

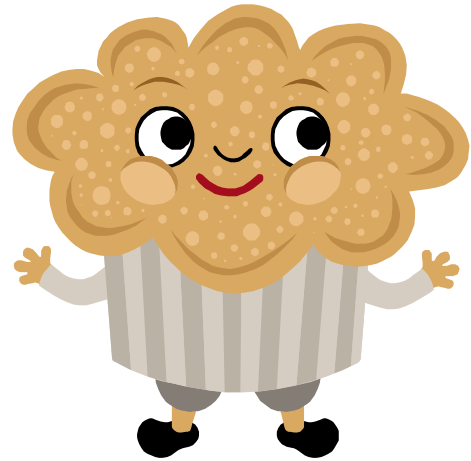
Bear Essentials

November 2007

Our first trimester is coming to an end this week and it gives all of us a chance to recall and reflect on what an eventful time it has been. Here is a brief list of activities that stand out in my mind:

- **Bonding Day**—Students and teachers spent time in Syngrou Park enjoying non-competitive activities and a chance to get better acquainted with each other.
- **House System**—We introduced our program in which students belong to one of four houses (Earth, Saturn, Mars, Jupiter) and can earn points for their house by doing things above and beyond our normal high expectations.
- **Student Council Elections**—Congratulations to the many students who ran for Student Council. The speeches this year were better than ever! Those students elected were: Layla Khatib and Constantine Toliias, Grade 6; Anastasios Chryssikopoulos and Luke Makris, Grade 5; Chris Kalomallos and Holly Tsalikidis, Grade 4.
- **Jeans for Genes Day**—This school-wide fundraiser was very successful and the money collected has been sent to England to aid further research into genetic diseases.
- **Swimming and Enrichment**—Both are in full swing. As our 2nd trimester begins, enrichment students will change activities. **Swimmers, be sure to have a wool hat with you on Wednesdays!**
- **Oxi Day Program**—Our Greek students provided us with an excellent show and helped the audience learn more about the history of this important day.
- **Halloween**—After a few years absence, this celebration was greeted with great excitement from students and teachers alike. The jack-o-lantern display was spooktacular!
- **Karagiozi Show**—Students were thrilled with this performance and learned the value of education.
- **After School Activities**—From the self-control of dance and Tae Kwon Do to the excitement of soccer and drama, our students are taking advantage of these fine offerings.
- **Baker Book Orders**—Thanks to the commission we receive as a school, we are looking forward to more interesting titles in our library.
- **School Photo Day**—We expect to have the packages before the Christmas holiday. There are certainly many, many beautiful ISA smiles!

- **Bake Sale and Special Tags Day**—We are busy collecting money to reach our goal of donating 200 new sets of hats/mittens/scarves to the Helping Hands Organization of Athens. We are off to a strong start! A warm thank you for all the baked goods, money donations as well as the lovely sets that you parents have been sending in. We truly could not do this without you!



DIARY DATES TO REMEMBER

- **Friday 30th November: School closed for students.** Faculty In-Service Day.
- **Wednesday 5th December:** Our deadline for Holiday Sets for the Helping Hands Organization of Athens.
- **Monday 10th December:** 1st Trimester Parent-Teacher conferences by appointment at ISA Primary School for students in Grades Kgn-6 at ISA. There will be NO school on this day for the ISA students at the main campus.
- **Tuesday 11th December:** Mrs. Tagas and the 5th Grade will visit Helping Hands in Athens with planned games and activities for a pre-holiday treat for refugee children.
- **Friday 14th December:** 1st Trimester Parent-Teacher conferences by appointment for all students attending Melina's Kindergarten. NO school for Melina's students on this day.
- **Tuesday 18th December:** Our annual winter music program.
- **Friday 21st December:** Last day before the winter vacation.

Now that the school year is in full swing, I feel it is necessary to write a few reminders in which we need your cooperation.

START OF THE DAY

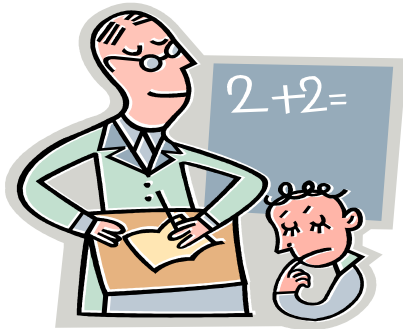
The school day begins **promptly at 8:40 for Grade 6**; lessons begin then. For **Grades Kgn-5**, lessons begin promptly at **8:45. This means that all students should have their school bags unpacked and be in their seats by 8:45 at the latest.**

END OF THE DAY

We must ask that those parents who opted for the early dismissal time of 3:35 to please leave the front entrance area as soon as possible. Students who are dismissed at this time **are not allowed** to return to the building or be in the hallways as this is very disruptive to the students who are still working in their classrooms. **The halls need to be clear before 3:50 when the majority of the students leave.** This is for the safety and security of all of our students. Thank you.

Mrs. Julie Demopoulos
Acting Principal

News from the classrooms



Kindergarten - Ms Cynthia

Hello everyone and Happy Holidays! Our Kindergarten class has been progressing by leaps and bounds this first trimester. We've completed our first unit of inquiry about the Five Senses and had fun exploring each one. Some of our favorite lesson activities were: going on a sound walk outside the periphery of the school to map what we heard as a class and tasting food items that represent relevant vocabulary, such as salty, sweet, bitter and sour.

Recently, we began our Author Study unit with works by Leo Lionni, which have meaningful messages that are helping students recognize what it means to be a well-rounded young person. Some of the books we have read are about sharing, overcoming fears, and making contributions as a team. These stories have also led to students building on their oral, written, and visual communication skills. They have been observing and discussing illustrations, making predictions about the story's outcome, and answering questions pertaining to who, what, where and when.

I'm excited to see our kindergarteners working together and our classroom turning into its own little community. Thanks to the parents for your patience and willingness to help out.

Ms Cynthia Theodorou

Grade 1 - Ms Pennie

The Grade 1 class has done a tremendous amount of learning in the first few months of school! There has been a major focus on reading and writing, and the children continue to improve in those areas. They practice their writing daily, mostly in the form of letter writing. They have been writing letters to Mrs. Pennie and also to Mrs. Bear about their experiences at home and what they have been learning at school.

The children have also been reading daily at school. They are reading phonetic books that focus on short vowel sounds, but soon they will be moving on to more challenging story books.

The Grade 1's successfully finished their unit on Recycling, Reducing and Reusing and are now involved in their second unit on Matter. They will continue to study Matter and the difference between solids and liquids and also the water cycle.

Ms Pennie Papavramopoulou

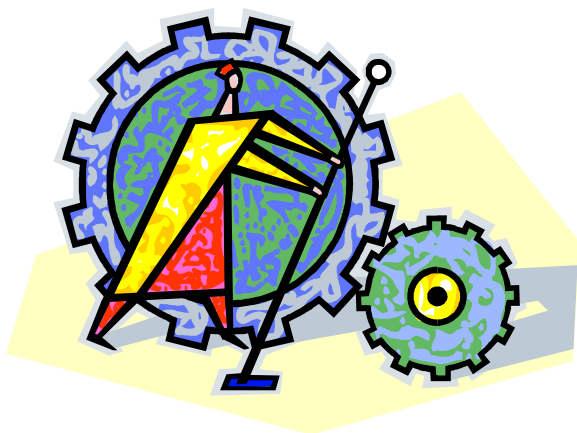


Grade 2 - Ms Marina

In our first unit, the second graders were able to unleash their artistic talent in creating clay, soap and salt dough sculptures! They used a variety of techniques to create mood paintings, still life drawings; abstract art and they worked on drawing objects from a variety of perspectives. A big thank you to our guest speakers, Mrs. Wyss, and Mrs. Padberg who volunteered to come speak to us about art, artists and creating. Our numerous fieldtrips also helped enrich our understanding of the message and feeling that different sculptures and paintings can portray. Our artwork is on display throughout the building so please feel free to look around and admire our young artists!

The second graders have been working hard on their second unit of inquiry, Changing Gears! We are developing an understanding of what a simple machine is and will continue to inquire into how machines can help get a task done without expending much physical energy! We are also learning about different forces, friction, and gravity during our science classes, to further our understanding of how simple machines work! If you can offer help as a guest speaker who has experience in this area, we would appreciate your input and be very grateful for your help!

Ms Marina Iatropoulou



Grade 3 - Ms Louise

The year began with a sparkle as the third graders embarked on a venture to investigate inventions all around them. Through daily

inquiry, they began to see the need for inventions and studied how they have changed our lives. Throughout the unit, the students were introduced to the process of research in their IT class and used a number of book resources that were available in the classroom so as to write about an invention that they were curious about. Most importantly, they participated in the invention process themselves and eventually began to see themselves as inventors too. Their innovative ideas were creative and original and now only need to be patented!

The next unit of inquiry to stimulate our minds was a focus on one of our most valuable resources- water! The third graders were very excited to discover how water is managed in our community and also reflected on how other communities are less fortunate. A number of scientific investigations and experimentation with working models helped us to further explore the process of aeration, coagulation, sedimentation and filtration. The students' comments and personal reflections revealed an appreciation of the fact that clean water is a luxury that only a few people are able to enjoy!

In Math we have been estimating numbers to 100 and modeling addition and subtraction equations to 1000. The students are now learning how to determine which tool is appropriate to use when measuring a variety of objects in our classroom. They are also working on developing an understanding of perimeter and area and measuring a variety of objects using 'square centimeters', 'square meters' and 'square units'.

Through our language arts program, the third graders have worked in groups reading 'The Twits', 'The School Mural', 'Diego Rivera', and are presently enjoying 'James and the Giant Peach', as well as continuing to develop skills through our individualized SRA reading program.

Ms Louise Kalokerinou

Grade 4 – Ms Kassimis

Our first unit was learning about the human body. We discussed the various systems in our bodies and their functions. The students chose a system of personal interest and researched, took notes and presented their work orally. They made a variety of visual aids, conducted experiments, made clay models and posters to accompany their oral presentations. An assembly was held for grades 2, 3 and 5 and it was an informative session where we were all learning from each other. The projects are on display in the front corridor. Do take a look!

In addition, we took a very close look at nutrition; using the food pyramid to learn about eating a balanced diet. This helped us to reflect on our eating habits and consider eating a healthier, balanced diet. Students also discovered that the Mediterranean diet is one of the best diets to follow.

Presently, our class is learning about myths and legends; the similarities and differences between the genres and looking into why they were made and the purpose they served. By reading myths and legends from around the world, 4th graders are learning about different cultures. Now they will use their new knowledge to write a myth or legend of their own. They cannot wait to share them!

Ms Nicole Kassimis

Grade 5 – Mrs Tagas

The 5th graders have been busy since September working diligently on their units. Our first unit of inquiry was **"Soaring into Literature"** where the students were reading selections from various Newbery Award winning books. They observed which techniques the authors were using and then patterned their creative writing stories based on this. They used such techniques as descriptions of setting, characters, and action and looked into writing exciting leads which would get the readers more interested in their stories. The students kept an on going journal response to reflect on what they had

been reading and to relate this to their own personal lives. The 5th graders are now more aware what commendable literature entails.

Our second unit of inquiry is **"A Place for Everyone"**. We are delving into the geography of the world and researching why people live in particular places around the world. We have learned how to locate places on a map using lines of latitude and longitude and have learned about the special lines of latitude and longitude. They will be writing a report about two of the world's biomes and comparing and contrasting their information. I am looking forward to their oral presentations!

To show how busy we have been, we are also organizing a trip to the Helping Hands organization on December 11th to volunteer our services and to arrange some activities with the refugee children. This should prove to be a worthwhile experience for all of us. As well, we are still collecting new sets of hats/scarves/mittens for the holiday gifts for these children. Thanking you all for your continued support in this endeavor.

Mrs. Pamela Tagas

Grade 6 – Ms Gina

The sixth graders have been hard at work this trimester. In Mathematics, we've been reviewing and mastering whole numbers, decimals, and have begun fractions. In Humanities, we have learned the tools a historian uses to study history through studying our own personal history and studying early man. In fact, we are in the midst of our Stone Tool project, in which students are researching different species of early man and building their own pre-historic tool. In Science, the class is learning about states, properties, and categories of matter. Students have performed several experiments, such as "Bubble-ology" and "Separating Mixtures", and are proving to be great scientists. In Language Arts, students have written creative narratives using Writer's Workshop, just finished their books, and are now learning how to write an informational piece to help them prepare for their Stone Tool project.

The sixth-graders are proving their responsibility and maturity on a daily basis. They use their lockers and change class periods efficiently. They are balancing many subjects with high expectations, and for some of them this includes a new language. Great work, sixth grade!

Ms Gina Hatzilambrou

Single Subjects

Greek - Ms Sophia

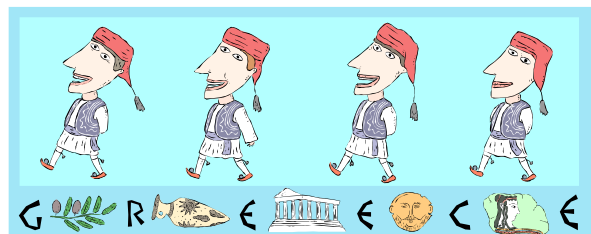
First of all, let me say a big bravo to all of you who participated in the Greek show for OXI Day. You were amazing! And it was the first time that there was such a big turn out from GFL students! You really made me proud. I'm looking forward to seeing you in the Independence Day show in March!

Our Karagiozi show was a great success. The magic bottle, the genie and the message about the importance of education thrilled the kids! A big thanks goes out to Panos Kapetanides and his shadow theater.

The Cycladic Museum visit showed us how creatively advanced Greece was in ancient times and arts and crafts were traveling from island to island. We saw sculptures, jewelry and everyday tools from the archaic and Neolithic periods in Cycladic and Cypriot art. We were also very lucky to visit the El Greco painting exhibition that was hosted by the museum.

Mother Tongue Classroom

The Kindergarteners work on writing and recognizing letters. I am very impressed with their memory skills when we play with memory cards. They beat me every time!



First graders have started to read short dialogues and work on easy spelling. The time has come for them to learn the notorious double letters and to make sentences! Good luck, hard workers!

Second graders have started grammar and descriptive paragraph writing. Aren't they impressive? You should hear them read, too! Third, fourth and fifth graders work hard on grammar, literature, geography, history, essay writing and reports for the class magazine.

Greek as Foreign Language.

I feel so lucky to have such big interest for GFL this year! This is our class for foreigners who want to learn to communicate in Greek without having so much grammar, writing and reading. Students have been practicing basic vocabulary and dialogues in Greek and they have started to read. Fun activities with posters, geography, 'Show and Tell' and word games enrich this class. Wait till we start cooking and Greek dancing!

Ms Sophia Ioakimidou



Music - Ms Maria

Students have been exploring 3 main areas in music lessons this year since the beginning of term. Grades 2-6 have been working on:

1) *Learning to clap and compose rhythms and reading musical notation*

This consists of teaching the children to recognise the values of notes, be able to clap or perform rhythmical exercises on a percussion instrument (drums and triangles etc) and finally to be able to compose small

rhythms themselves. The older classes (grades 4-6) have explored these techniques in more detail than the younger classes and have also started to incorporate dynamics and performance directions in their compositions. We also play a variety of rhythm games to test the children's oral skills and co-ordination.

2) *Instruments of the Orchestra*

Being able to name instruments of the Orchestra and to match the instruments to their different families consisting of strings, woodwind, percussion, brass etc. and discussing the different sounds and textures of these instruments.

3) *Singing*

We continue to learn a variety of new songs of all styles and genres and have currently started learning lots of Christmas carols in preparation for the concert next month!

Kindergarten and 1st grade

With the younger grades SINGING is an extremely important part of the lessons. We have been learning lots of nursery rhymes, traditional songs and Disney songs, often adding actions and/or sketches. We also play music games such as 'musical statues' and various rhythm games as well.

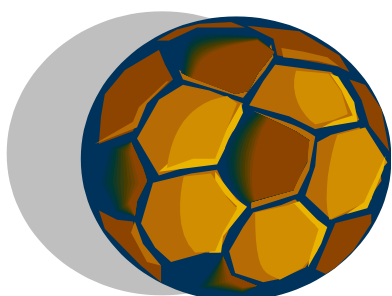
Ms Maria Michael

P.E. Department

I am pleased to announce that Grades 3 - 5 are practising their soccer skills every Monday after school. The students are showing great effort in all the soccer skills and are enjoying the soccer team oriented activities.

I am looking forward to next trimester for more sporting events.

Ms Leonidas Valvis



EAL - Ms Venetia

HELLO! GIA SAS! ZDRAVEJ! BONJOUR! LABAS! PRIVET!, these are some of the greetings our children shared in their Mother Tongue language.

First, I would like to welcome our new EAL students, who form a big group this year, and our returning students as well.

Kindergartners have been greeting each other by singing action rhymes and greeting songs. They are also working in the course book *Balloons*, while learning about colors, shapes, body parts and numbers.

Grade 1 has been working from *Alphabet Skills*, with focus on the sounds - letter - words, left - right direction as well as learning weather conditions.

Grade 2 has been learning about double consonant sounds, weather/ seasonal concepts and days of the week and the months of the year.

Grade 3 is concentrating on the form of singular and plural through story writing as well as becoming familiar with the use of irregular verbs in the present and past tense.

Grade 4 is working hard in *Basic Rules of English Grammar 4*, concentrating on tenses and the process for writing following the guide of words Who? What? Why? Where?, as well as what is a myth, a legend, an opinion, and fact and fiction.

Finally **Grade 6** has been working with great enthusiasm the workbook *In Touch*, improving their listening, speaking and comprehension and grammar skills.

Ms Venetia Panovrakos

Art - Ms Christina

Primary School Art classes have been fun, creative and adventurous this semester! Every class began with a self-portrait: 'What do you think you look like?' All grades explored ideas through the use of various materials and came up with surprising and exciting results. They were not afraid to experiment with concepts and tools that were new to them.

Kindergarten has been exploring the senses. This project involved a lot of teamwork. They listened to music and stories, which they then interpreted through painting. They experimented with aromatic spices, made a big plasticine snake together and played around with various textures to find out how different everything feels.

Grade 1 explored with paper and made very interesting collages. They have been painting and drawing, cutting and gluing and being real busy bees. However the recycling project now in progress has, by all means, been the most fun for them. They have been using all kinds of recycled objects to create a sculpture of their choice. They proved to be very imaginative and quite ambitious!

2nd Graders have been getting very familiar with all kinds of sculpture; they made 3D gardens out of paper, creative objects out of soap, and colorful creative pottery out of clay. The children came up with great titles and their work is displayed in the hallway and the art room for all to enjoy.



The **3rd grade** has been learning all about color. They have been experimenting with mixing and even creating their very own signature color. Van Gogh's dramatic use of color to express a mood was discussed and finally they made their own 'warm' and 'cool' paintings. They also listened to instrumental music and each student interpreted the 'soul' and the color of the music through painting.

The **4th grade** explored dreams through rich and delightful discussions that led to beautiful works of art.

All students made a picture of a dream that they had and then shared this sometimes bizarre and interesting dream with the class. This project led to reflections on surrealism and Dali.

5th graders were introduced to abstract art and artists related to this genre such as Picasso. They made abstract self-portraits which helped them understand the concept better. The results were fascinating! Take a look at their portraits in front of the art room.

The **6th grade** has been looking into their self image. As a starting point, they explored their personal identity. They created images that reflected ideas of themselves; working from memory and imagination. Their very brave and expressive self-portraits are displayed in the art room.

Please feel free to enter the art room and stroll though the corridors to view the children's works of art.

Ms Christina Mabger

Greetings from the Learning Center

I would like you to welcome you all to the Primary School Learning Center. My name is Elena Athanasiadi. As you already know our Center works with children with mild to moderate learning differences to help them develop strong self-esteem and provide them

with individual support to achieve their academic potential.

Different kinds of techniques and methods are used according to the child's needs and learning styles. For example, a student may use the "Think it! Say it!" Program to aid the development of expressive oral language skills and problem solving, or the "SRA Reading Laboratory" to overcome reading difficulties and reading comprehension. Writing productivity can be improved through "Four Square Writing" which increases writing content and the organization of ideas. Students also learn through table-games, flash cards etc., in the one to one setting which allows them the opportunity to identify and work towards achieving their relevant academic goals.

The Learning Center in our school is here to give to each child the special opportunity and support to achieve their individual academic potential. Through close collaboration between the homeroom teacher and the personnel of our center we can make a significant difference to a students' life. Appointments to meet with the Director of the ISA Center, Dr Gina Thanopoulou, or the Primary School Principal, Mrs Bear, can be made through Mrs Pauline Traka.

Ms Elena Athanasiadi

Library and I.T. from Mrs. Demopoulos

Information Technology (I.T.) Going upstairs to the High School Computer labs for I.T. classes for the first time has been exciting for our **3rd Graders**. They have spent their time using the *Type to Learn* program to familiarize themselves with the keyboard placement of letters. All are making fine progress and we will soon progress to Word Skills such as Cut, Copy and Paste. Keyboarding practice was also emphasized in grades 4 and 5. **Fourth graders** have been introduced to PowerPoint and have been exploring and experimenting with the various templates and animation; working toward a final project about myths and legends. **Grade 5 students** have been using the internet for

research connected to their unit on life in different biomes around the world.

Library

The beginning of the school year in the library is a time for the introduction and review of how books are arranged on the shelves. Books for early learners are shelved by concepts such as: family, animals, dinosaurs, science, etc. Our **Kindergartners** have already begun to recognize favorite authors and the **First Grade** class is enjoying the 'Magic School Bus' series introducing them to science concepts.

We had a lovely display of bears from the **2nd Graders** to help feature the 'Berenstain Bear' books which introduced this series to a wider age group. Thanks Grade 2!

Students in **Grades 3 through 6** have been tracing books by title and author using our computer catalogue and then locating the books on the shelves. Their book hunt activities included those in all sections of the library: Easy and Middle Fiction, Fiction, Non-Fiction as well as References.

A big thank you goes out to Mrs. Benakopoulou who has worked daily to bring nature into our library, not to mention the beauty she has brought to the outside of our building too! Please drop by to enjoy the atmosphere provided by the attractive plants and stunning aquarium she and her group of student helpers have been working on.

Thanks also go out to the Marton and Loci Juhasz, Tiana Drimeris, Stamatina Talias, Stavros Benakopoulos and the Mathiasos-Boundy family for their generous donations of books they have outgrown. They have made very fine additions to our holdings!

Mrs. Julie Demopoulos

