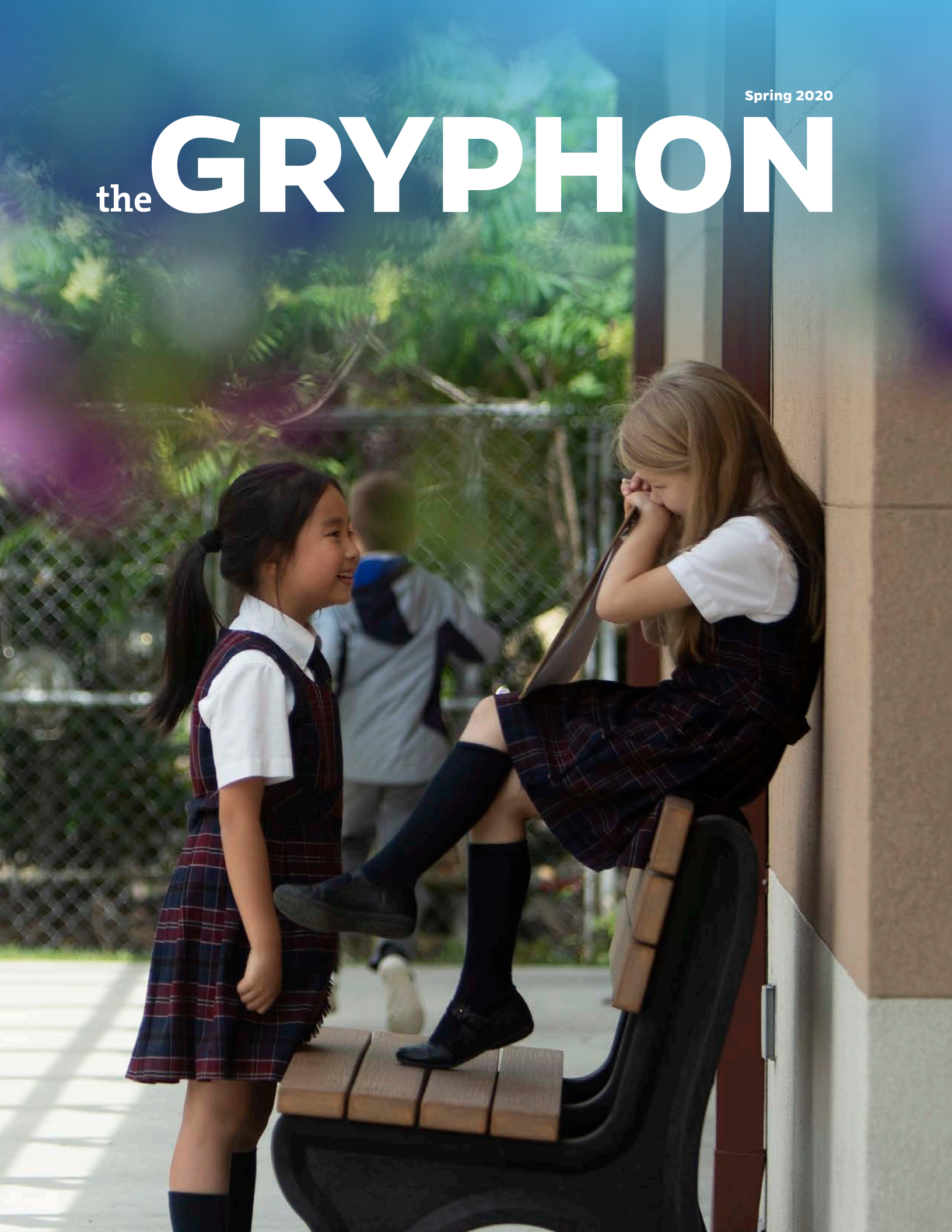


Spring 2020

the GRYPHON







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MEADOWRIDGE SCHOOL
12224 240th Street
Maple Ridge, BC
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Imagination, stewardship, community:

The Our Kids Review of Meadowridge School

Meadowridge grew out of a common desire among a number of families to create a school that was challenging, forward thinking, and based in a set of shared values. Unlike many private schools, it began with a blank slate—everything was an option—and has grown from there while remaining true to the initial vision that the founding families brought to the table. There are no ivy-covered walls, and the school doesn't bear the weight of some of the private school traditions that those walls represent. Since it was founded,

administration has been agile, adept, and tied to the local population and its desires. The community stakeholders have guided its development and continue to do so today. This isn't a school led by decree, and the recent capital development is an example of that. It's truly been a group effort, and you'd be hard pressed to find anyone within the school—from the administration, to the teachers, to the students, to the parents volunteering in the library—who doesn't feel part of the development process.



Meadowridge is known for its experiential education and inspires students to academic achievement through involvement and personal engagement. They don't just teach art, for example—they immerse students within it, including the school's on-site collection of works from an A-list of Canadian artists, including Tom Thomson, Kenojuak Ashevak, and Lawren Harris. The campus includes a forest, and links between art and the environment are profound. Likewise, gardens and greenhouses provide an entrée to ecology and biology, and a design lab introduces students to technology and engineering. Those, and other examples, provide a unique balance between didactic instruction and experiential learning.

The buildings sit on a 27-acre campus, with proximity to urban centres as well as a range of natural environments. The campus includes green space, a forest, outdoor facilities, and a campground. Golden Ears Mountain sit off charmingly in the distance. While some schools pride themselves on being city schools, Meadowridge rightly has great pride in being set a bit apart from the bustle of urban life. Nature feels close, and it is. There are bears from time to time, which of course is absolutely typical of the region and a sign of the health of the biome that the school sits within. ("The school is very careful about that," says one student, "and we have

designated procedures. And they have announcements, like 'okay, there's a bear, guys. Come in.' And the teachers blow whistles.") A creek runs through the campus, and it is rightly seen both as an environmental and instructional resource. Six years ago, a Grade 4 class released 5,000 coho salmon fry into it (the creek once supported a population of Coho, though it no longer does). Six years later, the same students—now in Grade 10—surveyed the population to investigate why the salmon didn't return. They concluded that a recent roadway construction created a barrier that the salmon were unable to navigate.

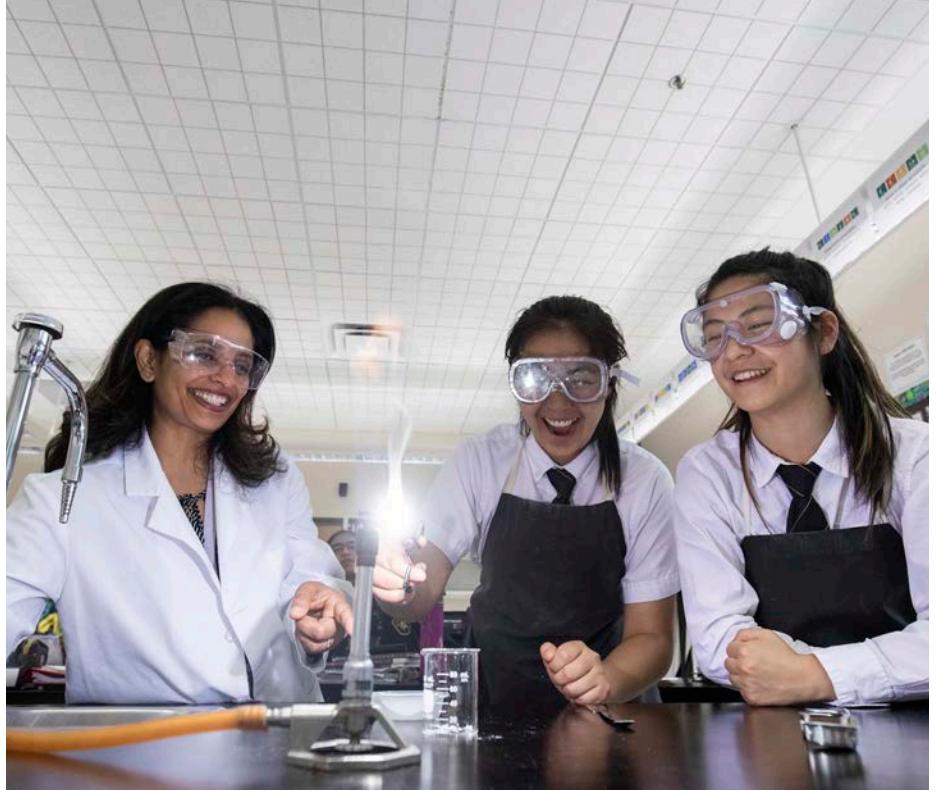
That kind of project is an example of the intentions of the program and how it has been developed over the years of instruction. "We're seeing repeats, connecting points, for students," says outdoor experiential ecological education (OE3) coordinator James Willms. "In that case it was the salmon." Those connections are then capitalized on through detailed, informed instruction. In addition to the biological processes, the staff layered in other aspects of learning and development, including, in this case, those associated with empathy and stewardship. "You start to see that empathy build for that natural space," says Willms, "with the intent that if they can build that empathy for our space, hopefully it translates to other spaces in the world, whether it's

their neighbourhood or where they're travelling."

In terms of its physical plan, Meadowridge doesn't present like a typical private school. There are regular interfaces between indoors and out, including doorways from each of the Elementary classrooms onto shared instructional spaces (some with roofs, and others, such as the outdoor play areas and teaching gardens, without). Even then, this isn't an environment that denies the presence of weather. A bit of rain or snow isn't enough to prevent kids from getting outside, and they don't shirk from it. The approach is 'this is our weather; it's part of our world.' And, you never know, it might be interesting (and if it isn't, the faculty has a knack for making it so).

Details like that are telling, and indeed there are many of them. There's a collegial feel across the grades and roles, and an intentional flattening of the social and administrative hierarchies. The school encourages staff and faculty to make good and regular use of the Fitness Centre, for example, even during the instructional day. A phys-ed class could go in and find a teacher mid-workout, on the elliptical or doing weights. "I think it is really good for kids to see that it's not just a room for PHE 9," says Scott Spurgeon, director of athletics. "That in real life, once you're done school, people still want to get in there."

Across the disciplines, the leadership of the school consistently takes a long view, intending to educate children for life, not just post-secondary programs. "Many schools see themselves as transactional," says headmaster Hugh Burke. "They promise 'If you send your child here, they'll go to a university.' But all of our kids go to a university, or a national theatre school, or an art program—they all go on to significant post-secondary programs." Beyond that, Burke adds, "we want our children to live well. We have them work with others so that they can learn to be social beings and get along with others in a complex world."



Burke's leadership is as consistent as it comes, having served as headmaster since 2001. It's hard to imagine anyone more qualified. He's taught drama, English, social studies, literature, math, philosophy, and theory of knowledge. He's taught from elementary to post-secondary to professional development. He's been a union rep, administrator, co-ordinator, consultant, writer, and CEO. He's been a member of the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University, and he was the first non-Jewish principal of the Vancouver Talmud Torah. He is a past president of the Independent Schools Association of British Columbia (ISABC) and a past member of the Board of the Federation of Independent School Association (FISA). He brings that wealth of experience to the school with seemingly unwavering enthusiasm. He is clearly revered and is a constant presence throughout the school, and he's not at all inclined to limit his activity to the admin suite. During an all-staff meeting, he sat to the side of the stage—something that felt more comforting than onerous, particularly given the size of his personality. Whenever he's in a room, you know he's there, which gives strength to his leadership. You also sense that he is

aware of his own fallibility and that he understands everything should come as the product of a conversation, not via executive fiat. In conversation, he will occasionally lapse into silence—not because he's forgotten that you're there, but rather that he wants to think things through before committing to a response. It can be a bit unnerving at first, though you get used to it and even appreciate it. It's important, after all, and that's his approach: whether you're talking about your child, or education more generally, it's right that all decisions be given an appropriate level of thought.

Burke exemplifies the kind of leadership that the school hopes to instill in the students. It's "leading from the sideline," says Scott Banack, past principal of the Middle School and recently appointed as deputy head of school, "rather than being the boisterous, follow-me type of leader." Initiatives are developed as a team, and good ideas are shared, rather than originating from the top down.



Keep Reading

at [Bit.ly/MDR-OurKidsReview](https://bit.ly/MDR-OurKidsReview), or email communications@meadowridge.bc.ca for your own copy.



filled the minds of students who participated in our recent outdoor adventures. One of the risks of planning outdoor pursuits is the uncertainty of weather, and – outside of a washed-out road cancelling a Grade 8 snowshoe experience – both students and teachers have demonstrated remarkable resilience through some adverse and challenging winter conditions. The Outdoor, Experiential, Ecological, Education (OE3) Program intentionally designs outdoor experiences to facilitate a growth of resilience in students; to interact physically with the natural world, develop new perspectives through unfamiliar settings and to connect with individuals by asking for, and providing, help.

Allan and McKenna refer to resilience as, “a person’s capacity to change or modify behaviour in direct response to environmental hazards, so they thrive”(135). Fostering resilience within Meadowridge students is at the backbone of the OE3 Program and it is discovered and developed primarily through outdoor pursuits. This winter, students from Grades 4 to 8 were provided the opportunity to Nordic ski or snowshoe while experiencing the extreme beauty of the North Shore mountains and the fierceness of mountain weather in the winter. Our students were risk-takers by embarking on these activities, as the winter outdoor pursuits were a brand-new experience for the majority of them. The stressors of preparing for an unfamiliar outdoor pursuit, anticipating unpredictable mountain weather and engaging physically and socially with peers and the natural world all combined to construct experiences full of immediate and long-term learning and meaning.

Grade 4 students excitedly embarked upon a snowshoe experience at

Allan, J. F., & McKenna, J. (2019). Outdoor Adventure Builds Resilient Learners for Higher Education: A Quantitative Analysis of the Active Components of Positive Change. *Sports*, 122-138.

Resilience (and Rain)

BY MR. JAMES WILLMS,
OUTDOOR, EXPERIENTIAL, ECOLOGICAL EDUCATION (OE3) COORDINATOR

Rain seemed to be the common thread woven through many of the outdoor pursuits that have taken place so far this year. The rain should have come as no surprise, considering that we are situated in the Pacific Northwest; however, the anticipation and hope of paddling up the Indian Arm with warm, late summer breezes on the face or gentle snowflakes, flittering down from the wintry sky while snowshoeing through the forests of Mt. Seymour, have romantically

>> **Outdoor pursuits** - student surveys

First Time Experience

88% of Grade 5 Students experienced Nordic skiing for the first time!

>> **86%** for Grade 4 (snowshoeing)
>> **87%** for Grade 7 (Nordic skiing)

Enjoyment of Activity

7/10 of Grade 5 and Grade 7 Students enjoyed Nordic skiing!



the end of January and were well prepared. Mount Seymour offers a terrific snowshoe trail network that is well marked, diverse in ability levels and patrolled by their expert staff. Students participated in an orientation session prior to leaving, preparing them to dress effectively for the activity and weather, discuss approaches to dealing with injuries, and prepare for the possibility of being separated from the group. Students were greeted by Mount Seymour with torrents of rain – a less than ideal snowshoeing setting. For a full two hours, students, teachers, and guides, endured heavy rain while learning about mountain safety, constructing emergency shelters and playing tag games to keep warm. When asked to reflect about the snowshoe experience, Amelia S. (Grade 4) reflects; “My challenge was how it was freezing cold. It was also hard because my snowshoe was always falling off. I overcame the challenges by keeping a positive growth mindset.”

This day of snowshoeing was certainly one of the most inclement days that I have experienced, and it was encouraging to hear how so many of the students faced the challenge head on, adapting to the extreme wet as best as they could and by supporting each other to keep on going.

>> **Outdoor pursuits - student reflections**

“I first had trouble not falling over, because I haven’t Nordic skied before, and I haven’t downhill skied in a year. I overcame the challenge by trying and I eventually got it.”

Charming C. (Grade 7)

“I was bad at going uphill and was not used to having my heel loose. I overcame this by using my poles for help.”

Liam B. (Grade 7)

Students in Grades 5 and 7 had the opportunity to try out Nordic skiing at Cypress Mountain and the experience provided great enjoyment. For the majority of students, Nordic skiing was a new experience, which levelled the challenge and greatly reduced the stress of needing to perform well. The majority of students experienced many challenges while Nordic skiing; however, they were well supported with trained instructors and supportive peers and demonstrated perseverance and determination to succeed. Unfamiliar environments and uncommon activities afford students the opportunity to think critically about problem-solving, and build resilience by positively meeting challenges.

Meadowridge School boasts a 100% post-secondary acceptance rate and strives to prepare students for the adjustments and stressors that come to many first-year university students. A recent study of first year, post-secondary students who participated in a one-week outdoor pursuit, prior to commencing their first year at university, demonstrated an 8.35% increase in resiliency than students that did not participate in an outdoor pursuit. “Resilience represents positive adaptive behaviours necessary for healthy adjustment during periods of transition, making it a powerful framework for deploying strategies designed to improve student retention and achievement [in post-secondary studies.]” The scope and sequence of outdoor pursuits, through the OE3 Program, contribute to the present and future success of Meadowridge students, setting them up to engage in the uncertainty of the world and strive toward, “...living well, with others and for others, in a just community.”

Outdoor Pursuits Across the Continuum:

Here’s just a few of the adventures students get up to

Fall Pursuits

- >> Junior Kindergarten North Forest Exploration
- >> Grade 6 Two-Night Camping Trip at Camp Potlatch
- >> Grade 12 Four-Night Retreat at Golden Ears Provincial Park

SKILLS LEARNED:

Small watercraft skills (kayak, canoe, SUP), introduction to shelter building

Winter Pursuits

- >> Grade 3 Overnight Camping Trip at Timberline Ranch
- >> Grade 7 Nordic Skiing at Cypress Mountain
- >> Grade 8 Bushcraft Skills Workshop in the North Forest
- >> Grade 11 Duke of Edinburgh Gold Skills & Practice Day at Alouette Lake

SKILLS LEARNED:

Water navigation (level 2), Small canoe paddle strokes and technique, small canoe open-water rescue

SKILLS LEARNED:

Shelter building (level 1), fire building (level 1), water filtration and foraging

Spring Pursuits

- >> Grade 2 Ropes Course at WildPlay
- >> Grade 5 Hike at Buntzen Lake
- >> Grade 8 Watercraft Experience at Whonnock Lake

SKILLS LEARNED:

Water navigation (level 1), Big canoe open-water rescue, Big canoe paddle certificate (level 1) - Paddle Canada

How Outdoor Pursuits encourage further adventures:

DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S ADVENTUROUS JOURNEYS

Completing the Gold Adventurous Journey happens during two trips – one practice, one qualifying – and after lots of training. Meadowridge has long since supported students to complete the Gold Adventurous Journey (formerly the Gold Project) with a variety of service and language experiences but established an official program in 2018. Our school now hosts a series of experiences, including a skills day, so students can meet the criteria of the Gold Adventurous Journey. Students can opt to take part in these school-hosted trips or pursue an adventure on their own.

Meadowridge prepares students to meet the demands of the Gold Adventurous Journey through a variety of experiences. In addition to outdoor pursuits, Classrooms Without Walls (CWOW), and Week Without Walls (WWOW), both lend to students' development and preparedness for not only the Duke of Edinburgh Award, but for life. Built into the curriculum, every student takes part and benefits from these trips and treks. Through experiences like paddling on Alouette Lake (Grade 9 WWOW), climbing up Grouse Mountain (Grade 9 and 10 CWOW), and campcraft sessions at the school (CWOW), students learn new skills and coping mechanisms which help build their resilience and adaptability in the rapidly changing environment in which we live.

Gold Adventurous Journeys at Meadowridge THROUGH THE YEARS

2020 LOCAL EXPERIENCE: LOCAL LAKES EXPERIENCE 9 Participants

- >> **Skills Day at Alouette Lake (1 Day)**
Students practiced tandem canoe safety in a technical session on Alouette Lake.
- >> **Practice Journey at Pitt Lake (2 Days, 1 Night)**
Students will tandem canoe to explore the hidden beaches and gems of the lake, while coping with changing on-water condition.
- >> **Qualifying Journey at Stave Lake (4 Days, 3 Nights)**
Students will tandem canoe while exploring many secluded beaches and campsites along the shores of the lake.

2019

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE: COSTA RICA 10 Participants

- >> **Practice Journey at Arenal Volcano and National Park (2 Days, 1 Night)**
Students hiked through the base of the volcano and explored the hot springs whilst acclimatising themselves to the Costa Rican climate.
- >> **Adventurous Journey at Zona Santos Trail (4 Days, 3 Nights)**
Students hiked for 12 hours each day in a jungle setting.

LOCAL EXPERIENCE 17 Participants

- >> **Skills Day at Cliff Falls Hike (1 Day)**
Students completed a day hike.
- >> **Practice Journey at Golden Ears Park (2 Night, 1 Day)**
Students hiked to Alder Flats to set up their tents and continued to the second lookout, summiting Golden Ears. On the second day, students explored the old growth section at the top of East Canyon Trail.
- >> **Qualifying Journey on the Hudson Bay Cultural Trail (4 Days, 3 Nights)**
Students hiked the Hudson Bay Cultural Trail in Hope, BC. During this hike, students experienced mountainous terrain and camped in winter conditions.

2018

LOCAL EXPERIENCE 9 Participants

- >> **Skills Day at Golden Ears Park (1 Day)**
Students completed a 10-kilometre hike with a stripped-down pack.
- >> **Practice Journey at Golden Ears Park (2 Days, 1 Night)**
Students hiked the Menzies Trail, camped at Golden Ears Campground, and completed the Loop Trail at Gold Creek.
- >> **Qualifying Journey on Vancouver Island (5 Days, 4 Nights)**
Students hiked the Juan de Fuca Trail.

A young woman with long dark hair and glasses is focused on writing in a notebook. She is wearing a dark sweater. In the background, another student is visible, also working. The scene is set at a desk with a laptop and various school supplies. The entire image has a blue tint.

A Definitive Moment

DP Students' Perspectives
On Climate Change

Walk in to Mr. Lockhart's DP Geography class and you won't see his students studying maps or hear them rattling off the names of national capitals, not that those are unimportant to the course, but they hardly scratch the subject's surface. Not unlike our learners, this subject is much more dynamic in nature. Focused on the interactions between individuals, societies and physical processes in both space and time, students are asked to identify trends and patterns in these interactions and investigate the way in which people adapt and respond to change. From shifting weather patterns that threaten food production to rising sea levels that increase the risk of catastrophic flooding, the latest DP Geography unit saw 31 Grade 11 students tackle what has been described as the defining issue of our time: climate change.

"The debate is over about whether or not climate change is real; it is already having a significant impact on ecosystems, economies and communities. It is now time to act to solve the problem."

DAVID SUZUKI

To that end, after studying the Paris Agreement, a new debate began in Mr. Lockhart's class. Searching for solutions, students were asked to discuss the different perspectives, who has the power and how to possibly resolve climate related issues shaped by both the human and physical processes at play. After familiarizing themselves with these disputes, students then looked at the topic on an individual level, drawing on their own personal interests and experiences to hone in on a specific challenge caused by climate change.

Tasked to evaluate the socio-economic and environmental impacts of climate change in their region of choice, the Grade 11s set out on a mission to cover the planet. Ranging from flooding in Vietnam's Mekong River Delta, to coastal erosion along the shores of Jamaica, to the all too familiar Californian wildfires, each case delved deep into the problems, processes and consequences of climate change in a geographical context. In conclusion, students had to identify where the power lied and what possibilities existed to mitigate, avoid or even reverse the impact of climate change in that region. Much more than just the monetary or social costs were accounted for when addressing the issues, since the moral and ethical implications allow for a far greater depth of student inquiry.

One example spoke to Mr. Lockhart expressly, since this particular student drew on her experience from a school trip taken to Barkerville in Grade 10. En route to their destination by bus, students were intrigued by the discolouration of the hillside, specifically the pinetrees. "Why aren't they green?" Mr. Lockhart probed in response, not knowing at the time that one attentive student would take that question to heart, and answer it.

By focusing on a problem that has hit close to home, Maisie L. learned that the Mountain Pine Beetle had destroyed over half of the province's mature pine trees in her lifetime and nearly 5 million hectares since that inspirational bus ride one year earlier. More importantly, by unearthing the root causes and connections to climate change, she also learned about the strategies and emerging technologies being used to mitigate environmental devastation and repair the socio-economic side effects.

Take a look at what we're doing right on campus to help curb climate change.



SUSTAINABILITY IN ACTION

REDUCING USED MATERIALS

Exterior bins will be placed in four locations and display messaging to promote appropriate sorting of all organic recycling and landfill items consumed by our community.

REUSING STORM WATER

We are investing in a storm water management system to capture rainwater run off which will in turn be used for irrigation around campus. This will help keep the campus green while conserving fresh water resources.

RECYCLING TEXTILES

A clothing donation bin for unwanted or outgrown branded Meadowridge uniform items will be located on campus. In coordination with another non-profit organization, these garments will be given to children in developing countries, keeping them out of the landfill and helping those in need.





Harkness:

Learning Through Dialogue

The one doing the talking
is the one doing the learning

BY DR. MARTIN REININK, MYP AND DP TEACHER

I am a student of English. I have always been a student of English. One thing that I hated—hated—about being an English student, no matter whether it was at the elementary, secondary, or university level, was reading a novel or a play or a poem and being so excited about it that I was practically vibrating in anticipation of talking with other people about it. But then, when I got to class, the teacher would stand at the front and say “this is what this text is all about.”

Hammer hits anvil.

It completely smothered the energy that I felt about my interpretation. I know others in my classes had the same sense of being deflated. The critical thinking that we had engaged in to achieve our interpretations turned instead to an act of absorption and acceptance. And so, many possibilities became one orthodoxy.

I am happy to say that that does not happen in any English class at Meadowridge.



Instead, always looking for successful pedagogical models to incorporate in its learning culture, Meadowridge School has recently introduced Harkness methodology in some of its high school classes. The introduction of this pedagogy, made possible by a generous commitment through the annual fund, represents a fundamental shift in the process of student exploration and learning. A Harkness classroom is strikingly different than a traditional one. Instead of sitting at individual desks, students sit around one large oval table; instead of standing in front of the class, the teacher sits with the students at the table; and instead of being recipients of learning, students generate meaning through discussion.

Traditionally, the teacher stands in front of the room and acts as the source of information. In “Socratic”

lessons, the teacher asks the students a series of questions and evaluates each response until an acceptable concept has been determined by the teacher. In other teaching strategies, in class discussions the teacher typically comments after every student contribution to highlight the positive and profitable aspect of the response and pare away erroneous or unbeneficial material. In all of these models, the teacher is responsible for the delivery of information and the student is responsible for absorbing it.

In Harkness methodology, the heavy lifting of learning is shifted

from the teacher to the student.

The teacher, instead of playing the role of the expert, is responsible for carefully preparing texts for discussion and then creating an environment in which the students work out the answers together. In Harkness English classes, students prepare for their textual discussion prior to class, and then come to class with their questions, observations, and interpretations. They then begin a discussion, adding to, linking to, and challenging ideas.

The teacher acts as a collaborator. They are there in case the discussion goes off the rails, but in practice the

They “own” their own learning. They think critically and they collaborate and they succeed in creating an evidence-based reading of the text.



students themselves correct, redirect, and focus the class. What results is a rich interpretation of the text, but perhaps more importantly, it results in student awareness of their ability to create such an interpretation themselves. They “own” their own learning. They think critically and they collaborate and they succeed in creating an evidence-based reading of the text. If necessary, the teacher supplements that reading, but often that is not necessary. It might be a different reading than the teacher’s, but if it is based on the evidence of the text, it is a valid reading.

This can be remarkably humbling for a teacher. I remember a Harkness experience in which I had given the students a text to prepare, and I had one key point in my pocket that was going to completely and radically alter their interpretations. It was a

complicated thought, and quite a sophisticated thought.

I never got to share the idea.

Through their discussion, the students got it by themselves.

Ego-buster though that was for me, it was a moment of celebration. The students were able to work out a nuanced aspect of the text through collaboration and discussion.

And that’s the point. With critical thinking, heightened social skills, ownership and stimulated curiosity, the students work out the issue together.

And they get it right.

Supported by the
Annual Fund

The Harkness Table

in Dr. Reinink’s class is just one of the many enhancements made possible by generous donations to the Meadowridge Annual Fund. Thank you to our parents, staff, faculty and alumni who have enabled enhancements across the Continuum (just like this one!)

- » Commercial radios for outdoor education
- » Trash pickers for the north forest service club
- » Classroom upgrades in the PYP, including furniture and sound proofing
- » Wireless listening stations for DP exams
- » Physics equipment for DP-level experiments and laboratory work
- » Basketball shooting machine to support student development and training

The Annual Fund supports experiential education, improves inquiry-based learning, and enriches the learning environment for every child at our school.

meadowridge.bc.ca/support



Classroom Round-Up

"By the end of the inquiry, children see how their family stories can be unpacked within a deeper understanding. They speak of the unique and special pieces of their families and learn that we as people have a lot more in common than we may have first thought," our teachers conclude.

Grade 2 Writer Workshop

During the 'How We Express Ourselves' unit of inquiry, students explore how authors communicate emotions and ideas. Throughout the six-week-long unit, students study authors, work with authors, and – after a unique workshop – become authors themselves. The unit begins with a look into illustrations. Students observe a variety of illustrations and examine them for clues: what can they infer from the colours? the body language? the facial expressions? Though unwritten, these clues say a lot! Students' inquiry then goes from the unwritten – illustrations – to the written: words. Reading short stories and poems, students look at words and phrases and unpack them for meaning. After seeing many pictures, reading many books, and learning lots of new words and phrases, students put their learning to practice. In a workshop led by children's author and illustrator Lee Edward Fodi, students

Kindergarten Exploring Family Traditions

Learning about the differences and similarities that they share, or don't share, with their peers, the 'Who We Are' Unit of Inquiry encourages students to celebrate and explore all types of families. At the start of this special unit, students write about their families (what do I know?) and, after lots of learning, answer the question again (what did I learn?). The unit is planned so that this learning happens naturally and over time. Beginning with conversations and stories about things like familial beliefs, traditions and structures, the unit evolves over time to include more complex, self-motivated inquiry. These ideas are explored "all the time," our Kindergarten teachers explain, "through music or play or reading or drama or action..." Drawing

family portraits, for example, has students notice familial differences and similarities for themselves, things like pets, grandparents, siblings and dual households. The portraits – like all activities throughout the unit – bring students' learning to life.

The unit continues with an inquiry into traditions. Moving from the 'form' of their family ("I have a sister, a mom, a dad..."), students look instead to what makes their families special or unique. Their traditions. Students conduct interviews to learn about the traditions their families celebrate. Then, they return to class to present their findings. Each student has a chance to share a tradition and how it makes them feel. These presentations, like the portraits, help students explore and celebrate the unique parts of every family, but in a new way.



plan, draw and write their own short stories.

In this lively, hands-on workshop, students learn to create story maps, visual guides which help them plan the structure of their stories. To begin, students draw a character, a setting, and a conclusion on a page. Then, they draw the path – the plot – that will connect the separate drawings together. How will their character, in that setting, reach the conclusion? Students are eager to fill in the blanks. Once completed, the maps provide students with the archetype for written stories.

Taking inspiration from Mr. Fodi, students learn to create bold beginnings, mighty middles, and exciting endings in their story writing. By breaking down the story writing process and participating in the writing workshop, students are empowered to become more confident and creative storytellers. Students learn how they too – with words, illustrations, and stories – can express themselves.

Grade 6 Pound Fitness

As a Physical Health Education Teacher, Ms. Sarice Kent-Grebski knows the single, scariest word for most teenagers: *dance*. Dance teaches movement, rhythm, collaboration and balance – it's an important part of students' physical education! – but Ms. Kent-Grebski gets it. It can be awkward. That's why during students' movement composition unit they learn other ways to move, ways different than dance. Tasked with choreographing their own routines, groups learn and can include "any type of movement" in their final assessment. Students explore many styles of dancing – like traditional, or cultural, or hip hop – as well as other fitness-based movements. In a brand-new workout, they even explore a combination of the two.

Pound Fitness is a "high-energy workout" combining creativity, rhythm and strength. Ms. Kent-Grebski found this new workout at a conference over the summer and, after just one session, was sure her students would

love it. "It was fun," she remembers, "it was high-energy and a great workout." She knew Pound Fitness would be the perfect complement to students' movement composition learning. She researched, planned, and found a local instructor. Then, she launched it in class. Students were a bit nervous at first, but once they got into it, got moving and got involved, that nervousness faded away.

For Ms. Kent-Grebski, that's exactly the point; she hopes to offer her students as many positive experiences as possible. By exploring movement in lots of ways, every student can find something they like and their comfort, interest, and excitement about physical recreation grows. By learning lots of ways to move, students' final assessment also becomes more unique to them. A collaborative piece, assessments can include any style of movement or dance – it's up to them to decide! "Students love to create things from scratch," Ms. Kent-Grebski nods. Students learn to collaborate and incorporate everyone's strengths. "When students don't have to follow instruction," she concludes, "they make decisions and explore... and that's when learning happens."

THERE'S MORE>>

Grade 7 Elder Stories

Everyone enjoys a good story. Telling a good story? That's different. Telling a good story can be difficult, especially when that story is in a new language. It takes not just knowing the words (vocabulary), but also how to use them (grammar) and when (syntax). To tell stories, you need to know the language – and, to know the language, you need to tell stories. In essence, that's what the 'Gens Que Je Connais' unit of inquiry is all about: during the three-month-long unit, students learn the words and the ways to talk about the people they know. They learn to tell stories... in French!

For students in Ms. Kerry Stanley's Grade 7 classes, becoming better storytellers begins with a "frontloading" of French words and phrases. Since the unit is all about people, there's a unique focus on physical and personality traits, as well as nationalities, occupations and other characteristics. The unit then evolves to include contextuality and even creativity. As students expand their vocabularies, they discover new and different ways to express themselves. By knowing more words, and knowing how and when to use them, students become better speakers, readers and writers. They become better storytellers.

This year, the 'Gens Que Je Connais' unit wrapped up with a new and unique project, something that would not only promote students' language learning, but also their indigenous ways of knowing, too. Wanting her classes to "experience and connect" with the community practices, relationships and rituals of indigenous peoples, Ms. Stanley had her classes interview and share the story of an elder in their lives.

The project was actually inspired by Ms. Stanley's own studies – she is currently earning a bilingual graduate diploma – and by a book, *Ma Kokum a Téléphoné Aujourd'hui*. Telling the tale of a little girl and her grandmother, the illustrated story shares the important role elders have in maintaining traditions and cultures in indigenous communities. After reading the book during one of her graduate classes, Ms. Stanley realized that she could easily incorporate the book and its teaching into her own classes back at Meadowridge.

And she knew that 'Les Gens Que Je Connais', a unit all about people, would be the perfect way to do it.

"I want to bring as much authenticity as possible to my students' learning," Ms. Stanley explains of the approach. Storytelling teaches students the words and how to use them correctly and in context. And, by having students tell stories about the elders in their own lives, that learning would be made more meaningful and real.

Ms. Stanley brought *Ma Kokum a Téléphoné Aujourd'hui* to school for a read aloud in the library. Together, she and her students discussed the book, its teachings, and shared their own interpretations. Then, Ms. Stanley introduced the connection with her students, explaining that they too would be learning from an elder in their own lives. Hearing that they would be interviewing and writing about their own families and friends, students were eager to get going.

Over the winter break, they reached out to elders from all around the world. With people from different origins, countries, and cultures, Ms. Stanley knew her students would hear and have to interpret many new words and phrases, and that they would have to take the initiative to learn these new words and phrases all on their own. This was on purpose. This, she explains, is a "big part" of language learning. "It gives students pride when they take ownership and learn something I didn't teach them!" Ms. Stanley shares.

The day of the presentations, that pride was clear.

Students were not only putting all their language learning together, but also showed a genuine joy and appreciation for the time spent with their grandparents, families and friends. "Although learning, practicing, and demonstrating their French oral ability is what I was assessing," Ms. Stanley concludes, "I was really happy that the biggest takeaway was what they actually learned from their elder. One student told me that his grandmother is 101 years old – how amazing that he could sit down and talk with her about her childhood!"

Grade 7 Elder Stories

Student



ANNABELLA W.

On what she discovered I found out my grandfather still remembers the first time he watched television when he immigrated to Canada. I asked him some of my own questions and found out that he loves to work, that he's always liked to make money, and that his first job was as an accountant. I found out his favourite subject was math – I hate math – but that we like the same foods: Chinese! Noodles, rice... the basics. **On what surprised her** I didn't think he'd remember all these little details. I didn't think I'd be so interested in his past story, but I found out all these little facts, ones I never imagined, and I didn't think he'd be like that. I think he really enjoyed the interview. **On her learning** I know my grandpa's story – and, I can tell it in French!

nt Interviews



ANEET D.

On what she discovered I never knew my grandmother wanted to be a teacher when she was young. That's exactly what she became, and I thought that was really inspiring. You talk to people who say *I wanted to do this, but then I did this...* but my grandma became exactly what she wanted. We have a lot of similarities. We both like to bake – I always bake when I'm bored – and we are both creative. My grandma knits – stereotypical grandma – and I like to draw and paint. But we also have our differences. I'm much more hyperactive. I like sports, music, and being online. My grandma is a much more down-to-earth, studious person.

On what surprised her When she was young, she used to go out in the evening after all her homework was done and would fly her kite. She used to fly her kite to get rid of all her worries. I found that really sweet.

On her learning I expanded my vocabulary a lot. My grandma said some things that I've never thought about, especially because of her past, and it helped me learn more about my family members, too. I also learned a bit about how our generations are so different. When my grandma was growing up, people biked and were a lot more social. My generation is always on our screens, and I realized we'd be so much closer if we weren't.

THERE'S MORE>>



ELIZA S.

On what she discovered My grandmother was a lot like me when she was young. She loved reading, and I love reading. Growing up, she played a lot of sports – which was something I didn't know – and she was a lot taller than me at my age. She liked high jump and played volleyball. We also love the same food; it's Chinese bread, kind of like a dumpling. **On what surprised her** She was taller than me at my age! For some reason, that really surprised me. I think it's because she's shorter than me now. Also, my grandmother has five brothers. She was the youngest of all five. **On her learning** I learned a lot of new words. I actually interviewed my grandmother in Chinese, so I had to go from Chinese, to English, to French. [Telling her story] I learned new words I would normally not use, like characteristics, names of dishes, and the word for high jump... now, that's one I know!



AMY X.

On what she discovered I interviewed a woman who I volunteer with at a senior activity centre. She was born in Burnaby, and she has 53 cousins! She doesn't even know them all. I guess that's because her mom had a lot of siblings. But we're a lot alike – our personalities – and we like the same things. She liked to high jump and run, two things I love, and she likes to spend time with her grandchildren.

On what surprised her I think the fact that she has 53 cousins. I was surprised by how much I enjoyed talking to someone new. I'm glad I talked to someone I didn't know, instead of my grandmas. **On her learning** Since we're doing a personality unit, we learned some new words. To describe her and her interests, I learned words that I would normally not use: shy – timide – and sports terms, for example.

more Student Interviews



SIMON G.

On what he discovered Things were so much different when my grandfather was growing up. In the town where he grew up, 75% of the people worked in a textile factory. His dream job was to design textiles, and that's what he ended up doing. I learned that he also played a lot of rugby, and that he ate ducks and rabbits that he would shoot! The two of us both like working on projects and having something to do. Right now, he's actually redoing his bathroom by himself, and he just redid his kitchen, plus he gardens and has a greenhouse. I like to have projects I'm working on, too; I like having schoolwork.

On what surprised him I always thought his life would be similar to our time, but I realized in talking to him that things were totally different. He grew up in a small town, and they had no fast food. They made their own food every day. **On his learning** This was an easy way to learn French, instead of just taking a test or memorizing stuff. It made it a fun way to learn; it was something to do and something to learn.



CARMEN N.

On what she discovered Growing up, my grandmother lived on a farm and her days would be full of chores and adventures. The river was where she got water and cleaned her clothes. When she was younger, she liked to dance, sing, and have fun... that's what I like to do too. She's also never had a job in her life, which made me realize how lucky I am to have my education.

On what surprised her Probably that she's never had a job in her life. She also hates when people are rude to her – she's such a nice, amazing person.

On her learning My grandmother speaks Romanian, so I had to translate from Romanian, to English, to French. This helped my learning, especially when I created my poster for my presentation.



ERICA C.

On what she discovered My grandmother was the poorest of poor. Her story, really, is about 60 years in China. She lived through two revolutions and a famine. She was an orphan, and was the eldest in the family she was adopted into. My grandmother worked, and was sent to create an artificial lake – she was the only woman hired to do it – and she had to work harder than anyone else.

On what surprised her She had four jobs her entire life: she was a farmer, a seamstress, ran her own breakfast food cart and later worked as a janitor for a school. **On her learning** Well, a lot of these topics weren't ones we learned in French. It gave me a chance to go and research beyond the level we are at. I remember stuttering over the word 'revolution' in French – how do you say it again?!



ANIKA C.

On what she discovered My grandmother has three siblings. She and I both like Japanese and Filipino foods. I also learned that she was the manager in the Coca Cola plant. She was in charge of making the bottle caps and putting them on. That's how she met my grandfather.

On what surprised her Probably that she liked playing badminton. She still does, but I never knew that. It shocked me that she still plays sports – I don't think of her as a sports person. I like badminton, but it's not my main sport. I like volleyball and swimming. Also, she likes makeup and beauty products, but when she was a little girl, she was much simpler. **On her learning** I bonded with my grandmother, and it helped me learn French.

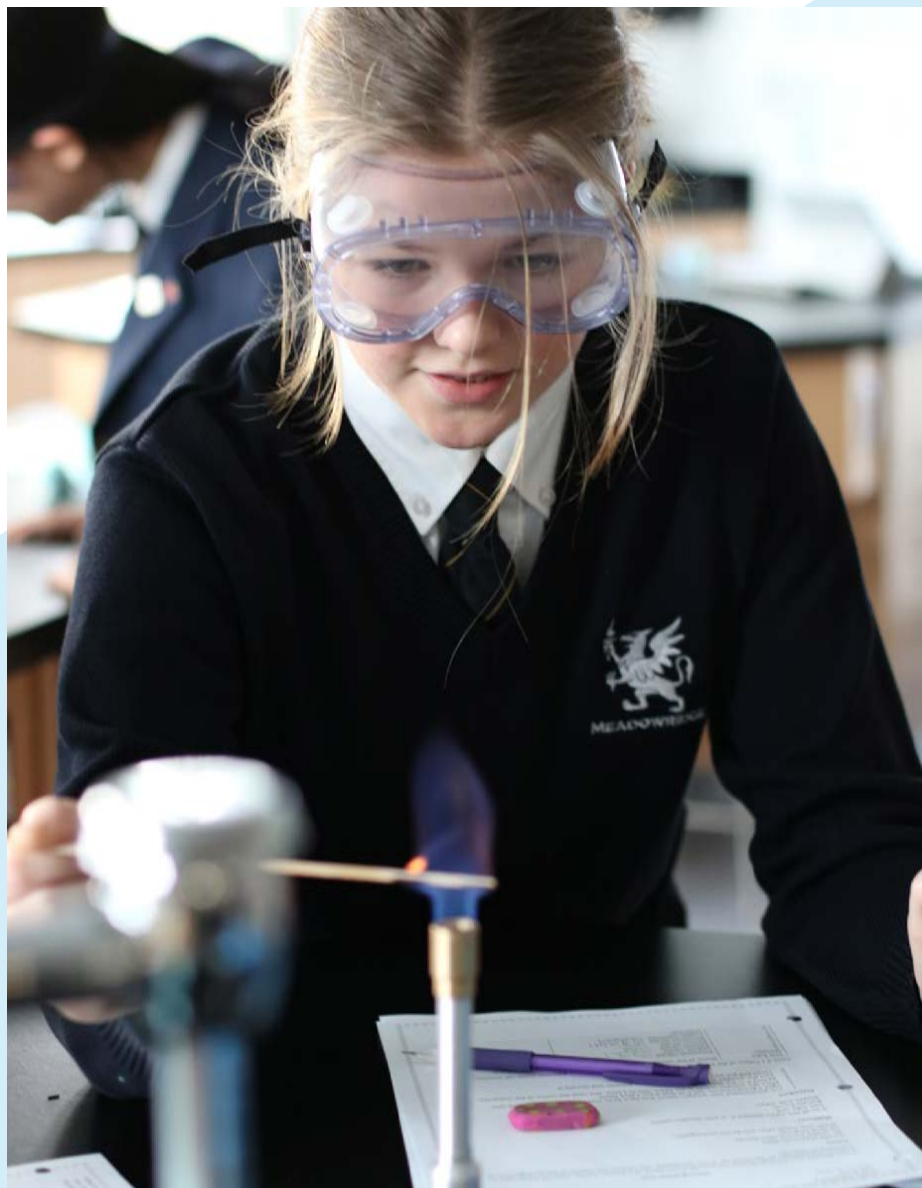
Grade 9 Design Survivor

With House Points (and bragging rights) up for grabs, Spirit Days are two of the most lively, energetic days on campus. Hoping to add to the excitement, Mr. Lester wanted to introduce a new Spirit Day activity, something that would challenge and delight students for years to come, and he wanted his students to be the ones to do it. Mr. Lester introduced this idea – an idea he named the Survivor House Challenge – with his Grade 9 Design classes early in the fall. Students listened intently, curious about the new and unusual challenge. Tasked with designing (and, in the case of the winners, even building) a new Spirit Day challenge, the classes were eager to get going. Put into groups, students brainstormed ideas, created plans, sourced materials, and built mock-ups.

Then came the fun part: testing their designs.

Students played with and analyzed the different challenges created by their peers before voting for their favourite. Each challenge consisted of three or four small challenges (or, parts) which made up the whole challenge. The chosen parts were combined to make up to three different challenges. After testing, students chose the tactful tilt table, adjustable combination lock, snake-ball, puzzle wall, amazing maze, spider wall, wheel maze, ball randomizer, ring toss, four-corner maze, pulley maze and tilt-a-maze.

A new project for students, this was also a new venture for Mr. Lester, who decided to let students take the lead. While students brainstormed, designed, built and tested their creations, Mr. Lester wasn't up at the front of the class – he was, instead, floating through, offering advice when needed and troubleshooting with groups, not for them. The project, and this tactic, has proved successful: "The Design Lab is so full of energy," Mr. Lester concludes.



Grade 9 Chemical Elements

During the twelve-week-long Chemistry Unit, Grade 9 students explore chemical elements, their properties and the compounds they can create. Of the unit's many labs, one in particular has captured their attention: the Flame Colour Lab. Creating flames from salt soaked wooden splints, the lab is a fascinating look at metal ions and their properties. Using Bunsen burners, students light each of the wooden splints before them and watch in awe as they create bright, colourful flames. Different metal ions produce different coloured flames, so each colourful flame tells our team of scientists a lot. To prepare

students for this inquiry, Mrs. Deepti Rajeev teaches her classes about the Bohr model, electron configuration and excited and ground states of electrons. The Flame Colour Lab gives students a visual representation of the latter: students get a firsthand glimpse at what happens when an excited electron returns to the ground state. "This is one of their favourite activities," Mrs. Rajeev shares, students are "fascinated" as they make the connection between what they learned in class and what they see before them during the lab.

notes

new and noteworthy



A MEAL FOR MANY

As Virginia Woolf once wrote, “One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well.” During our full-school lunches, we dine well... with each other! Preparing a meal for every student and staff member takes a lot of fresh foods – including, Chef Kyle shares, 300 pounds of cooked macaroni!



CBC MUSIC CLASS CHALLENGE

With over 60,000 entries from schools across the country, securing a top-ten finish in the CBC Music Class Challenge was no small feat! Our Grade 5 students, led by Mrs. Barb Durno, earned this honour with an incredible performance of *Human*, a song celebrating the UNESCO Year of Indigenous Languages. Check out the performance at bit.ly/MDR-CBCEntry.



CHRISTMAS

Many traditions fill our days and our hearts in the lead-up to winter break. Though this year's north forest carols were forced indoors due to some heavy wind and rain, spirits could not be dampened: the holiday assembly was filled with music and performances and a ton of Christmas cheer! (Did you know? We've been performing our special rendition of The Twelve Days of Christmas for 20 years.)

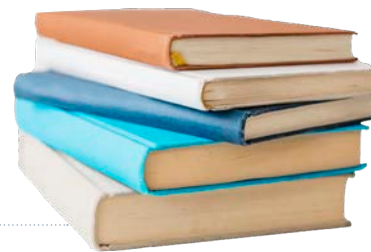


WINTER SEASON KICK-OFF

Student athletes packed away their cleats and headed into the winter sports season. Basketball and swimming season took off, while fencing continued into its second term. Involvement in athletics continues to grow, with 186 students participating on one of our 12 winter sport clubs and teams.

DP ANTICIPATORY EXAMS

To prepare students for the IB Diploma Programme (DP) final exams, Grade 12 students started the new year by writing the DP Anticipatory Exams. Mirroring everything from seating requirements to exam structure to even rules for refreshments, the exams provide students with essential experience, knowledge, and understanding for their finals in the spring.



TECHNOLOGY ENHANCEMENTS

Sixty iPads were brought in for our Junior Kindergarten to Grade 3 learners. Purchased from generous donations to the Annual Fund, students have used these new devices to create books and stories, access information, and share their learning on Seesaw.



STUDENT-INITIATED ACTION

An inquiry into rights and responsibilities inspired Grade 4 students to host the G6 Fair – the Grade 4 Fabulous, Fantastic, Fundraising, Fun Fair! The three classes organized booths, donated bazaar items, and baked sweet treats to raise funds for local and international charities. The event was a huge success, raising over \$2,700 for Child Haven International, Friends in Need Foodbank, and the Starfish Pack Program.



STUDENTS ON THE BEAMLINES

A group of high school students travelled to the University of Saskatchewan to participate in Students on the Beamlines. Accepting just ten groups each year, the unique program brings in students from across the country to conduct research using Canada's only synchrotron. Choosing to investigate the effects of commercial, glyphosate-based herbicide on snow peas, the group drove their own research, analyzed their results and presented their findings during a busy, three-day stretch.



CWOW ADVENTURES

From Nordic skiing up at Cypress to a French Voyageur experience here on campus, middle and high school students enjoyed all sorts of adventures during the last Classroom Without Walls.



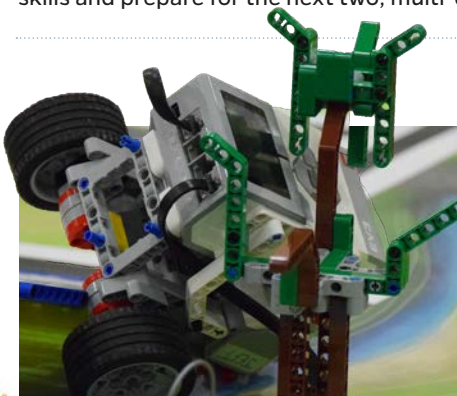
RASHOMON

A husband, his wife and a bandit each have a different version of what happened when they met. Who is to be believed? The cast and crew of this year's Senior Production brought this complex story to life during a four-day run of *Rashomon*.



EXPERIENCING THE LOCAL LAKES BY TANDEM CANOE

A lake trifecta! Nine students travelled to Alouette Lake for the first of three Gold Adventurous Journey experiences. Practicing propelling, maneuvering and navigation of a tandem canoe, this first session – a practice session – helped students build their skills and prepare for the next two, multi-day paddles at both Stave and Pitt Lake.



FIRST LEGO LEAGUE QUALIFIERS

Thirty-two teams – six from Meadowridge – plenty of spectators, and tons of robots took over the gymnasium for the FIRST Lego League Qualifying Tournament. This year's challenge, City Shapers, called for teams to research and present their own creative solutions to improve their communities.



LUNAR NEW YEAR

Guò nián hǎo! (过年好)! Students rang in the Year of the Rat during a colourful and lively assembly. The Lion Dance is a tradition we all know well, but this year we introduced a new dance to celebrate: The Dragon Dance! Both the Lion and Dragon performances are a form of traditional dance seen most often in festive celebrations.

掃街

Sweep the Streets

a conversation with
Charleen Lui '17



掃街

Halfway across the world, on her own for the first time, and about to enter her first year of university, Charleen's life was already full of change. These three things alone would suffice for some, but for Charleen it was just the beginning. She arrived in Hong Kong with resolve, wanting to immerse herself in the city's sights and tastes and sounds and smells. Upon her arrival, she learned a popular saying to this effect, *Sou Gai*, meaning to "sweep the streets—" to sample all the offerings from a street full of food vendors. Charleen took this advice literally, eating plenty of stinky tofu (her favourite), fish balls, siu-mai, and ice cream, but borrowed the saying for all other parts of her life, too. Wanting to know where her parents came from, Charleen was determined to do, eat, see, and experience all of Hong Kong.

Now, two years later, she returned back home to Maple Ridge for a visit and popped by where she always does, her second home-away-from-home: Meadowridge School. Charleen sat with us to share her story about "sweeping the streets" of Hong Kong.

What was that first year of university like?

The first year was hard. I was surprised, actually. Coming from the IB, you are prepared for university, but the way you learn in Hong Kong is so different. It's a whole new challenge altogether! Politics was not that hard, but law was very hard. The first law course we took was contract law and I think that was the first time in 15 years where I struggled a bit. The amount of reading we had to do was crazy! But that first year was also the most exciting.

How so?

Everything is new! I had a bunch of new friends and I was trying to experience everything in my new city. I went to a lot of karaoke – that's a local favourite. I did things [my friends] had been doing for years, but it was all new to me. We ate a lot of street food, literally walking around the city with no trouble at all. Street food in Hong Kong is really cheap, so we would sweep the streets and eat everything: stinky tofu, fish balls, siu-mai, ice cream... anything you want, they have. Hong Kong is also really small; you can basically walk from one end of the city to the other. It took me about a year to really get my bearings, but now I know the city so well.

What was the best thing you did in your first year?

There was no one specific thing, really. It's just the freedom of being able to go wherever you want, whenever you want, without needing a car. The transport system closes really late – at almost one in the morning – and the busses run 24-hours-a-day. You can go anywhere at any time. Actually, my favourite thing was karaoke at night. It runs from 11:00pm to 5:00am, so it's much cheaper at that time. You have so much fun, then you go for breakfast at 6:00am with all your friends.

What's your go-to karaoke song?

It's a Chinese song, by a singer called G.E.M.

Back to your studies, what did you learn about yourself that first year?

I'm keen on politics, but less-so on law. I think because, even if I like the things I learn in law, I don't want to be a solicitor or a barrister. After going



to internships, it's not something I'm interested in anymore. I did a pupillage and shadowed a barrister for a couple of weeks, and I found the lifestyle to be so boring: you sit alone all day and work on your cases – there's no interaction at all! I realized I like the history part of it. Ms. Higginson taught me that, actually. I like history, which is why I like politics.

For the first time ever, you're living alone: what's that like?

It was really fun at first, but then it became hard. You have so much freedom, but then comes the responsibility, all the stuff you rely on your parents to do. Things like getting groceries, getting the mail, cooking food... every single thing is up to you. So if your air conditioner starts leaking, or there's no food in the house, you have to take care of it. Living alone puts you through a mini adult simulation.

What have you learned living alone?

Living alone, you get to be yourself. People say that when nobody is looking, how you act is who you really are. That's really true. You're a different version of yourself. When you're home alone, you find out who you really are. I think [laughs] that I'm a lot lazier. I think I'm also more outgoing when I'm by myself. I talk to myself more. I might not share everything with my friends or family, but I share everything with myself.

I've also learned to cook. I like cooking a huge meal with a bunch of different

things... but all just for me! I also like cleaning. In Hong Kong, it's really humid and easy for bugs to reproduce. If a bug gets in your house, you'll see them reproduce very fast. Killing silverfish – that's hard!

What are some of the things you miss the most about Meadowridge?

Ah, it's just... it's just the best community. Everyone is so nice. Meadowridge spoiled me with nice people. I also miss the teachers, all the moments in class when teachers would ask us questions instead of telling us what to do or think. In English class, Ms. Bereza would show us a picture and we would discuss it, instead of her just telling us what we needed to know. Or in History, Ms. Higginson would always make us think about both sides of every issue. I think I took critical analysis for granted [while at Meadowridge]. Everything in university is more rigid; Meadowridge is more open-minded and flexible.

Have you found some Meadowridge-like comfort abroad?

I've made some great friends in Hong Kong. One of our favourite things – it sounds terrible! – is 24-hour assignments. It's basically an exam you take home for a full day. My friends and I stay overnight at a school learning library – we reserve a room – and we bring snacks and drinks and finish our assignment together. Then, we have McDonald's the next day at 6:00am. I'm blessed to have friends who like to do that. People in Hong Kong are a bit cold

at first, but they're really committed to their friends.

Any chances your friends will ever come visit you in Canada?

Actually, they're on exchange at UBC right now, so now I'm playing tour guide for them. We just went to Victoria for a few days – they love it! They keep saying they're going to come here to retire.

What's next, Charleen?

I'm not sure. I don't have a particular preference. Once I graduate, maybe get a job and earn my Masters part-time. I really want to start working as soon as possible.

Do you have any parting words of wisdom for our students?

Enjoy your high school life while it lasts! Because, honestly, adulthood is not fun. Enjoy not taking on responsibilities for now!

Charleen is currently enrolled in her third semester at the University of Hong Kong. In between school, studying, and sweeping the streets, she privately tutors students in English. Charleen visits home whenever possible, always making sure to pop by to visit her old teachers and friends.

FIRST PHOTO: Charleen poses in Tai Mei Tuk village, a "favourite for barbecuing and bicycling!" explains Charleen.

TOP LEFT: Charleen takes in the scenery during a hike of Mount Johnston (or Yuk Kwai Shan).

TOP RIGHT-DOWN: Exploring Lamma Island, a short ferry ride away from Hong Kong.

Charleen enjoys after-rehearsal ice creams with the HKU drama society.

Charleen volunteering during a Arts Society event on campus.

Charleen and two friends snag a selfie while taking a late-night subway ride.

RIGHT: Charleen captures a memory while visiting Instagram Pier, a cargo dock in Sai Wan, Hong Kong.



Exploration, Self-Expression and Learning

THEATRE AT MEADOWRIDGE SCHOOL



>> **On Stage:** A Student Perspective

Tracy Y. (Grade 11) shares her experience playing 'The Priest' in *Rashomon*

Standing in front of an audience and performing requires a lot of courage, something my peers and I learned first-hand during auditions for this year's senior play, *Rashomon*. During auditions, the production had yet to be decided. Since it could have been a musical or a play, auditions included not only reading lines, but singing as well. Among the songs performed, genres ranged from Broadway to hip-pop; Louis from grade twelve even auditioned with Beyoncé's iconic "Single Ladies"! I chose to sing "A Whole New World" inspired by the recent Disney movie *Aladdin*. The thought of singing in front of four teachers was highly nerve-wrecking, but as I performed, I realized that everyone there was supportive and that their purpose was not to criticize, but to recognize talent. After the audition, I felt very proud for doing something that challenged me, it was a very enjoyable experience at the end of the day. As soon as the cast of roles came through email, everyone was puzzled by the chosen play and its unfamiliar theme. Originally a Japanese movie made long ago, *Rashomon* has since become a Broadway show but most of the cast and crew were still not familiar with it.

Soon the rehearsals began. I received the character of the wife, who exhibits contradictory emotions in

different parts of the story and is often emotionally unstable. The first reading consisted of giggles, stumbles between the lines, and moments of pure confusion. As time passed on, characters slowly but surely took control over their lines. Great efforts were put in by the two stage managers - Shelby and Merdeka - as they probably made it to more rehearsals than all the actors. They organized the show, read for actors who could not make it to rehearsals, and fed lines so many times that they memorized the script as much as any performer. There were moments of distress and panic, but the stage managers always did their best to speak their minds and help the play. Besides these crucial individuals, play members also received sarcastic but beneficial input from Mr. Clark, inspiring acting demonstrations from Mrs. Flintermann, and detailed tips from Mr. Noble. Not to mention Ms. Sun who spent countless hours planning and buying props and costumes for the play.

After a month of three times per week afterschool rehearsals, weekend rehearsals soon began. They lasted from 9:00am to 3:00pm and were filled with fun and joy. Activities such as hanging up lanterns 5 meters above the ground and moving sacks of rocks were highly enjoyable for the crews. >>



About the Author

Tracy enjoys badminton, basketball, and writing. When not in class, on court or on stage, she also participates in the BC Youth Parliament, volunteers with charitable organizations, plays piano (at the ARCT Level!) and enjoys pop music. Currently in Grade 11, Tracy has been at Meadowridge since Grade 6.



There was also an endless supply of Timbits which some people never took a break from. Personally, I thought the time spent together with the play staff, crew, and cast was just as much a highlight of the whole experience as the performances themselves.

There were also moments of doubt and uncertainty. Many characters had to work hard since their personalities often had opposite traits as their roles. One example would be the usual gazelle-like leap of Hannah, contradicting with her role as the woodcutter, a character who stomps around. I also later switched to be *the priest*, a character who I was able to identify with much more and very naturally. Through the ups and downs, the willingness of everyone to put together a good play kept us pushing through.

Then the performances began. Since my character opened the show alone on stage, simply stating I was nervous would be an understatement. Moving under the gaze of a crowd full of audience members was more difficult than I had previously thought, but the excitement and people's passion was totally inspiring and it brought me into another state. I enjoyed the time on stage very much and it was a very educational journey.

The twisting, complicated plot of *Rashomon* evoked deep thinking, and delivered four different stories with the final reality determined by the audience themselves. It was a play with incredible depth that came alive on the Meadowridge stage.

The Transformational Nature of Theatre

Mrs. Danielle Donovan's love for theatre was an unexpected surprise. As a kid, she was shy and reserved – an unlikely performer! – and yet, something drew her to the stage. Maybe it was her father, an educator involved in community theatre “big time,” or maybe it was her peers, theatre kids who together found their place. Whatever it was, Mrs. Donovan was hooked. She took every chance to be on stage and involved. Her love of theatre followed her throughout high school, into university, and even her career. Today, Mrs. Donovan is not only a Diploma Programme (DP) Theatre Teacher and past director of our co-curricular productions, but a passionate advocate for the arts. Knowing firsthand the transformational nature of theatre, she is passionate about offering students the same experiences that she had growing up.

Teaching DP theatre takes a thoughtful balance. It is a highly academic course, involving lengthy essays and in-depth, critical analysis, but involves just as much



“Games that create trust and group cohesiveness are important too; as are those that develop quick-thinking and spatial and personal awareness. I take many activities from Agosto Boal (Theatre of the Oppressed), David Diamond (Theatre for Living), Anne Bogart (The Viewpoints), and Frantic Assembly in addition to making up my own to suit the needed skill development or drawing from the typical Drama teacher’s repertoire.”

MRS. DANIELLE DONOVAN, DP TEACHER

risk-taking and exploration; students need time to “play.” The curriculum lets students explore everything there is to explore in theatre. Students learn about sound, lighting, colours, acting styles, and everything else involved in designing and putting on a show. As Mrs. Donovan puts it, they are doing everything a director normally does, but in “six weeks instead of six years.”

To learn about these different elements, there’s lots of analysis, but also just as much time for play. Classes are structured with time for study, but also with time for self-expression and exploration. “We play theatre games,” Mrs. Donovan explains, “but these games are not like playing

basketball or playing cards.” They’re activities, activities designed to explore a specific theme, or emotion, or character. Like “Walking From,” a game that has students walk from a certain part of their body. Students will walk with their noses jutting out, or their chins, or their chests. A minor change can alter a character in big ways.

This exploration is an important part of the program. Mrs. Donovan likens it to a lab: students can’t just show up on the day-of, wing it, and expect to do well. They need time to think, hypothesize, and explore. Students need to test things like a light or a sound or a set piece, and see if it

worked. Then they need to show it to an audience and see if their intentions were met; and, if not, they have to try again. “We have a lot of fun – kids get to play and act and fool around – but then they have to write three- to four-thousand words on what they’ve just done and fooled around with,” Mrs. Donovan nods, “it’s active learning.”

Theatre also teaches a myriad of other skills.

There are the “obvious” things, Mrs. Donovan explains. Academic skills and traits like collaboration, critical thinking, writing and analysis. But there are also the “not-so-obvious things,” too. Mrs. Donovan explains



that theatre help build students' confidence and emotional intelligence. "You have to be really self-aware to participate in theatre," she nods. Mrs. Donovan spends the first year of the program building skills, and then, in the second year, empowering students to use of them. It's in their Grade 12 year things become less guided;

students start to make independent decisions and exercise their talents, test their theories, and think critically.

"Everyone has something to add," Mrs. Donovan nods, "If you're interested in lighting, or writing, or whatever else—you have something to add." There's room for all types of exploration; students can approach theatre from any one direction. There's also room for all levels of experience, too. "Students don't need any experience," Mrs. Donovan stresses, "even if they've never done a single drama lesson, they can still find success." That's because the skills students learn are not siloed to one discipline, nor are they separate from any of the skills they are learning in other classes. Theatre simply makes them real; students have to use every part of their education to succeed.

>> On Stage

DP THEATRE GAMES

Walking From

Students walk around the room, first in neutral (regularly) and then from various parts of the body. Walking from their noses or shoulders or bums or heels, students discover how leading from different parts of the body can alter not only a character's posture, but also their energy, emotions, thoughts, and perceptions. This game helps students explore the body and movement.

Spatial Relationship on the Grid

Students move in neutral around a grid, stop, and then take in the proximity of the people around them. Students then continue to walk the grid, paying attention – this time – to the space they create between themselves and others. Students work in the extremes, going too close or too far from each other. The aim for the group is to notice spatial awareness.

Colombian Hypnosis

Students work in pairs to lead one another through a space, with one student following the other's hand. The game evolves over time, with students following each other's shoulders, knees and other parts of the body. A storyline is sometimes introduced – the pairs tell a 'story' using only their movements – and tempo can be increased or decreased. The game helps build awareness, trust, focus and connection to the whole body.

Objects


A bunch of random and different objects are placed in a space. Participants take an object from the pile and enact a scene with no prior planning. The object can be anything, but it cannot be anything close to what it is (a bowl can't be a bowl or a pot or a basket but can be hat or an earring or a shoe!). Each participant who joins the scene must incorporate a new object. The scene is over when it becomes too ridiculous, the scene comes to a natural end, or ideas run up. This game promotes improvisation, creativity, quick-thinking, and exploration.

Effective Hand

Students stand in the room with their eyes closed; and, without talking, begin to walk around the room. When one student meets another, they stop. With their eyes closed, they get to know the hand: is it dry or moist? bony or fleshy? warm or cold? What does it smell like? Still silent, students open their eyes, see whose hand they are holding, say goodbye (without talking) and move on. Students continue to walk with their eyes closed and attempt to find that first hand. This game helps build trust, awareness, and heightens the senses.

Chair Status Game

A student sits on a chair and adopts attributes representative of low status (sad, insecure, fearful). Another person enters the scene, this time in a high-status position. Different students take on different roles – high or low status – and break to discuss observations and actors' choices.



Learning to be balanced, thoughtful and kind.

With 60 new iPads brought in for our Junior Kindergarten to Grade 3 classes, students now have the tools to create stories, conduct research, access information, and learn what it means to be a balanced, thoughtful and kind digital citizen.

Your gift to the Annual Fund allows us to continue funding special resources like these ones. Please join us and make your gift today!

meadowridge.bc.ca/support

Audacity Campaign

Since launching the Audacity Campaign on November 22, 2020, we have accomplished a lot in just four short months. We opened the High School classroom complex – a significant milestone – providing students with modern, collaborative, and specialty - designed spaces. Thank you to all of those that made generous contributions. Among them, nine families made major gifts and are recognized through naming the classrooms and science labs. There are only two unnamed spaces remaining in the building.

What's Next

The next phase of the Campaign will be to raise funds for the Great Hall, the Library, and an Administration Centre. We look forward to working with everyone to achieve our goal of raising \$12 million and in doing so, build the best school and campus possible.

Campaign Leadership

Offering their experience and leadership, the Capital Campaign Committee guides us to achieve our overall goal of raising \$25 million. We are extremely fortunate to have an excellent group of parents, staff and alumni who have volunteered their time and brought their knowledge and passion to the growth of our school.

Penny Pan

Parent, Board Member
& Committee Chair

Hugh Burke

Headmaster & Alumni Parent

Doris Dong

Parent

Catherine Gao

Parent

Stephen Just '05

Alumni & Board Member

Samuel Lam

Parent

Nina Ni

Parent

Wallace Tang

Parent

George Zhao

Parent

Kim Findlay

Director of Development

To learn more about the Audacity Campaign and the available naming opportunities, contact the Advancement Office.

Donor Story “Grounded”

For the Liu Family, supporting the Audacity Campaign was “about trust.”

When the family of four first joined Meadowridge, they were not just new to the school, but to the country. Then just 12 years old, Catherine Liu '18 – the family's eldest – remembers feeling homesick as she struggled to fit in. “Everything was new,” she shares of the move, “it had been a shock, for sure.” Daofeng and Quming hoped their children would find some comfort at their new school, never expecting what happened instead. Meadowridge became “more than a school” for the family, Catherine explains, more than they ever expected. Uprooted and in a world full of all-things new, the school grounded the family. It became their community.

That first year, Daofeng and Quming watched their children flourish. They saw them make friends and go on field trips and get involved all around the school. That first year, and all the years thereafter, the proud parents saw their children grow into knowledgeable, well-rounded and caring young people. “And they don't take that for granted,” says Catherine, “Meadowridge helped my brother and I become who we are today, and my parents are very grateful for that.”

The family grew to not just love the school, but trust it.

After five years, Catherine was about to graduate and begin her studies at McGill. A new job opportunity, meanwhile, was bringing Daofeng, and Quming and Daniel back to China. Though the family was about to find themselves far from Meadowridge, they promised themselves that they'd stay connected to the special place they grew to love and trust. It's been two years since then, and every trip home still includes a visit to Meadowridge.

It was during one of these visits that the family made an amazing announcement.

Quming, Catherine and Daniel were in town, home for the holidays and eager to see the school. It had been two years since their last visit, and the trio hoped to see

some old friends and check out some of the changes they had heard about. After a warm welcome and some catching up, they headed off on a tour of the new High School Classroom Complex.

Visiting the school and seeing the new spaces brought back many memories for Quming. She saw the students, excited and engaged, and remembered the experiences of her own children. She remembered the teachers and spaces and resources at Meadowridge which enabled Daniel and Catherine to learn, succeed, and grow. She wanted more students to have the same experience as them. Realizing this, she stopped the tour and asked straightaway how she could help. Though they were no longer parents at the school, Daofeng and Quming knew what Meadowridge had meant for their children, and they knew what it would mean for others.

The Liu Family is now one of the nine families who have sponsored a space in the High School Classroom Complex.

Knowing how donors supported her own education while at Meadowridge, Catherine is proud that her family is helping in the same way. “I still remember coming back after the summer and there always being enhancements and improvements,” she recalls. She remembers the new gymnasium, the grad lounge (her class was the first to use the new furniture!), and the “many” technological resources which helped her learn. Catherine even remembers how

teachers' professional development helped her in the Diploma Programme. “There are so many unique experiences and opportunities [at Meadowridge],” she explains. Experiences and opportunities – she is sure – which helped her gain entry into her first-choice university. For that, Catherine explains, the family is forever grateful.

“This is a place that shaped me, not only as a student, but as a person,” Catherine nods, “and Meadowridge was not only a school for my family, but a community.”

Grounded by trust and driven by care, the Liu Family's generosity is the essence of the community they grew to love.



LEFT TO RIGHT: Daniel, Daofeng, Catherine and Quming.

Developing students who are
audacious in their pursuits,
grounded in their values, and
unbound in their potential.

Audacity
The Campaign for Meadowridge School

Ask us how you can be involved.
audacity@meadowridge.bc.ca

