failure, or unfortunately, during the making of *Jaws* was the mechanical shark itself, [affectionately] named Bruce by the cast and crew. Bruce the shark was central in the original conception of the movie, beginning with an intense opening scene in the waters off the coast of Amity Island. Yet there was one problem: Bruce, the mechanical shark, didn't work, and on his first day of filming, Bruce sank to the bottom of Nantucket Sound like a leaky boat full of bricks, leading one crewmember to say, "We saw our shark dive to the bottom of the sea . . . and



there went our careers." So what to do when you have a movie about a shark . . . and the shark doesn't work? Pick up and head back to a Hollywood sound studio? Nope, instead Spielberg seized the opportunity to fail forward, turning what looked like an insurmountable obstacle into a milestone moment in American cinema: he began filming a movie about a shark without the shark. In the final cut of *Jaws*, the audience does not see the shark until 80 minutes into the film. Spielberg's bold, creative improvisation (with his own humble hat-tip to Hitchcock) defined the film, as the audience's anticipation of the shark became its most intense element. When Bruce sank, this 27-year-old director could have returned to the safe bud of a Hollywood film lot and no one would have blamed him. But dreamers like Spielberg find it too painful to be tight in that bud, and therefore he instead took the risk to blossom.

And he blossomed because the story of *Jaws* is about someone having your back. Spielberg garners most of the attention for *Jaws*' success, but he relied on others, calling the film "one of the most collaborative I've ever been involved with." A largely unknown example of this was one of the producers, Richard Zanuck. Zanuck was the on-set liaison to those studio executives back in Hollywood, constantly fielding panicked phone calls about schedule overruns, the ballooning budget, and sinking sharks. They were having grave doubts and wanted the film moved back to L.A. so that they could control their renegade director. I was struck to learn that, while Zanuck took these calls throughout the filming, he never told Spielberg about them, wanting to be a source of support and not a deliverer of doubt. Spielberg was already wracked with stress and worry; he expected to be fired at any moment. And that is where Zanuck, known for being a "director's producer," became such an important, albeit unknown, lifeline to his young director, protecting him from the doubters and naysayers. When you dare to take a risk and inevitably begin to question yourself, depend on others as you bob in rough seas of self-doubt. We all need our own Richard Zanuck, even sometimes an entire cast and crew, to provide us support as we dare to dream, discover, and explore.

Which leads to what is the essential lesson from *Jaws*: the film succeeds so famously because it is not really a story of a shark that terrorizes a small, coastal town. (Sorry!) The shark is merely incidental, as Spielberg proves during those first,

shark-less, 80 minutes. *Jaws* is a character piece, a story about three very different, incompatible, and as we all are, imperfect people, who are thrown together, unexpectedly and unwillingly, and are forced to rely on one another as they face their fears and confront together a seemingly insurmountable challenge. Brody, the new police chief of this island town who just happens to hate the ocean; Hooper, the young, cocky oceanographer who dispassionately considers the shark a scientific specimen; and Quint, the Captain Ahab of the tale, who sees the shark as his personal nemesis and the hunt as his opportunity for redemption and revenge. The best scenes in *Jaws* are when these men have the courage to "bear the untold story inside each of them." Over the course of 124 minutes, Spielberg deliberately and hauntingly reveals their hidden stories to us just as he slowly reveals the shark. It is in these hidden stories that each man reveals his humanity, building trust that at first seemed impossible among these very different men, but they realize will be essential in their hunt for the shark.

The most famous line of the movie, just after Brody sees the shark for the first time, and, stunned, he mumbles to Quint: "You're gonna need a bigger boat." Like the movie, this brief (and ad-libbed!) line of dialogue says more than it seems. They surely needed a bigger boat to take on the shark, and also a bigger boat to carry the heavy baggage that Brody, Hooper, and Quint brought along with them on this quixotic quest. Not dissimilar to the heavy baggage Spielberg and cast and crew brought to the frigid waters off of Martha's Vineyard, with the same slim odds of success. *Jaws* stands apart because of the humanness of the three main characters and of those behind the cameras, a humanness we can relate to, *Jaws* endures because all of them looked past their differences and banded together to accomplish the improbable and make movie history.

So heed Spielberg's lesson during those first shark-less 80 minutes: don't pay so much attention to the shark that you miss the real treasure that lies buried in the story, that "alone we can do so little, and together we can do so much."

I wish all of you a year filled with the eagerness to take risks, the courage to fail forward, the generosity to give and take support, and the thrill of breaking out of our bud and blossoming brightly and magnificently.

Read David Lourie's and Co-President Yirui Deng's '19 speeches at www.stab.org/convocation.

Sources

- Eggertsen, Chris. "The Nightmare of 'Jaws': 10 on-set disasters that plagued Spielberg's 1975 classic." UPROXX. Web. 19 June 2015 <https://uproxx.com/hitfix/jaws-turns-40-10-times-the-production-was-scarier-than-the-movie/>
- Galuppo, Mia. "You're Gonna Need a Bigger Boat": 'Jaws' writer reveals origins of movie's famous line. The Hollywood Reporter. 7 March 2016. <https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/jaws-bigger-boat-quote-writer-872226>
- Griggs, Brandon. "21 Random Facts Abouts 'Jaws.'" CNN Entertainment. 23 July 2015. <https://www.cnn.com/2015/06/05/entertainment/jaws-movie-40th-anniversary-feat/index.html>
- Gottlieb, Carl. The Jaws Log. Dell Publishing, 1974. Print.
- Jaws: The Inside Story. Dir. Erik Hollander. 2010. TV movie.

The Next LEVEL

This summer, many students took a break from their summer jobs, sports leagues, and much-needed rest to continue their studies in a variety of new settings. The following are four seniors who utilized parts of their summers for academic growth.



Hannah Trebour '19

During a discussion of higher education options with her college counselor, Hannah Trebour '19 looked into the University of Pennsylvania Veterinary Exploration Through Science (VETS) program for high school students. She applied, and was delighted to accept the offer to participate in the week-long curriculum designed to offer juniors and seniors insight into the depth and scope of science and research involved in the veterinary profession.

"During the day at the program, we usually listened to lectures about things like bio-security and animal welfare, then we completed various labs such as pathology, microbiology, and parasitology," said Trebour. "For two days we participated in rotations and learned from the doctors at the vet hospital for several hours as they worked on patients."

During the laboratory sessions, Trebour and other students learned how to handle animals intended for research including rats and mice, as well as how to perform a base check up on a dog. The group was also taught to interpret samples and biopsies while using microscopes.

"This program really sparked my interest in the scientific and more technical side to veterinary medicine," said Trebour. "This was one of the first instances in which I was truly motivated to learn outside of school, solely to expand my personal knowledge in a subject that could potentially become my profession in the future. I think I really found a new sense of motivation and drive. I got a clear glimpse into the various lives of vets and what it takes to get there, and it made me excited about my future."



Jovia Winkey '19

Jovia Winkey '19 spent 10 days at Johns Hopkins University with the Envision National Youth Leadership Forum: Advanced Medicine & Healthcare. Designed for high school students considering a career in medicine, the program attracts students from across the country and offers a variety of experiences including apprentice doctor workshops, interactive site visits to the University of Maryland and Johns Hopkins Medicine Simulation Center, speaking events with leaders in the medical community, and true-to-life simulations through Virtual Reality technology.

"I really liked the program because each day I had a different experience," said Winkey, who visited the University of Maryland Medical Center's Shock Trauma Center, learned different methods of suturing, diagnosed patients via case studies, and conducted a physical exam on a sample patient, among other activities.

"I found out that I love being in the hospital. I found out that I really enjoy helping people and doing whatever I can to make a difference in people's lives. After the program, I became one hundred percent sure that I am on the right track and that going into the medical field is something that I really want to do. This program helped me narrow my choices down to either a trauma surgeon, ER doctor, or OB-GYN."



Victor Ji '19

"During the summer before senior year at St. Anne's-Belfield School, I interned at the Shenzhen Court of International Arbitration (SCIA). Unlike a traditional court, a court of arbitration serves as a legal platform designed specifically for business dispute resolution that provides complete confidentiality and international enforceability, which most modern business disputes demand.

"My job at the court could be best characterized as a law secretary, someone who assists the court in all manners for its functional efficiency. A typical day for me began with checking in with my senior mentor who assigned tasks for me to complete, usually either filling in crucial information for the draft of the verdict of arbitration, or pre-court document preparation which included reviewing the arbitration application or examining the evidence submitted by both parties. In the afternoon, I usually attended an arbitration court as an assistant. I took notes on the proceeding, found requested documents for the court clerk, copied newly-submitted evidence for the record of the court, and more. Through this court internship I honed my legal document reading and critical analysis skills, and gained invaluable communication experience in formal, professional settings with colleagues, clients, and superiors.

"My experiences with SCIA have broadened my horizon, allowing me to familiarize myself with formal court procedures and to witness attorney debates in close quarters. Combined with my experience of interning at an international law firm last summer, now I have an in-depth picture of the work life of an attorney, both in a corporate setting and a court setting. These invaluable experiences have helped to confirm my interest in the legal profession, allowing me to focus on a college major/track that will suit my desire for a legal career. By interning in your dream profession, you will not only gain new perspectives and work experiences but also find out more about yourself and your vision for the future than you ever could otherwise in a traditional classroom setting."



Kate Define '19

Kate Define '19 spent the summer as part of the Virginia State Horse Judging Team, an honor to which she was invited following a March 2018 win in the 4-H equine competition horse judging contest.

Horse judging, or the evaluation of horses in relation to both the breed ideal and in relation to other horses in the class (group of four horses), requires judges to have extensive knowledge of breed characteristics, conformation, or how the horse is put together structurally, and performance. It also requires judges to work as part of a team and support their scores.

"Every week we have judging homework which tests our judging skills by asking us to place a couple classes and then videotape ourselves giving a set of reasons for why we placed one class the way we did," explained Define. "We also have quizzes that test information we need to memorize, like class penalties."

Define credits the judging experience with helping her learn to think on her feet, make decisions quickly, support her decisions with reasons, and have the confidence to tell a professional her opinion.

"I have also learned how to appreciate the knowledge of my peers and use their ideas to make myself a better horse judge," notes Define. "A lot of the work we do is together as a team, so you have to be both confident in yourself and willing to learn from others."

In addition to helping her look forward to a career path, the program has also allowed her to better understand the power of sharing a passion with a group.

"I would encourage everyone to become a part of a team in any aspect," says Define. "There is no feeling similar to knowing you are working with a group of people who are just as passionate about a topic as you are and want you to succeed."

An Innovative HEAD'S FUND

The **Head of School Fund for Academic Innovation and Leadership** provides annual grants and awards to a small cohort of distinguished and enterprising teachers or administrators who wish to undertake advanced professional development to further leadership pursuits. The initial cohort worked throughout the 2017 - 2018 school year on topics, and during the summer on proposals.



Jeremy Eith

Jeremy Eith, head athletic trainer, aims to set up a community health and wellness program to provide strategies for students and teachers to manage stress more effectively and pathways for improving mental and physical well-being. He will track how stress is placed on our bodies, while meeting with professionals in the field who specialize in burnout, nutritional counseling, and more.



Zach Minster

Zach Minster, coordinator of computer coding instruction and initiatives, has completed a survey of current conversations in progressive education and is exploring various avenues to create an innovative, experiential platform to bring together and motivate educators and stakeholders to experiment with more student-centered and holistic approaches to classroom instruction.



Sarah FitzHenry

Learning Village Librarian Sarah FitzHenry is exploring the power of diverse literature in facilitating meaningful conversations, strengthening relationships within schools, and building bridges out into the community. FitzHenry is looking forward to piloting a collaborative program at St. Anne's-Belfield School that will invite students and parents to grow together through reading.



Lindsay Rubin

Kindergarten teacher Lindsay Rubin is investigating big questions related to educational change, with a focus on the changing needs, interests, and motivations of today's young students and the resulting implications for school and classroom life.



David Smith

David Smith, Upper School humanities teacher, has been researching questions related to the institutional culture of independent schools. His next steps are to conduct focused conversations with administrators and teachers from various schools to understand how schools maintain core values and practices in times of change.

Kudravetz '98 Leads New Dominion Bookshop into Second Century

As the new owner of the New Dominion Bookshop, **Julia McCrea Kudravetz '98** is excited about where things are headed for the bookshop's second century.

"I wanted to carry on the traditions of the past one hundred years serving the Charlottesville literary community, but make some important updates so that the business could thrive for the next one hundred years," Kudravetz said, thinking back on the sale.

As the oldest independent bookseller in Virginia, New Dominion not only has a wide collection of fiction, non-fiction, and children's literature, but a broad and loyal customer base who visit the shop for events and literary conversations as much as to browse for books.

"At New Dominion, we go beyond book retail to be a gathering place for the literary community," Kudravetz explained. "We have approximately one hundred events a year, from book launches to author panels to book club meetings. It is as much a literary space as a retail business. That is what is exciting, from a community perspective. I think my favorite part is having conversations about books with so many different people who come into the shop, from locals and long-time customers to international tourists and new U.Va. students exploring the Downtown Mall for the first time. Every day is different, but there is always talk of books and ideas."



Julia McCrea Kudravetz '98

Kudravetz remembers history classes with Dr. Cornell and English classes with Mr. Amos, Ms. O'Neil, and Dr. Erb as foundational to her understanding of classic texts.

"I had excellent teachers at the School, and those reading lists formed the backbone of the knowledge that I draw on every day when ordering and selecting books for customers," she noted. "Additionally, the workload at the School, the sheer amount of reading, prepared me for the amount of reading and research I need to do in order to keep up with the number of new books coming out each season."

New at the bookshop this year is an initiative with another St. Anne's-Belfield School alumnus, Chris Murphy '18. "Friday Night Writes" provides a space for college students and older high school students to share their prose, poetry, original acoustic songs, and even one-act plays. Murphy coordinated Open Mic Nights during his time at the Upper School, and will now use that experience to run the professional events for local young artists, bringing a new generation of readers and writers into the shop along the way.

For Kudravetz, it is this physical visit to a bricks and mortar bookshop that is the core factor in a successful reading experience.

"I think it's very important to always have physical books around," she said. "Browsing a library of books, where you can discover something new among the shelves, is a powerful experience that can't be replicated on an e-reader. I think students, and children especially, retain information better when reading a real book. Make sure there are always physical books around, both at home and at school. And if you are in the area or just coming back for a reunion, we would love to help you find your next book to read!"

New Dominion Bookshop is located on Charlottesville's historic Downtown Mall at 404 E. Main Street. The shop is staffed by booksellers who love reading and talking about books. A full schedule of events is available online at www.ndbookshop.com.



Battling Overparenting; Reducing Student Stress

Charlottesville Tomorrow, February 2018

What happens to children when parents "overparent"? That is one of the main questions *New York Times* best-selling author "Dean Julie" Lythcott-Haims posed to an auditorium full of parents in 2018, engaging them on red-flags she saw with parents and students in her time in academia, and ways to combat them now.

Early Childhood Expert Calls for Empathy, Trust

Charlottesville Tomorrow, November 2017

In fall 2017, *New York Times* best-selling author Erika Christakis visited the School as a part of the *Inspiration Speaks* series. She spoke with parents about the formative years, and the importance of focusing not just on content learned, but the meaning behind it.

Our School In the News

St. Anne's-Belfield School has been recognized both locally and nationally, showcasing the talents of its community members, generosity of alumni, cutting-edge curriculum, and more.

Read each of these stories and more at

www.stab.org/in-the-news

IoT Has Arrived (Just Not in the Way You Expected)

THE Journal, March 2018

The School is highlighted for its use of Google Home in the Learning Village Library. The small electronic device listens to students, "providing easy and immediate answers to low-level questions, allowing more time for deep discussion," while offering the opportunity to discuss privacy and online safety.

Tech Groups See Charlottesville as Potential Model for Closing the Gender Gap

Daily Progress, July 2017

Learning Village Coordinator of Computer Coding Instruction and Initiatives Kim Wilkens and the Charlottesville Women in Technology organization support and recruit women into technology jobs.

The Ten Best History Books of 2017

Smithsonian, December 2017

2017 Alumni Award winner Sally Mott Freeman '74 released her first book, *The Jersey Brothers: A Missing Naval Officer in the Pacific and His Family's Quest to Bring Him Home*, after a decade of research and writing. Based on the real-life accounts of her relatives, the book chronicles Mott's uncles and a family torn apart during World War II.

Why Instructional Coaching Matters in Independent Schools

Education Week Teacher, April 2018

The School is highlighted as a "beacon of hope" in the independent school arena for its utilization of instructional coaching. Through this program, teachers are supported by fellow faculty and administrators, and strongly encouraged to participate in professional development.

In Charlottesville, Chris Long Gives Underdog Kids a Chance

Sports Illustrated, January 2018

In fall 2017, Chris Long '04 donated his first six game checks as a defensive end for the NFL's Philadelphia Eagles to create two scholarships at St. Anne's-Belfield School. In 2018 - 2019, two Boys' & Girls' Club of Central Virginia members started in the sixth grade.

#STABSUMMERREADING!

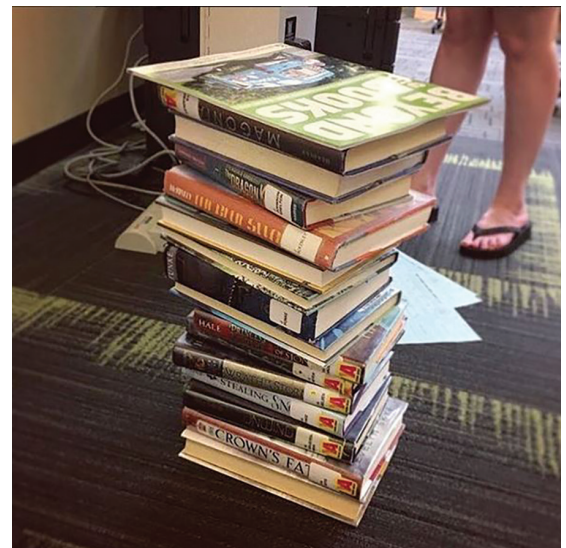
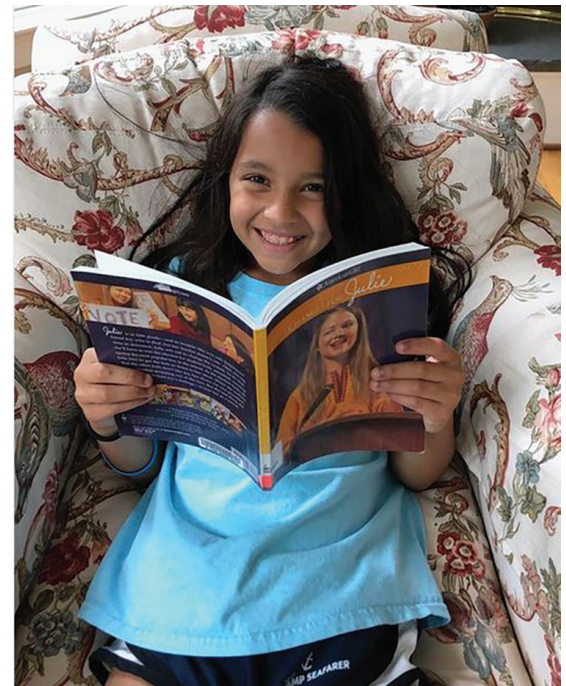
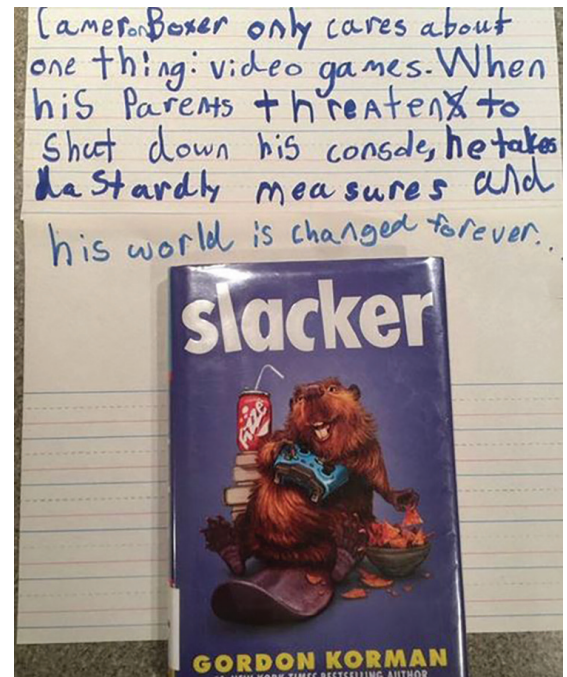
Led by Learning Village Librarian Sarah FitzHenry, a School community campaign to celebrate pleasure reading during the Summer Break saw more than 150 posts of #STABSummerReading shared on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. The posts showed the books, and reading environments, enjoyed by faculty and staff members, parents, and, of course, students.

"One of the most amazing things about St. Anne's-Belfield School is the strong community of readers. During the school year, the classrooms and library are buzzing with passionate conversations about books, especially book recommendations and reviews. It's never hard to find your next great read," said FitzHenry.

"Over the summer, when we're not all in the same place, it can be much harder to keep from falling into a slump after finishing a great book. Using #STABSummerReading, the School community used social media to stay connected and keep conversations about literature going from all over the world."

In addition to social posts, FitzHenry received direct messages, tagged posts, emails, and even handwritten postcards and letters with book recommendations, reviews, selfies, and book stack snapshots.

"It was so great not only to see our community reading for fun outside of school, but seeing our lively and engaging reading community expand beyond the walls of our library," she said.





& Teaching Learning

in *rapidly* changing times

What does it mean to teach and learn in modern society? How do current events in our rapidly changing world shape curricula and lesson plans? What impact does technology have on students and teachers alike?

These are just a few of the questions our faculty members have examined in the following pages, based on ideas and projects they've explored and facilitated at the School. From mindfulness and design thinking to interdisciplinary humanities and the basis of assigning grades, our faculty members address myriad topics related to teaching and learning today, both inside and outside of the classroom.

Sophia Sun '24 and
Polina Shumilina '24
begin building their
robot in Quest and
the School's First
Lego League.



Measuring the immeasurable

By John Russell, Grades 4 - 8 Visual Arts Teacher

Education shouldn't be ordinary, it should be extraordinary! This is not achieved by piling on more homework, throwing technology at students, or completing every AP class available. It is looking at what we want, as teachers and parents, and realizing that the students' higher interests and our higher goals are not incompatible. Raising the level of consciousness, of focused attention, as well as finding the greatest happiness and becoming better human beings are goals for all of us, not merely our students.

As Jacob Needleman said in an introduction to *The Spiritual Emerson, Essential Works* by Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Do we still really hope in the ordinary mind, the ordinary heart, the ordinary senses? Or are we at last ready to accept the idea that what is needed is a new human being, new men and women. Are we at last ready to accept the possibility that we are not yet human beings in anything like the real meaning of that term?"



Now, some may be skeptical. Aren't we already human? But are our goals and our aspirations rooted in the senses and on this basic physical level or are they higher? Are our goals for ourselves and our students only knowledge-based, or are our goals about measuring our empathy, our compassion, our quest for truth?

If we think of our very youngest students and their interactions with teachers, we realize that encouraging smiles and comforting hugs are immeasurably important. The critical nature of these interactions are immense, and yet they can't be calculated or quantified. We just know that they work, they help cultivate curious minds and empathetic hearts.

Much of the finer, subtler features of education are found in these misty areas where encouragement is done just right, where a prodding or nudge is needed, where instilling a desire for truth is a sign that a true education has been achieved. Teaching is a science, but it is also an art. It exists in a space where the linear mind meets the soaring imagination and intuition.

Sometimes teachers and mentors don't even realize when significant learning has occurred. I think back to one of the most challenging classes I had in college and it was perhaps the class in which, on paper, I was the weakest. It was also where I gained, perhaps, the most significant, profound understanding. Did the professor get it wrong when he calculated my grade? No, he gave me the grade I technically deserved. But in a way, he missed the point. If he had given me a self-evaluation on my takeaways from the class, he would have seen that I grew tremendously as a student and young adult. Isn't this the point of education?

Are we willing to accept that we, and our students, have a long way to go, but have infinite potential? Are we open to the possibility? Or do we limit ourselves and in turn limit the potential of our students and children? Do we project these restrictions and parameters that we

encase ourselves in?

Great teachers have advised us to "go within" and search the depth of our being. As the poet and mystic Rumi put it, as recorded by Sawan Singh in *My Submission*, "The basis of all learning is simply that in the end you know who you are. You may know the value of everything around you, but if you know not your own value, you remain an ignorant fool."

We assume that we know ourselves, but do we really? Are the workings of our mind clear and practically seen and easy to measure? We can often only measure the easiest items that can be quantified. Finite measurement and data are inherently less critical and crucial to the vaster, deeper, more significant issues of life: being a human being, and developing our evolving consciousness.

We don't know what is inside us. We often don't know how to get there. Often we are surprised when we hear about the influences or inspirations that made a difference in shaping a life. Steve Jobs surprised us in his 2005 commencement speech at Stanford University when he said, "I didn't see it then, but it turned out that getting fired from Apple was the best thing that could have ever happened to me. The heaviness of being successful was replaced by the lightness of being a beginner again, less sure about everything. It freed me to enter one of the most creative periods of my life."

We and our students must take time - no, make time - for ourselves, the real, truest part of ourselves, that part that is linked with the eternal. As Vincent van Gogh wrote, "And in a picture I want to say something comforting, as music is comforting. I want to paint men and women with that something of the eternal which the halo used to symbolize, and which we seek to convey by the actual radiance and vibration of our coloring."

Here's to the search, the journey, and to finding the extraordinary within each one of us!

“Are our goals for ourselves and our students only knowledge-based, or are our goals about measuring our empathy, our compassion, our quest for truth?”

Reaching Others:

Fostering Empathy & Kindness through the Hurricane Harvey Book Club

By McKenzie Inigo, 2017 - 2018 Grade 4 Teacher, 2018 - 2019 Director of Admissions (Grades 1 - 8)

"I lack in self-confidence," one of my students read out loud, shifting her weight nervously from one foot to the other as she shared a draft of her essay. She continued in a steady voice, reading about her struggle to feel brave and confident in the world. As she finished, the burst of applause in our fourth grade classroom took her by surprise. This moment of risk taking, and many like it, can only happen in a safe, supportive community of learners who value and respect each other.

Creating a climate in which students are willing to take risks - both academic and social - allows them to excel and thrive in this rapidly changing world. Carol Dweck's growth mindset theory, set forth in *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*, asserts that students have mindsets that are malleable, and that with guidance they can learn to see failures as opportunities to grow and expand their minds. At the heart of this theory stands the teacher, whose role in classroom practice is to help a student move from having a fixed mindset, which assumes that intelligence and creative ability cannot change, to having a growth mindset in which we constantly stretch our current abilities.

In my own experience, students are willing to take those necessary risks when a growth mindset is coupled with the trust that your community will support you regardless of any mistakes along the way. Reaching this point results from daily interactions, thoughtfully planned experiences, and sometimes through unexpected opportunities.

The Benefits of Fostering Empathy and Connection - Hurricane Harvey Book Club

As we settled into our new classroom in August 2017, we learned about the devastation that Hurricane Harvey brought to schools and homes in Texas. Working with Sarah FitzHenry, Learning Village librarian extraordinaire, our class decided to participate in something called the Hurricane Harvey Book Club. This closed Facebook group was started by a teacher in Texas who was committed to providing opportunities for children to listen to their favorite stories despite being displaced from their normal lives.

Our involvement with this project began by brainstorming about what we might need and want under similar circumstances. We imagined that a funny and light-hearted story might be just the thing to bring a smile, or that a story about family might hold some amount of comfort, while silly stories would offer a welcome distraction. These empathy-filled discussions taught us a lot about each other and what we value, and allowed us to explore our own feelings of insecurity about important things in our lives like family and friends, housing, and school.

With insight from discussions and excitement to share, we began to record stories such as *The Pigeon Finds A Hot Dog* and *We Are in a Book* by Mo Willems, *The Three Little Wolves and the Big Bad Pig* by Eugene Trivizas, and *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein. Once recorded, these videos went up on the group page for students in Texas to access.

While we talked about how to connect with these children far away, something wonderful happened within our own community. In an effort to share ourselves with others, we became closer, understood more about one another, and strengthened our connection. This experience allowed us to not only express empathy and kindness for people experiencing tragedy far away, but also for those classmates sitting in the same room who might be struggling with a math problem, a conflict with a friend, or feeling brave.

The student who read her essay about self-confidence stood with a huge smile while her classmates applauded. "That was great!" a friend commented. "I think I'm going to rewrite my essay to make it more personal."

We take risks because we know one another, we have learned to trust one another, and we care about each other. As these students head off into the world it is the ability to connect with others and the desire and willingness to have empathy that will allow them to face ever-changing challenges with success.

These empathy-filled discussions taught us a lot about each other and what we value, and allowed us to explore our own feelings of insecurity about important things in our lives like family and friends, housing, and school.



2017 - 2018
fourth grade
students in
discussion.

taking a risk with COMPUTER SCIENCE

By Kim Wilkens, Learning Village Coordinator of Computer Coding Instruction & Initiatives

Technology is changing everything - the way we work, govern, educate, and communicate. This change has been so rapid and so profound that the educational system in the U.S. finds itself trying to catch up. In the past 50 years, we have experienced a technology revolution and the demand for a tech-savvy workforce is rapidly outpacing the supply. Students must have a deeper understanding of the fundamentals of computing so they are empowered to take control of how technology will affect their lives, their culture, and their future. Computer science (CS) education can be the key to unlocking powerful student-driven, interdisciplinary inquiry-based learning.

However, asking a teacher to bring CS into a project or lesson is asking them to take a risk. The fear of change and not being able to keep up in the midst of rapid and rampant technological advancement is very real. Educators are dealing with paradigm shifts brought on by technology use in and out of the classroom. In the midst of this turmoil, St. Anne's-Belfield School has positioned itself on the cutting edge of CS integration because the School culture here fosters risk taking and facing the unknown.

So, what does taking a risk with CS look like and what impact does really it have? Let's hear from the teachers themselves.

WHAT DID THEY DO?



Terry Lippman, eighth grade math teacher, did a CS integration project around functions at the request of his student, Alex Paget-Brown '22, who also helped plan the lesson.



Tom Weis, eighth grade science teacher, embarked on the most ambitious project, Design Thinking and Robotics, challenging students to design, prototype, and present a solution to a real-world problem.



Pam Grosch, seventh grade science teacher, used CS integration as a way for students to share their knowledge. A recent project was creating a virtual environment of the earth's atmosphere using Scratch.



Andrea Corbin, third grade teacher, was inspired by a mentor at the SPARK! Hackathon who shared her experience of integrating CS into a writing and research project around animals. Andrea's students combined traits of animals they were studying to create "super animals" and then brought them to life through robotics.



David Jones, fifth grade science teacher, was the first adopter of CS into the classroom at the Learning Village and his students have coded projects in Scratch on chemical reactions, the Wright brothers, animal habitats, and most recently simple machines.



McKenzie Inigo, former fourth grade teacher and current director of admissions (Grades 1 - 8), attended the Learn to Learn: CS Institute in summer 2017 and was inspired to bring CS into a unit on regions of the U.S. The students created regional maps out of salt dough and then made the maps interactive through physical computing.

WHAT IMPACT DID IT HAVE?

We tapped into students' intrinsic motivation and creativity

"I was surprised at how seriously the students approached the task of designing and building their 'super animals.' Their imagination and creativity turned on right away. They were problem solving and collaborating with one another because they needed to in order to complete the challenge." - Andrea

"I was initially surprised at how intrinsically motivated the kids were. When changing classes, they would literally run to my classroom. It was also wonderful to see how naturally kids collaborated and helped each other." - David

We challenged our students and ourselves to stretch and grow

"Although a more traditional way to assess, such as making a poster or writing a paper, would have been more familiar to the students, it would not have allowed them to stretch themselves. This project allowed them to meet the basic requirements without too much difficulty, but also work to as complex a level as they felt excited about. It was rewarding to add a new coding experience to my repertoire of skills, and seeing some students who are not traditionally strong students become 'experts' in their class." - Pam

We helped students become more self-sufficient and independent

"Student-directed learning gives them intrinsic motivation and having a real-world problem to solve is important because it helps students build up the 4 C's of creative problem solving,

critical thinking, collaboration, and communication, plus compassion, the fifth C! Our role during the project is to be facilitators. Instead of dispensing knowledge, we help guide students through their own learning while we learn alongside them. After going through the process of this project, I see students being more self-sufficient and independent and applying what they learned to other projects and problems." - Tom

We all gained confidence while working through failure

"They were so proud of their work! It certainly gave me confidence to try another CS project. I realized the high level of engagement that children have during a project like this, not only with the CS component, but with the curricular content as they worked through the CS part. The addition of the CS component really kept their interest high throughout the project, even with frustrations and failures that happened along the way." - McKenzie

"I was surprised at how many different responses there were with the initial functions that they had to act out. Students made assumptions and failed to pay attention to detail in the directions. This was a valuable learning moment for both the students and for me. I think that the most rewarding part of the project will be that students will remember acting out functions and then writing their own function for someone to execute." - Terry

Braylon Robinson '27, Carter Montgomery '27, and Alex Reed '27 explore technology together as a part of the 25 Days of Techmas.





The **POWER** of Design Thinking

By Sarah FitzHenry, Learning Village Librarian

"We're looking to hire consultants to solve a library problem. All interested parties will study the problem, design a solution, and pitch a prototype. Not every group will be hired. Any questions?"

These were the instructions given to fourth grade students by Ms. Wilkens and me in our inaugural Design Thinking Library Challenge.

The design thinking process is a way of looking at problems from the point of view of those it affects and iterating a solution. At the School's 2017 Learn to Learn Computer Science Institute, Jenny Chiu, associate professor at the University of Virginia's Curry School of Education, spoke passionately about how this problem solving method pushes students to engage through empathy. I left the conference feeling inspired to try design thinking in my own classes and in collaboration with Ms. Wilkens.

The first step of the design thinking process is discovery, or researching, observing, and immersing yourself in your environment. For our discovery stage, fourth grade students observed as Kindergarteners attempted to navigate

the nonfiction section of the library independently. This led perfectly into the next phase: empathize. Students observed that the younger readers seemed frustrated and overwhelmed as they searched through the thousands of nonfiction books. After empathizing, the next phase of the design thinking process is to experiment. This is the stage in which brainstorming, prototyping, and sometimes the unexpected happen. Together, students listed as many ideas as they could to make our library more friendly for younger readers.

Then we put the project completely in the hands of our "consultants," with students choosing their own groups based on interest, and moved on to final step: production. Students set to work creating prototypes including 3-D models using art supplies or origami; digital prototypes created with 3-D rendering or graphic design tools; formal, written proposals; and classic drawings. Each group asked teachers, parents, peers, or Kindergarteners to test their projects, and used feedback to improve their ideas until they had their very best work.

Ultimately, Ms. Wilkens and I chose a

few prototypes to implement, including QR code signage coded to give auditory directions, floor mats with numbers, pictures, and arrows, a wayfinding sign coded with MakeyMakey to give auditory directions when touched, and a color coding system that will be used in all projects to make all signage easier to navigate and follow. It's hard to believe that these thoughtful solutions, designed specifically to fit the needs of St. Anne's-Belfield Kindergarten readers, came from nine-year-olds.

The design thinking process transformed our fourth graders into engaged, empowered problem solvers. They took on the responsibility to work hard and meet deadlines, took their projects seriously, and cared deeply about creating solutions for their younger classmates. Channeling the critical skills of creativity and empathy, the project challenged students to create a product based on the needs of someone else, while naturally providing a safe space to make mistakes and channel a growth mindset. Working on a real-life problem and approaching the issue with empathy for people in our community was a powerful way to get students thinking, testing, and collaborating.

Violent Video Games

and their impact on values and habits

By Walker Richmond, Grade 6 History Teacher

Last year, a video game called *Fortnite: Battle Royale* became very popular among adolescents. In *Fortnite*, the latest in a succession of first person shooter games including *Call of Duty* and *Grand Theft Auto*, a player accumulates resources and weapons in order to kill other competitors. Players compete alone or as part of a "squad" with the goal of outliving the 99 other players who begin each game.

When I became aware that some of my sixth grade students spent hours each week (and, sometimes, each day) playing *Fortnite*, I felt troubled. At a time when the United States is confronted with frequent episodes of gun violence, I believe that violent video games — particularly if played to excess — can harm children and do lasting damage to our social fabric. As more and more of the students expressed enthusiasm about *Fortnite*, I felt an urge to talk to them and share my concerns.

As a teacher, expressing an opinion about the way students spend their time outside of school is tricky. There can be a fine line between providing guidance and appearing judgmental. Nevertheless, several colleagues encouraged me to be open and honest with the students about my feelings. With that encouragement, our team gathered the sixth grade for a group discussion of violent video games.

In general, I told the group I believe that people today spend too much time in front of screens, including televisions, computers, and cell phones. I think this is true for many adults and for many children. I think this is true for me; I spend more time in front of screens than in the past and I think my screen

time has negatively impacted my time interacting with other people and experiencing the outdoors. I also have a specific concern about screen time spent on violent video games. My concern about the games can be explained by highlighting four issues.

First, our society can be quite violent. There are frequent episodes of people hurting others and, tragically, more and more of these episodes seem to occur in traditionally safe places like schools. Because of the high level of violence in our society, I hope that students will mostly play games in which the characters do not hurt or kill each other. I believe we can honor the memory of people who have been hurt by violence by trying to act peacefully in our own lives, even in the way that we play games. I understand that games are fun partly because they are competitive, but I prefer games in which the competition does not involve killing, even virtually. This is one reason I love playing and watching sports like football, soccer, and basketball. Sports provide a way for people to engage in aggressive competition with each other without actually hurting each other (at least not intentionally). Similarly, a number of non-violent video games provide an outlet for competition, cooperation, and creativity.

Second, if a person sees or experiences too much violence, there are two possible negative effects: (1) he or she may become more aggressive, and (2) he or she may become less compassionate about the victims of violence. In this section of my talk, I introduced the sixth grade students to the concept of being desensitized to violence. Scientific

studies have indeed established that frequently playing violent video games can lead to increased aggression and/or desensitization, for example Grizzard et al's work on *Repeated Play Reduces Video Games' Ability to Elicit Guilt* (2016).

Third, spending too much time playing violent video games may cause a person to become socially isolated because he or she is sacrificing precious time that could be used to build and nurture real, living friendships and relationships.

Fourth, I believe that spending too much time playing violent video games encourages the wrong values and habits. For example, games like *Fortnite* may teach a person that violence is a good way to solve problems, it is acceptable to cheat and break the rules as long as you "win" in the end, and/or it is fun or funny to mock people who are "weak."

I understand that playing games like *Fortnite* can be a positive outlet for some people, and I told the students that I do not expect them to abandon the games altogether. However, I encouraged them to be aware of the amount of time they devote to the games in comparison to other activities, and to spend some time thinking about the issues that I highlighted.

In concluding my talk with the students, I emphasized that my goal is for each of them is to continue to nurture all of the positive values and habits that St. Anne's-Belfield represents, including respect and compassion for every person, hard work, and behaving with empathy and kindness in all situations.

Problem Solving: THE HEART OF SINGAPORE MATH

By Sara Kronstain, Grade 5 Math Teacher

When I was in school, my math classes were typical of what one would expect a "traditional" math class to look like. I remember sitting in my elementary and middle school classes, watching as my teachers modeled problem after problem. The class would listen and then practice many of the same types of problems in our notebooks. While this type of teaching may achieve the immediate goal of learning a mathematical procedure, it does not guide students to reach an integral part of learning mathematics: problem solving (Cai & Lester, 2010).

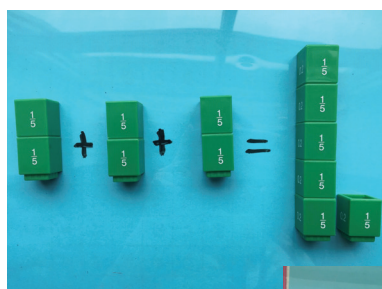
Singapore Math is comprised of a framework with problem solving being the center of learning mathematics. This framework is built around five key components - metacognition, process, attitudes, skills, and concepts - all being of equal importance in developing mathematical problem solving in students. Whereas traditional math classes may place primary importance on developing skills and concepts in students, the additional three components of metacognition (self-regulation of learning), process (reasoning, making connections, and applying knowledge), and attitudes (perseverance, confidence, interest) are all key to developing critical thinking and problem solving skills in students (Ministry of Education Singapore, 2006).

A typical Singapore Math lesson is taught with a concrete-pictorial-abstract approach. Where many of my lessons as a math student began in the abstract stage (solving equations), the concrete and pictorial stages allow students to create and solidify their own understanding of a topic. The concrete stage refers to using hands-on materials to model a mathematical situation. The pictorial stage consists of diagrams and other visuals, thus building students' learning in a tangible way (Maths No Problem!, 2018). The concrete and pictorial stages allow students to understand why math works the way it does before learning the procedure of how to solve using an algorithm.

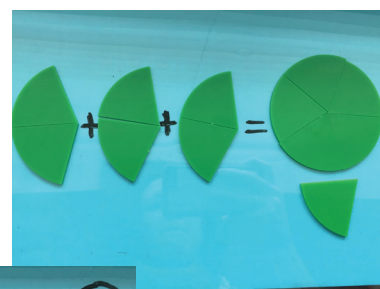
Most Singapore Math lessons begin with an anchor task, allowing students to explore these three stages. The anchor task is a question that allows students the chance to deeply explore a topic and develop multiple methods for solving a problem (Ban Har, 2013). Let us say, for example, a group of fifth graders were posed the problem, "The distance of a race is 3 km. Lily ran two-fifths of the distance. How many kilometers did Lily run?" Students would be given the opportunity to freely explore this question by using manipulatives such as fraction bars, fraction circles, or paper (for folding) along with writing materials. Here are a few examples of possible student responses to this question:

Method: Repeated Addition

Add $\frac{2}{5} + \frac{2}{5} + \frac{2}{5}$. Students may use fraction bars, fraction circles, or pictures. Students become familiar with the phrase "three groups of $\frac{2}{5}$."



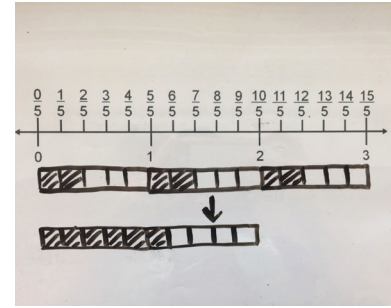
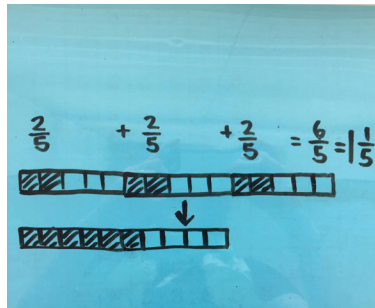
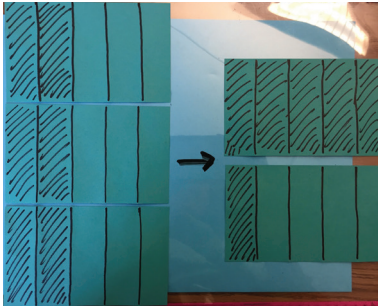
A photograph of a student's handwritten work on a blue background. It shows the equation $\frac{2}{5} + \frac{2}{5} + \frac{2}{5} = \frac{6}{5}$ and $= 1\frac{1}{5}$. A small circle with an arrow points to the 6/5 result, containing the text $\frac{5}{5} = 1$.



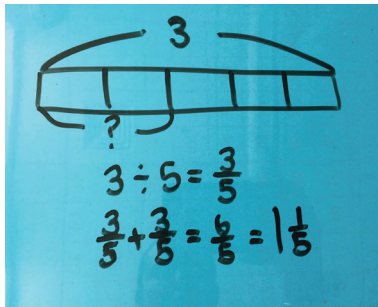
A photograph of a student's handwritten work on a blue background. It shows the equation $\frac{2}{5} + \frac{2}{5} + \frac{2}{5} = \frac{6}{5}$ and $= 1\frac{1}{5}$. The fractions are represented by hand-drawn triangles. A small circle with an arrow points to the 6/5 result, containing the text $\frac{5}{5} = 1$.

Method: Bars

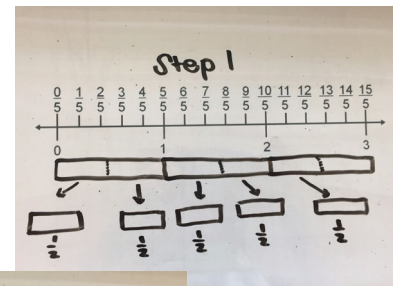
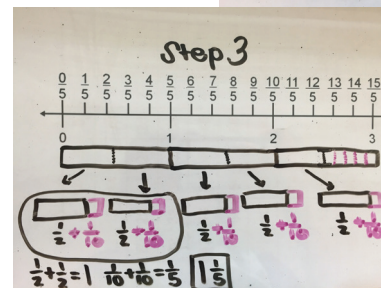
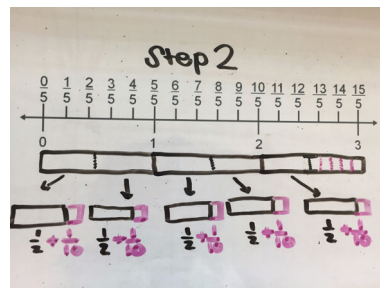
Three boxes are each split into fifths. Two of each of the fifths in all three boxes are shaded in. The shaded parts are added together.

**Method: Bar Model**

A bar with the length of three wholes can be split into five parts. Each part has a value of $3/5$. Then add $3/5 + 3/5$.

**Method: Addition with Fractions**

Three boxes are split into five equal groups, first by placing one half in each group. Then, split the leftover half into five parts (tenths). Each group will have one half of a whole and one tenth of a whole. Combine two groups by adding two halves to two tenths.



In this example, the repeated addition method reinforces addition with fractions, while the last method has students thinking about and manipulating fractions in a much more complex way. Thinking back to the five key components of Singapore Math, students in this example are refining their process of learning operations with fractions by making connections across operations. It is powerful that these responses are coming from students, as they are building their understanding of math through collaboration with their peers. In sharing methods, listening to other's methods, and processing others methods, students are also developing their metacognition. This question could also be modified and challenge students to problem solve in an even deeper way. "What if the total distance was $1/2$ km? What if the total

distance was $3 \frac{1}{2}$ km?" Students can then go back to the concrete, pictorial, and abstract stages and continue to build on their problem solving abilities.

At the end of the day, the primary purpose of this math lesson, or any math lesson for that matter, is not simply to learn how to multiply fractions by a whole number. The most important takeaways are the critical thinking, questioning, collaboration, and problem solving that happens among students. Teachers are not preparing students to go out into a world where they will simply be asked to recite an algorithm. While a goal is for each child to develop a deep love of math, the biggest hope is that students learn to ask questions, logically think through problems, and make sense of the world around them.

Resources

- Ban Har, Yeap. (2013, June 13). Singapore Math at the Blake School, Hopkins, MN. Retrieved from <http://banhar.blogspot.com/search?q=anchor+task>
- Cai, Jinfa, & Lester, Frank. (2010, April 8). Problem Solving. National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. Retrieved from <https://www.nctm.org/Research-and-Advocacy/Research-Brief-and-Clips/Problem-Solving/#brief>
- Ministry of Education Singapore. (2006). Mathematics Syllabus Primary. Retrieved from <https://www.moe.gov.sg/docs/default-source/document/education/syllabuses/sciences/files/2007-mathematics-%28primary%29-syllabus.pdf>
- Maths No Problem! (2018). Concrete Pictorial Abstract. Retrieved from <https://mathsnoproblem.com/en/the-maths/teaching-methods/concrete-pictorial-abstract/>

Foiling

~~FAKE NEWS~~

with Fourth Graders

By Kim Wilkens, Learning Village
Coordinator of Computer Coding
Instruction & Initiatives

Sarah FitzHenry, Learning
Village Librarian

Fake news has been big news recently. It took front and center stage at MozFest last October where Sarah FitzHenry, Kim Wilkens, and Elsa Emanuel '21 presented, "Is That Real? Outfoxing Fake News with Fourth Graders," one of several sessions focused on dealing with misinformation. FitzHenry and Wilkens began this journey because they wanted to start introducing the concept of fake news before students become active social media users, and help them build the skills to navigate real-time news with knowledge and confidence.

What does fake news mean to you?

Fake news used to be those clickbait headlines on social media sharing something that was just too good or bad to be true. Over the past few years, it has become more sinister as some content providers have taken advantage of social media algorithms and users to insert false or misleading news into our collective consciousness.

When fourth grade students were asked what fake news meant to them, they offered a wide range of responses from "I have no idea" to "fake news is a lie and not very kind or nice" to a more nuanced understanding that "people are lying so they can get more people to listen to them and get more attention."

Is that legit?

The first activity the group explored was from Mozilla's Web Literacy curriculum called Kraken the Code. In this activity there isn't a clear yes or no answer, rather gray areas into which a lot of fake news falls. And with students in the driver's seat, having them make the decisions about what, where, and how to search, they experienced first-hand the impact of not having an online search strategy and/or the downside of getting pulled into a rabbit hole of useless content.

Fact or opinion?

With social media feeds we are all running on information overload and making snap judgments about what we read. To simulate this environment, the fourth grade students played a game in which they had to determine if a headline was real

or fake within three minutes, then two, and finally just one. Students discovered that the less time they had, the more they relied on their opinion. This confirmation bias is a very real phenomenon for adults, too.

Is hacking good or bad?

These days, tools exist so that anyone can build a website to share ideas, opinions, research, news, and more. On the final day of the project, students used Mozilla X-Ray Goggles to "hack" a news website, giving them hands-on experience with some of the underlying code that it takes to develop a web page. They learned that hacking can be a great way to figure out how something works by taking it apart, and also that hacking can be bad when it's used to harm someone else.

What can you do to foil fake news at home?

Our first inclination of protecting kids from things like fake news "may feel like the right thing to do, but it undermines the learning that teens need to do as they come of age in a technology-soaked world" writes Danah Boyd, principal researcher at Microsoft Research. Through her research, Boyd found that we won't really have a clue about what kids know or do not know with regards to technology until we start having a conversation with them about it. Here are some conversation starters:

- What's the difference between facts and opinions?
What's the difference between mistakes and lies?
- Why would someone's worldview lead them to interpret the same piece of news very differently from someone else?
- Watch TV or browse online with your child and see if you can spot ads that appeal to emotion. How could those same emotions be triggered by fake news? Would that be effective?
- These conversations can be challenging, so be sure to stay calm. Children can feel anxious and uncertain when they are confused about information and a calm adult can help them think rationally.

Resources

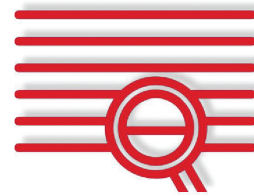
- Fake News: Why We Fall For It (*Psychology Today*)
- It's Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens (Danah Boyd)
- Parent & Educator Guide to Media Literacy & Fake News (Connect Safely)
- International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions - <https://www.ifla.org/publications/node/11174>

HOW TO SPOT FAKE NEWS



CONSIDER THE SOURCE

Click away from the story to investigate the site, its mission and its contact info.



READ BEYOND

Headlines can be outrageous in an effort to get clicks. What's the whole story?



CHECK THE AUTHOR

Do a quick search on the author. Are they credible? Are they real?



SUPPORTING SOURCES?

Click on those links. Determine if the info given actually supports the story.



CHECK THE DATE

Reposting old news stories doesn't mean they're relevant to current events.



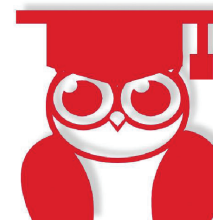
IS IT A JOKE?

If it is too outlandish, it might be satire. Research the site and author to be sure.



CHECK YOUR BIASES

Consider if your own beliefs could affect your judgement.



ASK THE EXPERTS

Ask a librarian, or consult a fact-checking site.

examining

RACE, GENDER, & SOCIAL JUSTICE

Upper School teachers use Intensive as platform for discussion on current events and tough topics.

By Laura Robertson, Upper School Humanities, Grades 9 - 12 Dean of Faculty Development
John Shoup, Upper School Humanities
Antxon Iturbe, Upper School Spanish, Director of Residential Life

As Charlottesville went from our lovely hometown in the Blue Ridge to a hashtag and a headline in August 2017, everyone in our community struggled with our new reality. While we were asking what we could do as a School community to support our students and teachers, a group of our recent alumni and a few seniors asked to gather to form a circle and to process the events together. Through text messages and emails, students from the Classes of 2016 - 2018 found a time to share a common, familiar experience during an uncommon time - they seemed to have an answer to the question "what do we do now?"

What we saw on that summer afternoon, and really in every circle that we have formed in our four years teaching the Issues of Race, Gender, and Social Justice three-week Intensive course, is that not only are our students hungry to engage in the kind of discussions that often stymie even the most mature among us, but they also can and have developed the necessary skills to strengthen a community even in a fractured time. By creating a space for conversations that they knew would be hard in the aftermath that continues to cast a shadow over our town, our students gave us all the power to collectively move forward. To sit in that circle that day was to see hope and recognize the vital importance of providing our future citizens with the opportunities and skills necessary to engage across differences, to have difficult conversations, and ultimately commit to the work of making a world that matches its promise.

When we were first challenged to develop an Intensive course in fall 2014, the former senior elective course entitled Issues of Race and Gender taught by Kevin Levin and Laura Robertson seemed a perfect fit. Charged with developing a three-week experience with a value that extended beyond the classroom, we immediately began to discuss the possibilities. As we initially met to plan we, perhaps naively, wondered what topics and case studies we might choose. Yet in the time leading up to our first day of our first year, Ferguson erupted, Eric Gardener couldn't breathe, Tamir Rice lost his life, and the University of Virginia (U.Va.) found itself in the center of the national controversy surrounding sexual assault on college campuses.

As the teachers of the course, we were immediately presented with immediate, relevant case studies that were not only happening in real time, but which also allowed our students to grapple with their world in meaningful, connected ways. From creating our own Flipboard of relevant articles to using Twitter to engage in broader, virtual discussions to blogging and attending marches and events, our first cohort exceeded all of our expectations. Not only did they engage beyond the bounds of the classroom, never a night went by that our students didn't post an extra piece, share a new article, or send an email to

the class. They also turned the lens that they had sharpened through our discussions towards our own community, creating a final diversity and inclusivity statement and report for the Board of Trustees.

The first lesson we learned from the events of that fall was that, unfortunately, we didn't have to plan our case studies because they would most assuredly emerge from current events. In the four years we've facilitated the Intensive course, we have never experienced a shortage of material. Whether it was in delving into the divisions highlighted by the 2016 presidential election, #metoo movement, or tragic events that defined those days in August 2017, the interests of the students and the events shaping our world have formed the curriculum of the course. As all excellent educators know, students and communities must always be prepared to respond to changing and even unforeseeable circumstances. The students who have chosen to delve deeply into these issues have demonstrated to their teachers and the broader community the power of conversation, empathy, civic engagement, and models of informed citizenship.

When we first gathered to design the class, we all agreed that the students and their personal experiences had to be front and center. Letting go of the reins of the course and handing them over to the students is not always easy, but it might help explain the growing interest to enroll in the course over the last four years, and also the level of engagement of those who do. However, in order to create community, we begin with the concrete. Before we can explore the nuances and complexities of lived experiences, we believe it is crucial to establish a common language and an understanding of the realities of rights and responsibilities, and how those have evolved over the past century and a half. Through explorations of the trajectory of civil rights as they apply to minority populations, women, and the LGBTQ community, we begin to dive into how we as a country have arrived at this moment.

Hearing from peers who come from diverse backgrounds is an integral part of the class ethos. During the school year, a majority of the student body tend to gather by informal affinity groups, keeping them in silos and unable to hear and relate to other students who have been raised in different contexts. Juwan Woodson '17 noted that the course "brings those people into the same environment and pushes them to have those difficult conversations that open people's eyes." We emphasize how every participant in the class has a unique and valuable experience we can all learn from, different from all the other members in the course.

There is a thirst among our students to talk about different types of discrimination and injustice, to comprehend what

Continued on page 28

their roles are within our society, and to learn how to become agents of change. Providing a safe space for students to engage in conversation about topics that are generally superficially addressed, or not discussed at all, in other courses is a key component of the course's success. However, this is not an easy process, and in order for the class to be effective for everyone, both students and teachers need to let down their guard and have the courage to be vulnerable during discussions. Isaiah Wilkins '17 reflected that "Race and Gender pushes students to come out of their comfort zone and talk about issues that are important in our society and culture, but are typically not talked about because people are afraid."

Year after year, we are amazed at how willing the students are to share their stories, admit ignorance, and listen and learn from other peers. The most solemn moments of the class have always surfaced after a student has shared a personal account allowing the rest of us to truly walk in his or her shoes. These moments allows us, as Jana Djordjevic '18 (an exchange student from Serbia) noted "to see the other side of the picture and make you grow as a person," and "to have discussions that are more eye opening than anything we could have read on a book," as Holland Edmonds '17 described.

However, those same discussions have also been the source of frustration among our students. The discussion-based nature and the limited duration of the course leaves some of our most action-oriented students feeling powerless in front of the issues at hand. We realize the limitations of the course, but our goals are to empower students to identify what social issues they are interested in, and how they can help address a particular problem within our community, as well as endow them with skills that will serve them beyond their experience in our

class and St. Anne's-Belfield School. Christiaan Branche '17, affirmed that "the student-led aspect of the class has definitely informed me how to take action as a young person in twenty-first century America." This is what we hope for our students; to become responsible and active citizens of their communities and the world, and to act when they see any injustice regardless of whether or not they are personally affected by it.

The focus on action means this course usually represents the first step in our students' journeys rather than the final destination. When Intensives draw to a close, they yearn to turn discussion into action, to take what they have learned outside the classroom, to do something. Despite the national scope of the issues we discuss, students frequently find their attention drawn to the local level. Through research, field trips, and interviews, our students come away with a better understanding of the challenges facing so many residents in the Charlottesville area. Those passionate about a particular issue design their final projects to study and address it, seeking to make a difference in their community.

In 2015, a group of students started a petition to better honor Vinegar Hill, the African-American neighborhood razed in the 1960s as part of Charlottesville's "urban renewal program." As part of their proposal, the group advocated for a more respectful treatment of the existing plaque on the Downtown Mall, which had been hidden behind a pair of large planters and a garbage can. Weeks after completing their course work, these students petitioned the City Council in person, eloquently making the case for proper recognition of the city's history. A few months later, the garbage can had been removed and the planters had been relocated, enhancing the visibility of the plaque as a small step toward telling the story of Vinegar Hill.

"Race and Gender pushes students to come out of their comfort zone and talk about issues that are important in our society and culture, but are typically not talked about because people are afraid."





The 2015 Race & Gender Intensive participates in the annual scavenger hunt on the Downtown Mall.

In 2017, another group investigated strategies for combating sexual assault on college campuses. After researching a number of programs, they decided to adapt a plan that been successfully implemented in other college towns. Working with businesses on the U.Va. Corner, the students designed posters informing customers on how to discreetly alert a staff member if they found themselves in an uncomfortable situation. As a result of the students' work, a dozen restaurants and bars frequented by U.Va. students placed these posters in their restrooms.

By the end of Intensives, many students seek ways to build closer bonds between our School and the Charlottesville community. They have organized international group visits to the Boys & Girls Club, volunteered with the Internal Rescue Committee and International Neighbors, registered citizens to vote, and worked with public schools to better understand how refugee children adapt to new environments. These one-on-one interactions build personal connections, which in turn offer students opportunities to learn about the experiences of their neighbors and to build a better, more understanding community.

Many of our students continue their work by addressing issues of race, gender, and social injustice in our own School community. Inspired and emboldened by their own experience with challenging conversations, they reach out to classmates, younger students, faculty, and parents in order to broaden the discussion. Over the last four years, we have seen students facilitate conversations in advisory, establish clubs, and raise topics that came up during Intensives when they return to their other classes. In Community Forum, students have presented on Black History Month and discussed the meaning of the word "feminism." Others have researched ways to start these conversations earlier, in an age-appropriate fashion, planning visits to the Learning Village to discuss bullying and healthy

relationships.

Our students' work serves as a welcome reminder that seemingly small actions can produce real change in our communities. We all struggle with the feeling of helplessness brought on by the asymmetry of the magnitude of a problem and our individual capacity to make an impact. Those of us gathered together last August shared these feelings, seeking solace and strength in the familiarity of our circle. But our students' work in the community, their willingness to build personal connections and learn about others, attests to the power of the individual to make change. In this way, students serve as important role models to adults. These teenagers seek spaces to have difficult conversations, and they are often more willing to listen to, and learn from, each other. When faced with an injustice, their first question is usually "how can I help?" Discussion is a necessary first step, but the work does not stop there.



See what students in the 2016 Issues of Race, Class, & Gender Intensive had to say:
www.vimeo.com/stab365/race-class-gender-2016

Life Skills:

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING THAT TRANSCENDS THE CLASSROOM

By Sophie Speidel, Upper School Counselor

It is a sunny afternoon in mid-April, and the sounds of shrieks and laughter permeate the forest on the University of Virginia's Observatory Hill. Hidden along myriad trails, under logs and leaf litter, are three worn paperbacks for which members of the St. Anne's-Belfield Girls' JV Lacrosse team are searching as part of an annual team-building activity. Players are grouped into teams of five and handed a rough map of the trails. Working together, they search for the three books, tear out a page from each, and race back to the start line with all three pages.

Based on the Barkley Marathons, an obscure ultramarathon that takes place each spring in the mountains of eastern Tennessee, this "Baby Barkley" activity is a highlight of lacrosse season. It breaks up the routine of practice and games, introduces the girls to the different skill sets of trail running, hiking, and map navigation, as well as problem-solving, collaboration, and emotional control. It gets competitive; players get frustrated by teammates who aren't keeping up, read the map incorrectly, or lead the group off course. In the real Barkley Marathons, runners search individually for hidden books that serve as checkpoints. In the more than 20 years of the 120-mile event, only 15 people have ever finished under the 60-hour time limit. Participants are actually drawn to the Barkley precisely because of its low finisher rate. It offers impossible odds of success, or, in other words, failure is almost guaranteed.

As the School counselor, a Life Skills faculty member, and coach of the Girls' JV Lacrosse team, I look for opportunities for my students to experience failure, disappointment, and frustration. These are emotions that, when reflected upon, shared, and harnessed into action, can lead to immense personal growth and resilience. Josephine Kim, a researcher at Harvard University, has found that "many young people have too few opportunities to practice and build resilience. More so than in past generations, many teens today have their basic needs met, and they haven't had much practice making mistakes. Especially in affluent communities, their parents are hyper-involved in their academic and social lives, so it's unusual for teenagers to study, arrange a meeting about a bad grade, or even resolve a disagreement with a friend without parental help."

Life Skills is a course that helps students develop and build

effective coping skills. It is required for all St. Anne's-Belfield students in Grades 5 - 10, and emphasizes the basic tenets of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). Children learn and develop the skills to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. A typical ninth grade Life Skills class includes practicing deep listening, learning about healthy relationships and consent, and role-playing being an active bystander who intervenes in a potentially dangerous situation. In Grades 5 - 8, Life Skills classes teach students about online safety and privacy, resisting peer pressure, being a good friend, and setting boundaries. Life Skills stress the importance of empathy: what it is, and how to develop and use it.

Research shows that empathy encourages emotional intelligence, limits aggression, and helps students become more thoughtful and reflective, and that higher levels of empathy make people more productive in cooperative learning and work environments. Since 2016, the Grades 9 & 10 Life Skills classes have collaborated with the U.Va. Department of Psychology's Connection Project, a prosocial development research project, to cultivate empathy in our students. With parental consent, students are randomly selected to participate for 12 weeks in classes that teach collaboration and reinforce the benefits of healthy relationships. St. Anne's-Belfield joined public schools in Ferguson, Mo. as research partners; when the testing phase is completed, the School will be able to use the research findings to improve upon our existing Life Skills curriculum. The Peer Mentors (PMs) program is a next step for students



who aim to improve their prosocial skills, including empathy and concern for others, and apply what they have learned in Life Skills into practice. PMs are students in Grades 10 - 12 who are trained to facilitate discussions around topics such as healthy relationships, body image, and mental health. They build on the best practices gleaned in Life Skills to recognize when a friend is engaging in risky behaviors and to intervene in non-judgmental and effective ways. Senior PMs have an additional role, they are trained by the OneLove Foundation to facilitate discussions with their classmates after viewing *Escalation*, a film that depicts dating violence. These conversations are entirely student-run and, over the years, have inspired students to create and organize additional programs about sexual harassment, consent, and healthy relationships. After a period of training led by me and other faculty members, PMs are eligible to meet with students in Grades 6 - 9 during Life Skills classes, where, depending on the class agenda, they might share their own struggles with making and keeping friends, dealing with bullying, or navigating their way through social media and technology. Peer mentoring meets students where they are, allowing for cross-divisional connections, authentic audiences, and opportunities to put into practice effective communication skills.

In addition to helping our students develop prosocial skills, we strive to educate our students, faculty, and staff about adolescent mental health and how it impacts learning. Anxiety is the most common mental health challenge that teens face today, and it is on the rise. The reasons for this include the comparison trap of social media, a 24/7 news cycle, and a lack of resilience in today's youth. They are the post 9-11 generation who have known economic and global insecurity, terrorism, and school shootings, and they are hitting puberty when technology and social media are becoming addictive.

Our faculty is encouraged to emphasize a growth mindset in teaching, helping students embrace challenges instead of feeling overwhelmed by them. Daily meetings with advisors allow students time to debrief and reflect on how to best approach a difficult issue, be it in the classroom or between friends. St. Anne's-Belfield School's emphasis on Problem-Based Learning (PBL) also facilitates the development of a growth mindset as it allows students to experience frustration and failure while inviting them to overcome these feelings in healthy ways. Starting class with a short mindfulness practice, challenging illogical thinking, and reinforcing healthy coping skills are effective tools for our students to use when anxiety levels increase. Faculty members (including advisors and coaches) are trained in Youth Mental Health First Aid to be aware of the signs and symptoms of mental health challenges facing youth, including anxiety, depression, and suicide, and all faculty members and students in Life Skills learn the differences between having "the blues" and clinical depression, between non-suicidal self-injury (aka self-harm) and suicidal

ideation, and what steps to take to help someone at risk.

Our Life Skills curriculum reflects the School's commitment to helping our students become healthy 21st century citizens. We teach substance abuse prevention (with an emphasis on the dangers of e-cigarettes), sexuality, and consent. We ensure that all students know what sexual harassment looks like and how to respond. Despite being connected to one another through social media and other forms of technology, adolescents today are showing the symptoms of a lack of true connection. They need more practice with face-to-face interaction and quieting the negative self-talk that can lead to anxiety and depression by facing their triggering fears, not avoiding them. Lynn Lyons, a therapist based in New Hampshire, says "in order to retrain the brain, in order to create that message that says that 'even though I'm uncomfortable I can do this,' we need to stop treating these anxious kids like they're so frail, like they can't handle things. Kids are being given some really



The 2017 - 2018 Girls' JV Lacrosse teams runs together as a team-building activity.

dangerous messages these days about the fact that they can't handle being triggered, that they shouldn't have to bear witness to anything that makes them uncomfortable and that their external environments should bend to and accommodate their needs."

To ensure today's teens grow into confident and healthy adults, it is essential that parents, teachers, and others who work with and love adolescents keep encouraging them to take risks and to welcome failure. Opportunities outside of school might include travelling alone to a camp or location where they know no one else, trying out for a sport or the school play without any previous experience, or starting a new hobby or project without help from well-meaning adults. Even searching for hidden books in the forest with a few of their friends, with nothing to show at the end except a few pages and a lot of sweat, is a start.

Creating Empathetic Students Through the Interdisciplinary Course of Humanities 10

By Rosanne Simeone, Upper School Humanities

Racism, classism, anti-Semitism, sexism, genderism, colonialism - in a world riddled with conflict and power hierarchies, practicing global empathy matters. To appreciate another's perspective, another's religion, another's access to power or shackles of oppression is to create hope for a more peaceful international community. The question is: How can a teaching practice help foster such cross-cultural sensitivity?

Since its fall 2014 pilot class, Humanities 10 has nurtured St. Anne's-Belfield sophomores in the cultivation of global empathy through a unique curriculum placing art, architecture, history, literature, and ways of wisdom into conversation with each other. As our students explore a rich cultural canon of words and images, they develop an appreciation for how the humanities can enrich and deepen their senses of responsibility to other citizens across the globe.

The journey begins on the first day of class, when students learn the first of two mantras:

Everything is a Text to be Interpreted

A prose poem by Denise Levertov, a passage from the Bhagavad Gita, and a painting by Joseph Wright of Derby set the stage for a year of close, critical thinking and synthesis.

- "What do you see?"
- "Write down at least seven specific details you notice."
- "Where does the light fall?"

- "Where do you see movement? Repetition? Variation? Vivid color?"
- "What do these three texts have in common?"
- "How they treat this common theme or motif differently?"
- "Why do these differences matter?"

Soon the class conversation is lively with details and conjectures. Initially the fact that the three texts are so different presents obstacles: What can a twentieth century poem possibly have to say about an eighteenth century painting, much less a Hindu epic dated somewhere between the fifth and second centuries B.C.E.?

Yet with time and closer study, students begin to notice the core similarity: all three texts manipulate light. And with that key, the pieces begin to fit together. One student remarks that "the light in the painting seems to make scientific advances questionable, no one except the scientist looks happy about what's happening to the bird in the air pump." Another extends her thought that "While the poem and the Gita passage connect light to God, or the divine, that painting maybe is saying that people sometimes see their own work, like technology, as a kind of god. Maybe they forget about nature and what's natural. I mean, there's another source of light in the painting. The boy is closing the curtains on the moonlight. Maybe the painting is making some sort of comment on which light is natural and which is unnatural."



Similar to Humanities courses, Jon Shoup's senior capstone class joins together for "harkness," a form of student-centered discussion.

The next classes will push students to add to the cultural equation: J.D. Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye* and Michelangelo's "The Fall and Expulsion from the Garden of Eden" (1512), Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha* and the Buddha of Kamkura. And as the course progresses, our historical narrative wends from the French Revolution through both World Wars to South Africa, China and Tibet, and the modern Middle East. Our books range from Shakespeare's *Macbeth* to Simon Wiesenthal's *The Sunflower* to Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*; and our journey through Ways of Wisdom expands to include Islam, Taoism, Hinduism, and Judaism.

At every turn and twist of the curriculum, we ask not only "What does this text say?" and "How does it connect to every other text we have studied?" but also "How do the connections among the texts shape our understanding of who has held power? Why and how do those power hierarchies matter? What are the possibilities for resistance? Whose voices have been marginalized? What are our responsibilities towards the silenced?"

SO HOW DID WE GET HERE?

The seeds of Humanities 10 were sown in 2011, when the English, History, and Religious Studies Departments held a retreat to explore a common humanities curriculum. In the fall of 2013, the three academic departments merged into a Humanities Department with the charge to develop an interdisciplinary humanities curriculum. Consequently, in June 2014, the department developed a mission statement that opens with a recognition that our students can become the stewards of international culture:

The Humanities Department reflects a belief that the most significant way to prepare students for the demands of an increasingly global and complex world lies in interdisciplinary study. Consequently, Humanities integrates English, history, and religion into a program emphasizing inquiry in these disciplines as well as in the arts, architecture, and philosophy. One of the goals of Humanities is to invite students to enter a conversation that has been on-going for thousands of years and to help them understand that they are caretakers of a tradition that involves both understanding the past and preparing for the future.

With this charge in mind, we targeted the tenth grade curriculum as the first course to be significantly re-envisioned. Over the summer of 2014, we designed the curriculum for a team-taught Humanities 10 course. The initial team of teachers hailed from all three branches of our Humanities Department: Bob Clark, chair of the former Religious Studies Department, Jon Shoup, Spanish and history teacher; and Rosanne Simeone, English teacher. We wondered what would happen when a team of teachers put different kinds of texts from different disciplines into conversation with each other. Although we sought to break down the barriers separating the three central disciplines,

READING LIST

What are the Humanities 10 students reading this year?

- *Catcher in the Rye*, J.D. Salinger
- *Siddhartha*, Hermann Hesse
- Excerpts from *The Bhagavad Gita*, *The Dhammapada*, *The Tao*
- *In the Time of the Butterflies*, Julia Alvarez
- *Macbeth*, William Shakespeare
- "Declaration of Rights of Man and of the Citizen"
- "Declaration of the Rights of Woman and Citizen"
- *Excerpts from Spielvogel textbook*
- Woodrow Wilson's 14 Points
- Treaty of Versailles
- *The Sunflower*, Simon Wiesenthal
- *The Joseph Novella*
- *Freedom in Exile*, Dalai Lama (China/ Tibet unit and research paper)
- *A Dry White Season*, Andre Brink
- South Africa Choices curriculum
- "Black Consciousness," Steve Biko
- Excerpts from Ari Shavit's *My Promised Land*
- "An Alien City," Amos Oz
- Collection of digital resources on Israeli-Palestinian conflict
- *Persepolis*, Marjane Satrapi
- *The Handmaid's Tale*, Margaret Atwood
- Excerpts from Martin Buber's *I and Thou*
- *Book of Ruth*

Poetry:

- "Dulce et decorum est," Wilfred Owen
- "The Second Coming," W.B. Yeats
- "Death of the Ball Turret Gunner," Randall Jarrell
- "Death Fugue," Paul Celan
- "The Waste Land," T. S. Eliot*
- "To Our Land," Mahmoud Darwish
- "In Jerusalem," Mahmoud Darwish
- "It was concealed in interpretation," Yousef el Qedra*

we deliberately integrated essential features of all three, recognizing that all are facets of a single humanities jewel. From religious studies, for example, we preserved the Sermon Project and a study of Ways of Wisdom, crafting a curriculum that fosters global empathy. From history we preserved the critical study of specific, significant events that help shape our narrative of human life. Lastly, from the English curriculum we preserved not only the practice of literary analysis but also a rigorous writing curriculum.

While we intended to bring the best of all three central disciplines into the new course, we strove constantly (and still strive, today, in every curricular planning session) to break down the lines between English, history, and religious studies. After all, we were not trying to create an English-history-religious studies class; instead, we were creating something new, something multi- and inter-disciplinary, something unique to St. Anne's-Belfield School. So we ourselves had to see the world anew. We had to ask ourselves questions that would blur the edges of the boundary lines drawn between our disciplines.

Art often became the key or a nexus where lines of inquiry about history, religion, and literature could converge. Analyzing the Buddha of Kamkura (actually, the sculpture initiated a series of buddhas and bodhisattvas up for interpretation, comparison, and contrast) drew together ideas about Siddhartha as well as the ideologies of Hinduism and Buddhism. We extended the use of art with a Ways of Wisdom project in which pairs of students studied works of art central to Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism. Interpreting these Ways of Wisdom through visual art emphasized how cultural artifacts express and shape worldviews, both classical and contemporary. The final oral presentations not only demonstrated the students' collaborative critical work but also created an ephemeral museum filled with student docents interpreting Asian philosophies through sculptures and paintings. For many students, both domestic and international, discerning similarities among Eastern and Western philosophies was a powerfully empathetic experience.

From here, the Humanities 10 curriculum threads in its second mantra:

Who Tells The Story Matters

Grounded in skills of text interpretation, Humanities 10 is a carefully curated curriculum that spirals up through a series of culminating assignments intended to foster global empathy. Whenever possible, we juxtaposed opposing historical narratives. For example, in our study of South Africa, we introduced the notion of Historical Memory, or the ways in which communities construct, understand, and relate to narratives about the past. Noting that because Historical Memory establishes a sense of common history and common destiny, it helps build communal identity. Consequently, it can

be used to empower or disempower certain groups.

Students saw this theoretical concept come alive while examining two memorials to an event. Afrikaners called the event the Battle of Blood River, using the tale and creating a striking memorial, The Laager Monument, that establish an Afrikaner origin myth. In contrast, Zulu interpretations of the event at the Ncome River were far more concerned with the encroachment of Afrikaners into their land and far less concerned with memorializing the battle itself. Located across the Ncome River from The Laager Monument, the Zulus' Ncome Memorial and Blood River Heritage Site seeks to re-value and re-inscribe black history into African history.

From Afrikaner monument and Zulu memorial to the complicated Afrikaner narrator of Andre Brink's *A Dry White Season*, a man trying to comprehend black South African oppression, to Steve Biko's Black Consciousness theory and the testimonies in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, different perspectives push our Humanities 10 students to understand South Africa through multiple historical narratives, all of which speak to the truth, and none of which can be dismissed.

As the course evolves, students tackle essential, difficult questions about events through time and across the globe. How can a deep study of *Macbeth* shape our understanding of dictators throughout history and today? How can understanding anti-Semitism as a centuries-old hatred shape our understanding of the machinery of the Holocaust and other genocides? How can that understanding shape our responsibilities towards marginalized peoples today? Does a Nazi soldier have the right to ask a Jewish man to forgive him? How do different Jewish and Christian perspectives on forgiveness shape our understanding of the complexities of this question? How can examining these Jewish and Christian perspectives clarify our understanding of the term "religion" and broaden our empathy for different religious beliefs? Why do Tibetans believe China invaded their country, but China believes it liberated Tibet - always a part of China - from feudal serfdom? How can both stories hold truth? How can that understanding shape our responsibilities towards other peoples today? How can both Israelis and Palestinians claim the same land? How do their historical narratives overlap and how do they differ? Can we create a two-state solution for Israel-Palestine? How can understanding the objectification of women through art and the oppression of women in history help us understand the dystopian patriarchy in Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*? How can that understanding shape our responsibilities towards women today?

FINDING WISDOM

The final assignment in Humanities 10, the Sermon Project, offers every student the time to reflect upon the entire year of study and synthesize it into a grain of wisdom, the time to



consider their personal relationship to the larger themes we have reflected upon. In preparation, we ask students to keep a Quotations Archive in the back of their class journal, filling it over the course of the year with quotations that have intrigued them. The Archive, rich with pearls of wisdom from other writers, often becomes a goldmine for the students trying to deepen their own message.

The Project answers another charge from the Humanities Department's Mission Statement:

Students will further be expected to develop habits of self-reflection that echo Ivan Ilych's question in Tolstoy's novella: "How should I then live?" In a world whose pace of life can charitably be called "frenzied," we feel that it is vital to

slow down and to provide opportunities for students to be introspective—to allow them time to reflect on, make sense of, and synthesize their experiences.

This call to reflect, to make wisdom, runs counter to much our current culture's emphasis on the superficial, yet by the end of Humanities 10 our students are eager to tell their own stories, in their own voices, with their own messages of wisdom. Last year's collection of sermons took on such challenging topics as overcoming debilitating perfectionism, saying goodbye to loved ones, finding one's own path to God, and creating community through shared meals. Each story was small and unique to the individual student; yet each sermon's message resonated with the entire class. Empathy reigned.

Charlottesville 2017: HOW DID WE GET HERE?

Grades 7 & 8 Quest provides space for deep discussions.

By Michele Mathieson, Learning Village Director of Innovation

Marie Reed, Grade 7 Humanities, Grades 5 - 8 Dean of Faculty Development

Before the Aug. 12, 2017 Unite the Right rally caught the world's attention, a series of hateful protests shook Charlottesville. In May 2017, white nationalist Richard Spencer led a march around the city's statue of Robert E. Lee, and in July a handful of Ku Klux Klansmen - some in their signature white robes - gathered outside the courthouse. Like many, we wondered what these events meant, how they would be resolved, and whether our community could find a unified and just path forward. Each day we sought each other out to offer reactions, pose questions, and share resources. As the weeks passed, we realized that our daily conversations supported and sustained each of us through an unsettling summer.

Then August came. Outside groups descended upon Charlottesville, beginning with a torch-lit march on the evening of the Aug. 11 and leading to a morning rally around the Lee statue on Aug. 12. The streets of Charlottesville grew tense as a mix of white nationalists, neo-Nazis, and armed militias collided downtown. The nation and world watched as the violence culminated in the death of Heather Heyer.

Suddenly our routine daily conversations felt urgent, even essential.

With school starting in less than two weeks, we wondered how to support our students as they grappled with the violence in their hometown, and the intense discussions unfolding among adults. We knew that they, too, needed a space to talk, one that would help them consider recent events and the history that informs them. Could we establish

a space for students to think critically about why these events unfolded and how they, as young people, might respond? Could our students build a skill set that would empower them to be active, engaged citizens in the most challenging times?

And so we invited students in Grades 7 & 8 to join us in a trimester-long, student-directed Quest titled Charlottesville 2017: How did we get here?

Where did we begin?

We opened our first class with a period of private writing on a guiding question: What brought you here? Students shared their concern for the community, their outrage at the image of Charlottesville in the news, and their fears sparked by the hate they witnessed on Aug. 12. One student recollected, "Everyone knew about [the rally] and everyone wanted to say something and express what they felt about it. The Quest really helped us do that." Another student remarked, "I joined the Quest because I heard adults talking about these issues and I wanted to voice my opinions and be heard."

Like us, the students wanted their own space for unpacking what they witnessed. Several students hoped that the course would offer some clarity on conflicting narratives. One student reflected, "I joined this Quest because I wanted to know what was right and what was wrong [...] I have divorced parents who have kind of different views on politics. I just wanted to know what the majority of people decided. I think it is important to know what more than two people say." From the outset, we knew that honoring

this desire to share, explore, and question would be central in our work with students.

What principles guided our journey?

Middle school is a complicated time for any discussion of current events. Some students have limited interaction with the media, some have only heard of events from acquaintances, and yet others follow national and international news. Often, information is filtered by friends or family. Our students' background knowledge was as varied as their emotional responses to the events. In an effort to nurture a classroom culture that would allow for honesty in the midst of polarizing viewpoints, we established daily protocols so that every voice and heart would be heard.

We began each class with a 10-minute free write followed by a group check-in. Each person had an opportunity to share his or her thinking at the outset of the class. Conversation protocols required that each participant, students and teachers alike, would have the opportunity to speak before anyone spoke twice. From intentionally listening to each voice in the class, we collectively built an agenda for the day.

The students understood that daily writing and check-ins anchored and directed their experience. As one student recalled, "It was a super intense part of the year." Each day's news seemed connected to our ongoing conversation: the events in Charlottesville, rhetoric around November's elections, NFL protests and backlash, and Las Vegas shooting each surfaced in student

writing. As they wrote and shared, we followed their lead. Daily writing enabled the students to process all that they encountered in the news, empowered their voices in the conversation, and equipped us to be responsive facilitators. As the students began to trust our willingness to respond to their thinking, they wrote and shared more freely.

How did we connect along the way?

We quickly learned that the students had a lot they wanted to share, and in addition to private writing, we needed public ways to develop and synthesize their thinking as a group. We created a shared document for students to post their thinking outside of class. As the group gained momentum, students posted their personal stories from

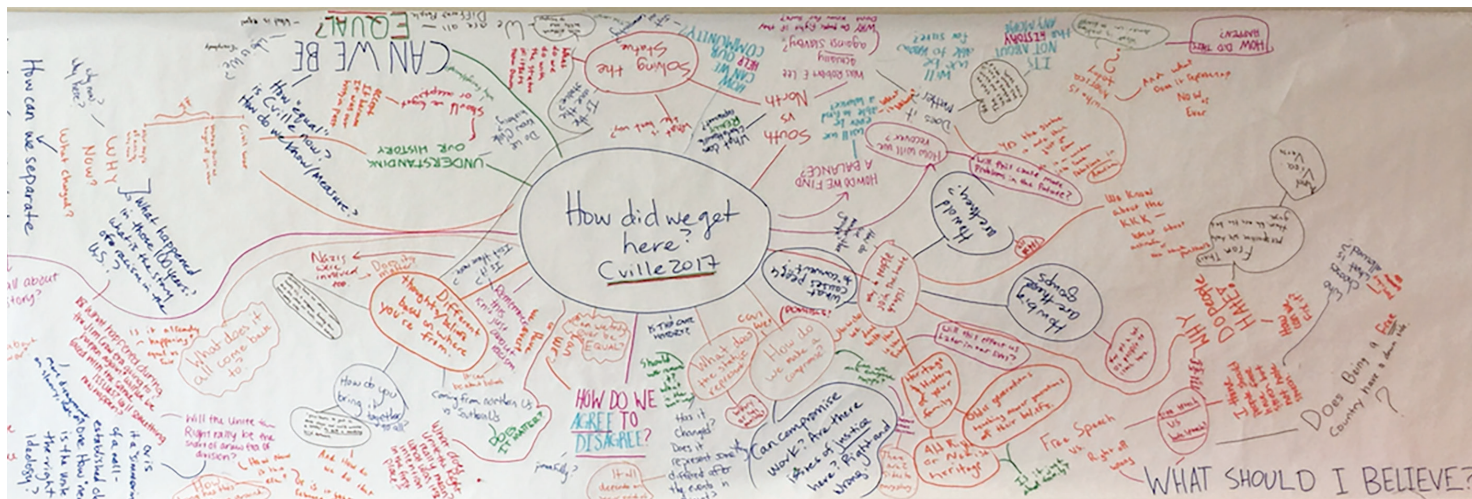
collectively explored a single question. The directions were simple: write down what is on your mind while making a visual connection to someone else's thinking. These silent, written seminars lasted longer than we expected as students stepped away, read the growing conversation, and then added new comments and questions. In the words of one participant, the silent seminars allowed students to "feed off of each other's work" and "helped [us] organize [our] thoughts."

When we posted these banners in the Grades 7 & 8 Commons, other students began to take an interest. Quest participants said that it became impossible for conversations to end with each class period. In the words of one

Over the 12 weeks between August and November, the class became, in the words of one eighth grade student, a "one-of-a-kind moment" for students to engage in honest conversations in a safe and supportive space. Students described the Quest's impact in these terms:

- I thought about what was right and wrong.
- I learned to cope with people who have really strong opinions.
- Most of the time, rather than debating, we learned to discuss.
- I learned restraint — when it was appropriate to speak up and how to be respectful.

More than anything else, students attributed these results to the protocols established in class, including quiet



Aug. 12 as well as articles and videos they found online. Like the conversation protocols, this document enabled every voice to be heard. Students who preferred writing to speaking gravitated to the digital conversation. Simultaneously, the document allowed us to see students' thinking beyond class and let it shape the direction of our work.

In addition to the collaborative document, we used a variety of visible thinking activities in which the group responded to each participant's ideas through writing. For the students, the most memorable was the silent seminar. During a silent seminar, students gathered around stretches of bulletin board paper (as shown above) and

participant, "Everybody walked out of the Quest with something to say ... We talked [about our experiences] with our friends and at our lunch table." Students not enrolled in the Quest reached out to get copies of resources discussed in the Quest and to ask questions about the experience. One student described how she carried the conversations home with her, "I talked to my Dad about interesting stuff ... we just sat and talked. It made a deeper bond with my Dad. I had thoughts to take home and thoughts to share with friends." The small but compelling routines of our class empowered students to lead a conversation within our School community.

What was the impact of our Quest?

writing, intentional and inclusive conversations, opportunities to connect and extend thinking, and flexible plans that amplified student voices and responded to their experiences.

In this Quest, we never found a definitive answer to "how did we get here?" but we did find a compass that could help us chart the course for our collective future. We were reminded that, like adults, young people need a chance to speak, to listen, and to connect around even the most challenging topics. And they need a school community that equips and supports them as they engage in these conversations.

Developing Self-Awareness, Resiliency, & Compassion Through Mindfulness in Education

By J. Robin Albertson-Wren, Pre-School Teacher

"Please get your bodies ready," the eager four-year old directs her peers, one hand resting on her teacher's, the other poised to ring the bell. After a short interlude filled with rustling sounds, 19 Pre-Schoolers are settled on the rug, legs crossed, hands resting on their laps, eyes squeezed tight. Their ears are tuned to the sound of the instrument their friend has rung three times. As the sound dissipates, they each raise a hand to signal the close of their personal mindful listening practice.

"Okay everybody, listen up. This is a safe space. Put your stuff down and close your eyes," the eighth grader says. His approach is more abrupt, but just as well received.

This past school year, I have led some of our tiniest learners and all of our Grades 7 & 8 students in introductory mindfulness lessons. Whether it has enabled a three-and-a-half-year-old to "find a quiet space to just have some breathin' time" in the midst of a rowdy afterschool playdate, or empowered a young teen to tackle the stressful homework assignment without a meltdown, many mindfulness techniques introduced in academia have offered our students ways of dealing with whatever comes their way. Whether it is anxiety around academic life, social issues, or habits we find ourselves falling into, mindfulness instruction offers our adolescent students tools for life.

It is beautiful to observe social and emotional growth in our students day-to-day. It is inspiring to watch as some of our youngest learners begin accessing their own power to attend, to display self-control, and to exercise compassion towards others. It is uplifting to witness our young, anxious, over-stimulated teens begin to share openly about their daily struggles with academic responsibilities, social confidence, and self-reflection. In education, we place great value on the ability "to pay attention." But it is rare that we ever teach how to pay attention. As we can strengthen and build muscle groups to excel in athletic endeavors, so too can we train our minds and bodies to excel in any activity that requires focus.

More and more research is demonstrating the profound impact that mindfulness can have on children and adolescents. In the largest study to date, *Mindful Schools* (2011) showed that students who are routinely exposed to awareness building strategies by a trained instructor are better able to attend in class, better able to remember and re-explain information, and actively participate more fully. Not only that, but - brace yourself - the side-effect for both teachers and students is an overall sense of happiness and well-being. Teachers report

feeling more connected with their colleagues, and children claim they are happier and that people seem kinder.

In his book *Mindfulness for Beginners: Reclaiming the Present Moment—and Your Life*, Jon Kabat-Zinn puts it beautifully when he says, "Mindfulness is paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally ... Exposure to mindfulness training by a skilled teacher can nurture emotional balance, ... [and] foster greater stress resilience and greater social intelligence and cooperativity – just what one would hope for from an enlightened and engaged citizenry."

In my teaching, you may see mindfulness instruction incorporated into the school day through a 30-second breathing practice or a 10-minute activity followed by reflection and group discussion. I offer short periods of attention-building awareness practice that include a variety of activities. One day we can be found playing a rousing game of "Still Chillin'," in which students dance freely and then find stillness in a well-practiced yoga move. The next afternoon we may be contemplating the back-story of a single raisin as we engage in a mindful eating and gratitude exercise. Other times students share stories of resiliency and compassion ("When my brother broke my necklace, I was mad but then I hugged him and breathed"), or offer ideas for recognizing and shifting bad habits. ("Did you know there is this app called In Control to help you not be distracted by your phone?")

In his April 2018 article, *To Change the World, Start with How We Educate Children*, Ryan Redman states that "...Our potential for personal growth is heightened in early childhood and adolescence, and that positive changes conferred early in life predict favorable outcomes decades later into adulthood. These outcomes suggest an education in basic human values is indispensable for cultivating personal, societal, and planetary wellbeing. In short, changing the world begins with educating children to be compassionate, caring citizens."

Mindfulness training offers tools for empowerment, resiliency and concentration, allowing all students to reach their potentials as academic learners, active listeners, and engaged members of society. As we prepare all of our students to thrive in the future, I believe strongly in outfitting the next generation with tools for life, nurturing and challenging their bodies, minds, and spirits.

MINDFULNESS ACTIVITY

Try this "Anchor Breathing" mindfulness activity from Ms. Robin Albertson-Wren when you need to feel grounded:

When you are surrounded by emotion or commotion and things feel overwhelming, it can be helpful to do "anchor breathing." Just as an anchor on a boat keeps it from floating away, our own bodies have anchor spots that help us feel grounded and safe. One place is at our chest and lungs.

1. Place your hands in the middle of your chest and breathe in deeply
2. Exhale slowly
3. Feel the rise and fall of your rib cage as you inhale and release
4. Repeat three times

You can pay attention to your breathing without using your hands as well. Anchor spots are free and always available!

Cortez Anderson '24 and Benny Zheng '24 practice anchor breathing during a moment of mindfulness in Mr. Kent's and Ms. Albertson-Wren's Life Skills class.



Why Social Studies in the Pre-School?

"Whether we're a preschooler or a young teen, a graduating college senior or a retired person, we human beings all want to know that we're acceptable, that our being alive somehow makes a difference in the lives of others."

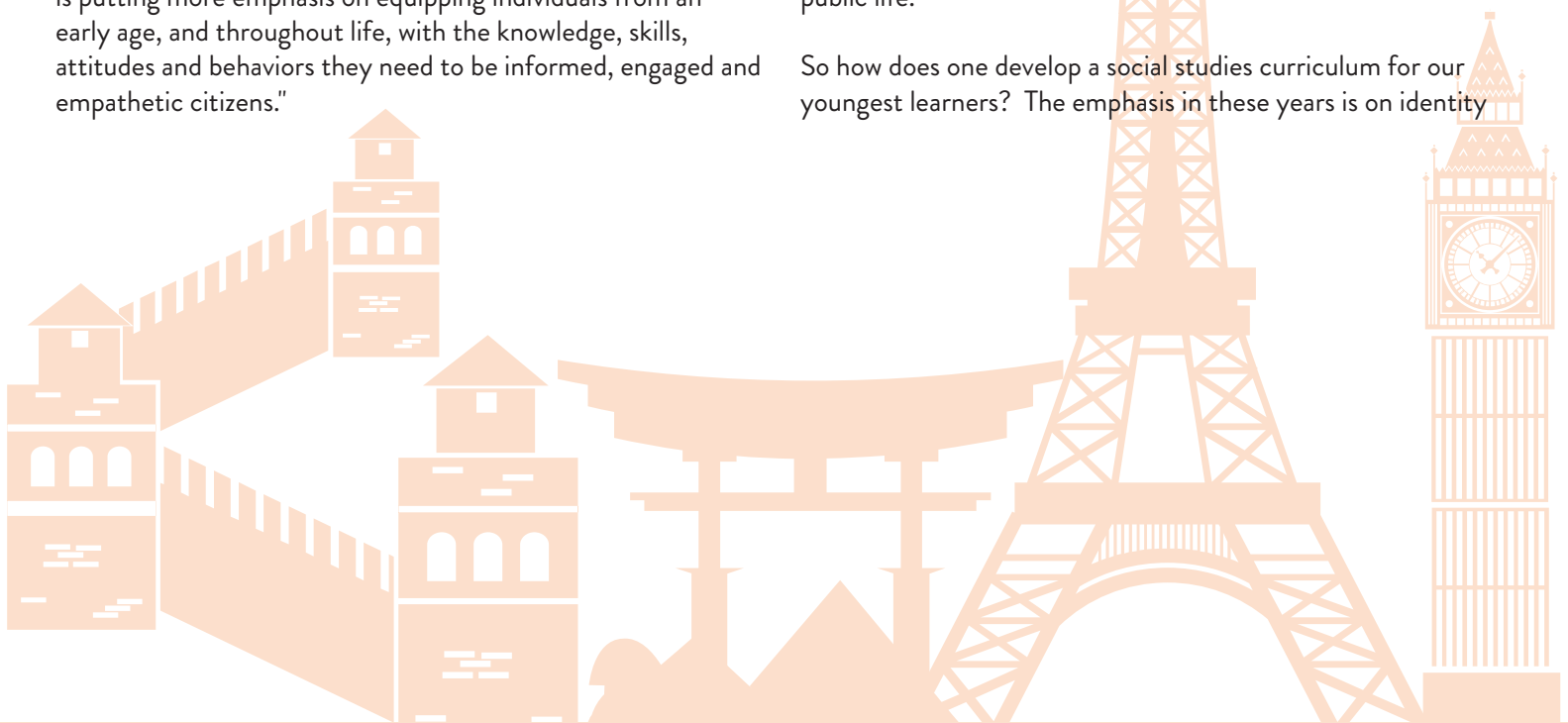
- Fred Rogers

By Kathy Carpenter, Director of Pre-School Programs
Erica Roth, Pre-School - Grade 4 Spanish

Mr. Rogers was way ahead of his time. His emphasis on positive self-identity, interest in learning new things, the ability to talk about similarities and differences, responsibility and caring for others, and how to puzzle through a problem are all concepts that we need to discuss today with our youngest students. Numerous educational predictions indicate that the skills most needed for a new generation of leaders will not be those upon which we have traditionally focused. This indicates the need to embrace a social studies curriculum that can build upon itself starting in the Pre-School years. According to a 2014 report from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), "in a globalized world, education is putting more emphasis on equipping individuals from an early age, and throughout life, with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors they need to be informed, engaged and empathetic citizens."

Our youngest learners are extremely curious about the world around them. The implementation of a social studies curriculum will allow them to explore our shared humanity while developing the skills necessary for a "global mindset," defined by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages in *Raising Global Children* as "the ability to work comfortably across borders, cultures and languages" that will allow them to thrive as citizens of the twenty-first century. According to the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), "the aim of social studies is the promotion of civic competence – the knowledge, intellectual processes and democratic dispositions required of students to be active and engaged participants in public life."

So how does one develop a social studies curriculum for our youngest learners? The emphasis in these years is on identity



and the concept of a community. The first curricular goal described by Louise Derman-Sparks and Julie Olsen Edwards in *Anti-Bias Education for Young Children and Ourselves* is that "each child will demonstrate self-awareness, confidence, family pride, and positive social identities." This includes a focus on fostering both individual and social identities. In the Pre-School curriculum, "Who am I?" is the first thread that we weave into many areas. Questions such as "Who are the members of my family?" "What celebrations do our families observe?" and "Where do I live?" among others, serve as prompts for dialogue and exploration in the classroom. Teachers embrace opportunities to engage the children in conversations about similarities and differences, and use each child's lived experience as a starting point for the social studies curriculum.

The second strand for Pre-School social studies is the concept of "my community." Initially, the children explore their own homes and neighborhoods including all aspects of our School campus, as well as learning about those who are community workers and helpers. There are ample opportunities to expand their horizons by inviting in members of the community who have unique experiences to share. The arts, literature, cooking, and personal interviews serve as mediums through which the children shape their understanding of community. The social curriculum currently in place in the Pre-School, Systematic

Training for Effective Parenting (S.T.E.P.) includes expectations of respect, responsibility, and reinforcement of a child's place in a community. Morning meetings in which children write classroom rules help establish the understanding of collaboration and empathy. Emotional growth is encouraged to help young children realize that they all are part of a team that works together.

As we build upon our social curriculum in the Pre-School, and begin to take a social studies focus with a goal of civic competence, our attention turns to the impact that children's literature, music, media and other teacher-supported activities can have in exposing our youngest learners to the idea of being an empathetic and caring citizen. Recognizing that in the early years children benefit from a focus larger than teaching one language cycle, such as the broader scope of social studies, will allow students to begin to develop many of the key skills necessary for global competence in our ever-changing and interconnected world.

Although the world is changing quickly, it is time to return to the lessons of Mr. Rogers and a focus on empathy, respect, and community. An engaging social studies curriculum is the right fit for our children's future.

Resources

- Berdan, S. N., & Berdan, M. S. (2013). *Raising global children: Ways parents can help our children grow up ready to succeed in a multicultural global economy*. Alexandria, VA: The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.
- Derman-Sparks, L., & Edwards, J. O. (2010). *Anti-bias education for young children and ourselves*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.
- France, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2014). *Global Citizenship Education Preparing Learners for the Challenges of the 21st Century*. Paris: UNESCO.
- NCSS (National Council for the Social Studies) (2010). *National Curriculum Standards for the Social Studies: A Framework for Teaching, Learning and Assessment*, Silver Spring, MD: NCSS



My Child Loved to Read... What Happened?

Why do students love to read one minute and not the next? Two faculty members look at the habits of young students and how to cultivate lifelong readers.

By Jared Passmore, Grade 6 Humanities
Sarah FitzHenry, Learning Village Librarian

"What happened to my reader? Last year, he was in the library every week picking out books. I had to take his book away at meals. Now, I can't get him to read anything. It's like he has no interest in it."

This mystery baffles parents, librarians, and teachers alike. As students pass through middle school and into high school, many of them stop reading for pleasure. Loving adults beg, cajole, bargain, mandate... but nothing works. Let's get one thing out of the way: It's not your fault. It's not your child's fault, either. Major neurological changes take place during middle school years, and these developments affect the way pre-adolescents view the world. While these changes are happening internally, their lives are changing externally, too. Homework demands increase significantly, athletics and other extracurricular commitments take up more time, and social interests become a principal focus. Additionally, the amount of assigned reading increases, and as students are required to read more for school their schedules no longer provide "free" time. As it turns out, the more children are required to read, the less they do so.

Many educators refer to this as the reading slump. We have seen this transition firsthand in our classrooms and libraries. We're here to share, after years of trial and error and stacks of research books, what has worked for us and so has been introduced to the unique structure of our sixth grade English program. Each year, we've found we're met with the same student questions.

"Can I really read what I want?"

The biggest piece of the puzzle is also the simplest: student choice. In order to preserve students' love of reading while helping them to continue to develop their reading skills, we create a reading curriculum based on choice and surround students with quality literature of all genres and levels for independent reading. This combination encourages them to explore reading without consequence or judgement. If a student tries a book and then discovers it is not a good match, we provide the option of abandoning it. There are too many great books to slog through one that isn't captivating! When

students have independent books they enjoy, they are more invested in the process, read more closely, and grow more as readers. They also find more time in their schedules for reading and are more eager to begin their next books. It is important to note that finding an identity as a reader is a trial-and-error process that can take a lifetime and cannot develop without choice. The more students read, the more they learn about themselves as readers and the stronger their identities become.

"Are you serious? We're going to spend the whole class... reading?"

When we designate extended periods of time for students to pursue their interests in reading, we send a clear message to them that it is worthwhile and important. Similarly, when we take the time to read aloud to students, sharing the experience of a novel or picture book with them, we demonstrate how reading can bring them joy and help them learn at the same time. In the transitional years of middle school, correctly analyzing a classic novel often takes precedence over giving students time to explore their interests and practice widely-applicable comprehension and analysis skills. Though both approaches will help students to become more skillful readers, the former often diminishes a love of reading while the latter encourages it. As we all know, actions speak louder than words, so we help students to set reading goals for

themselves, give them time to strive for those goals, check in with them frequently, and reward them for success — with more reading. External rewards send the inaccurate and counterproductive message that reading is merely a means to an end. Earning more time to read or a trip to the library are rewards that carry the excitement and pride of finishing a book into the next reading journey. Make reading a priority in your classroom or home, and your students will do the same.

"What are you reading, Ms. Fitz? How about you, Mr. Passmore?"

Modeling a life and love of reading matters. Closing our laptops, putting down our work, and picking up a book right alongside students gives credibility to our claim that reading is

"Modeling a life and love of reading matters. Closing our laptops, putting down our work, and picking up a book right alongside students gives credibility to our claim that reading is valuable."

Logan Montgomery '29
and Peyton Booth '24
gather in the Learning
Village Library to read
together in celebration of
Picture Book Month.



valuable. This is true for all of the adults in a child's life. Telling students to make time to read is one thing, doing it ourselves, while they're watching, is another.

When our classrooms and libraries aren't full of quiet readers, they are bursting with passionate conversation. Talking about stories doesn't come naturally to most students, and modeling the way that we talk about books, with excitement and enthusiasm, makes a huge difference. Going beyond plot summaries and genre descriptions to meaningful moments and emotional responses models a deep and rewarding relationship with books. As the school year progresses, we see changes in how our students talk about what they read. This leads to a change in the way they approach books, and helps to create deeper connections with literature that go beyond academics. Habits like these lay the groundwork for a lifelong love of reading.

"Can I have that book when you're finished?"

Traditionally, reading is seen as a solitary activity. But teens and tweens don't work that way, so neither should reading instruction for this age group. By adolescence, many readers have developed negative opinions about reading: it's boring, it's too hard, it's not for them. By turning reading into a collaborative, interactive experience we are able to use this mindset to our advantage as an opportunity to surprise students and reset the way they approach reading. These experiences further cement reading as an exciting, rewarding, and important part of their lives, making it something that they are more likely to continue in the future.

In our library, everything centers on students' passions rather

than required literature or academic expectations. Book clubs, literary lunches, literature-themed makerspaces and computer science collaborations, and interactive artistic and written book displays get students talking, moving, and experiencing literature in unexpected and engaging ways. Suddenly, books that felt daunting or boring seem exciting, challenging, and within reach. These gatherings provide diverse opportunities for learners of all strengths to feel like they belong. A reading program that requires students to conform or sacrifice in order to succeed will not be as strong or as meaningful as a program that is created to be flexible and to reflect its students' strengths and interests.

Part of engaging students is meeting them where they are, and there's no denying that tweens and teens spend a lot of their time online. Instead of lamenting the lure of screens, teachers and parents can embrace social media and use it to market literature and reading in a way that adolescents will find exciting and relatable. To see this in action, head to Instagram and check out [**@fitzbetweentheshelves**](#).

Every student deserves to be a reader. From succeeding academically to leading a fulfilling life, a love of reading will pay meaningful dividends every day. By demonstrating the importance of making time to read and respecting students' choices, challenges, and interests, we can help preserve their love of reading throughout their middle school years while encouraging their natural fascination with the world and nurturing their critical thinking skills. It is not always easy, it is certainly not conventional, but it is very much worth the investment.

around the world in 29 days

In June, 39 students traveled to China, Dominican Republic, and Spain for cultural exchange, language instruction, and community engagement.



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

11 students, 8 days, 2 houses built

Eleven students and two faculty and alumni chaperones traveled to the Dominican Republic in June as a part of an international engagement trip with a focus on service. They helped to rebuild two homes of local residents.

SPAIN

12 students, 10 days, 11 host families



From touring Madrid and Toledo to spending the day in the mountains in Buitrago de Lozaya, no two days were alike for the 12 students who traveled to Spain in June. Students and two faculty chaperones also bonded with their host families during their 10-day trip.

CHINA

16 students, 11 days, 5 cities



Sixteen Upper School students and two faculty chaperones visited China for 11 days in June. They saw five cities, as well as interacted with boarding students, alumni, and newly enrolled students living in China.

2018 - 2019 BY THE NUMBERS

404 Upper School & **490** Learning Village Students

8:1 All-School Student:Faculty Member Ratio

14 All-School Average Class Size

73%

Faculty Members
Hold Advanced
Degrees

CORE PURPOSE

To inspire and
prepare the next
generation of
exemplary citizens
and visionary
leaders.

OUR HONOR CODE

A student is not to lie,
cheat, or steal.



53

Zip Codes
Represented in
Student Body

3,800+

Alumni in
37 Countries

40%

Students
Receive
Financial Aid

STRATEGIC AREAS OF FOCUS

- Inspired Teaching & Enduring Learning
- Close Community
- Sustainable Resources

CORE VALUES

- Integrity: Cultivating responsible, honorable, ethical behavior
- Curiosity: Fulfilling our desire to question, to know, and to learn for a lifetime
- Diversity: Seeking to know, learn from, and value one another
- Creativity: Expecting imaginative, critical, and divergent thinking
- Agency: Empowering students to own their learning
- Impact: Accomplishing meaningful, significant work for the greater good



**Thank you to an amazing community for all your support
of our students and teachers.**

We are especially grateful to our many volunteers, partners, friends,
and the 889 donors who provided more than \$1.39 million to our 2017
- 2018 Annual Fund and \$10.26 million in new commitments to the
Raise We Our Voices for Access and Excellence campaign.

You make a tremendous difference in so many ways!

**OUR ANNUAL
FUND**

 **Raise** we our **VOICES**
FOR ACCESS AND EXCELLENCE



another big picture

Kenyan boarding student Melvin Kanaiza Onguko '21 hopes for a strike as she bowls during a Residential Life outing before the start of her sophomore year as a Bridge International Scholar.



St. Anne's-Belfield School
2132 Ivy Road
Charlottesville, VA 22903
www.stab.org

   @StAnnesBelfield

Pre-Sorted First Class
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Charlottesville, VA
Permit #186

Address Service Requested

Join us on campus this year!

Oct. 12: Fall Family Picnic

Dec. 14: Lessons & Carols

Jan. 12 & 13: Wearable Art Runway Show

May 3 - 5: Alumni Weekend

May 4: Maroon & White Party

May 31: Commencement

www.stab.org/calendar

