



PIEDMONT MIDDLE SCHOOL

an IB World School

Talent Development News

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6th Grade Math

The 3rd Quarter is always the longest part of the year; it is the longest stretch that we go without a break. Those winter days weigh on both teacher and student, but we will see a whole range of events. The quarter started out slowly with us making up snow days and will end with us gearing up for the End-of-Grade test.

Way back in February, we started out by finishing up percents and decimals. These were topics that we had spent some time with second quarter but most students found that the extra time was well needed. A majority of these last nine weeks was spent on geometry. Geometry is a huge topic, not only on the material it includes but also its importance on the EOG. We started with tying in material learned in 5th grade - shapes and angles - and then added area, coordinate geometry, and transformations. Most students find transformations (the moving of objects around a coordinate grid) the most challenging. They often have a hard time seeing the move and rotating the object into its exact location.

We are finishing this quarter with probability; this is another topic that is very important for the EOG. It is also a topic like geometry that will have some challenging aspects to it; most students will have trouble with compound events and trying to decide if the result of the first event influences the second. We will have plenty of time to work out the kinks in probability. With the strong groups of students that we had this year we are ahead of pace and have plenty of time to work through probability and review for May 18th Math EOG.

6th Grade Language Arts

How do I understand and appreciate poetry? Why do humans create poetry? How can words represent ideas and feelings? This quarter's MYP Unit questions explore the themes of creativity and written expression. Students will reflect on various poems to interpret their meanings and to discuss how figurative language and sound techniques are used in poetry. Human Ingenuity will be our focus as we look at the elements of poetry and discuss how poems are created and our desire to read and to create poetry.

We will explore many famous (and not so famous!) poets such as Lewis Carroll, Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman, Gary Soto, Carl Sandburg, Maya Angelou, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Basho, Issa, and Edward Lear. In class, students will read and practice writing Limericks, Haiku, Concrete, Free Verse, Cinquain, Two Voice, Bio, Ballad, Ode, Narrative, and Acrostic poems. These original poems may be incorporated into the culminating project, which is a Poetry Anthology. Students will write original poems for their anthologies. Each poem will be a different type of poem and illustrate a different type of literary device. Each poem will include a reflection allowing the poet to think about and to share the creation process.

Students are encouraged to read as many different poetry anthologies as possible during this quarter in order to expose themselves to a wide variety of poets and types of poetry. Active Reading Strategies for reading poetry are to preview the poem and read it aloud a few times, to visualize the images, to clarify words and phrases, to evaluate the poem's theme, and to let your understanding grow! Please encourage your 6th grader to practice these reading strategies while reading poetry and perhaps share some of his or her favorite poems with you. Do you have any favorite poems you would like to share with your 6th grader?

Seventh Grade Math

We are now moving towards the EOG's. In the third quarter we have been consumers and producers with our school stores. The students showed their entrepreneurial skills in creating stores that had sales involving percentages and decimals. They were working on their life skills of balancing check books, while shopping at the student stores. Students worked with using a debit card and how important it is to keep track of what you spend. The stores consisted of candy, clothing, sporting, and video game stores. Along with the student stores, our students created colorful tessellations that were dazzling. They were displayed in every room. The students showed that they can make one piece and turn it into many pieces that fit like a puzzle.

Additionally, our math team is continuing to differentiate for the students by using methods such as flexible grouping, tiered lessons, and anchor activities. We are encouraging students to work more in depth within the same topic to help enrich their learning every day.

Honors math students completed models using scale factors. Honor students created an object larger or smaller proportionally. Students created sharpie pens to teach timer the size of students and candy bar the size of table. The students created these while keeping dimensions proportional so they looked exactly the same but different sizes. They also worked in the "New" textbook which has all hands on activities. It was exciting to see their work.

Coming up next quarter, we will be working on more equations, and finally taking the EOGs. Students will continue to prepare for the EOG through numerous opportunities; for example, through Study Island and Castle Learning. So, we're in the final stretch for the EOG! ☺

~7th grade Math Teachers~

Miss Carlson, Mrs. Davis, Miss Hetrick, and Miss Peterson

Seventh Grade Language Arts

In 7th grade language arts we have been very busy preparing the End of Grade Test. We have been working on an eight week plan. During these past few weeks we assign the students a pre-test at the beginning of the week on given concepts like; main idea, cause and effect, author's purpose and analogies just to name a few. The results from these tests help us to determine how to group the students. Some students need a little more practice while other students need some more challenging work to do. Some classes are divided into centers and we have even tweaked our schedule to meet the needs of all the students. In Mr. Milligan's and Ms. Whiting's classes students completed their Pigman Trials. Mrs. Thornburg finished Animal Farm and Mrs. Brown finished Scorpions. We were all pleased with how well the students did with our individual projects and activities. We encourage all students to continue to read as much as possible. For fourth quarter we have our poetry unit planned. Students should enjoy some creative fun and we are hopeful to have a culminating event where students will be allowed to share their creations.

Thanks for all that you do to support our department,
Maranda Thornburg
David Milligan
Megan Whiting

Cynthia Alexander-Brown

Eighth Grade Language Arts

Third quarter was a challenging quarter, and we are happy to say that our students rose to the challenge as we read a Shakespearean play. We read and annotated *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (AMSND). It was well worth the effort for students to purchase their own copies of the text, because we saw remarkable improvements in annotation and comprehension.

We started off the unit by creating our own stage and forest backdrop. Students took turns acting on stage. All students had the opportunity to interpret a role and act out a small portion of AMSND for their peers. Because Shakespeare is so difficult, we focused on closely reading the text and then modernizing it in our own words. We worked on defining words, based on context, using our Latin and Greek root knowledge to help us.

In addition to reading AMSND, students read many sonnets and used our knowledge of making inferences to make meaning of complicated language. We closely read the sonnets, looking at figurative language. Next quarter we are excited to look at poetry in more detail. After all this hard work, we will re-assess our skill development with a mock EOG before the end of the quarter. From there we will be able to identify and tackle any weaknesses before we take the EOG.

This quarter, many of our eighth graders will take our learning outside of the classroom and across the state to North Carolina's Outer Banks. We will keep a detailed journal which will house everything we learn and our reactions/reflections on the trip. We look forward to one last great quarter with our awesome Piedmont eighth graders!

Eighth Grade Math

As we wind down third quarter, we are gearing up for EOGs and EOCs. Algebra students have completed many hard tasks: systems of equations, factoring, quadratic and exponential functions. During our systems of equations unit, students learned many different ways to solve a system of equations. Students then determined which method was best for them and for the different systems. Students completed a project called *Rescue the Princess* that used reading, graphing, and linear equations skills. Business analysts use systems of equations to determine where break-even points are and to analyze trends for predicting future events. Students then used factoring and graphing to determine the number of real roots of quadratic equations. Students studied exponential functions such as growth and decay; they applied these formulas to many real-world problems in the banking, engineering, and science fields.

Standard Plus students are just finishing the Algebra unit. They have learned about slope and rate of change. Rate of change describes how rapidly a line rises or falls. It is used in real-world context to express the relationship between two quantities, for example, number of words typed in a minute. As we moved through the chapter, students learned the three forms of an equation of a line: standard form, slope-intercept form, and point-slope form. Student can manipulate the various forms to get a different form of an equation of a line.



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Talent Development News

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Mission Statement

Piedmont exists to inspire in its students a passion for learning and a commitment to personal integrity and academic excellence. Students demonstrate self-confidence and creativity, are open-minded and inquisitive, and display a sense of social responsibility and global awareness.

Piedmont ... You Know ... We Care!

What is Talent Development?

The **Talent Development Program** for gifted services is based on consultation and collaboration between the talent development and classroom teachers. They work together to meet the needs of the high achieving student.

Program Benefits

- Gifted education and general education are related, connected and integrated.
- Out of class sessions are scheduled when needed most.
- The pace of learning is enhanced.
- High achieving students receive more challenging tasks within the classroom.
- Classroom and TD teachers work together to maximize student learning.

Did you know?

- Research on the TD Program indicates that students receive at least three times the amount of services using this model compared to the old pullout, once a week program.
- The TD model is most effective when high achieving students are flexibly grouped together based on their instructional needs.
- Every school has a Talent Development teacher.
- The TD teacher at your child's school can tell you how they work with your child and your child's teacher.

TALENT DEVELOPMENT TEAM

- ***Academic Facilitator***

Dawn Johnston

- ***6th Grade Team***

Language Arts

Rebecca Gwynne
Karen Bailey
Meredith Lamb
Lindsey Kolbrek

Math

Paul Booth
William King
Andy Bell
Sara Suckstorff

- ***7th Grade Team***

Language Arts

Megan Whitting
David Milligan
Maranda Thornburg
Cynthia Brown

Math

Karen Carlson
Heather Hetrick
Teresa Peterson
Angela Davis

- ***8th Grade Team***

Language Arts

Suzanne Ingram
Sheila Dixon
Kelly Hanson

Math

Cheryl Lamb
Janet Delery
Stacey Callahan

Summer Camps!

Happy almost spring to you all!! It's just the beginning of March, but already time to think about summer camp! There are many opportunities created especially for gifted students –great ways for students to “keep on learning” all year long! The following list offers just a sample of what is available for summer 2011:

WHAT: Discovery Place

WHERE: 301 N. Tryon Street

CONTACT: Phone: 704-372-6261 x 301

Charlotte, NC 28202

Information for all camps at all locations: http://www.discoveryplace.org/education/summer_camps/

INFO: “Discovery Place summer camps offer learning and fun for all ages, all summer, all over town. Available at locations throughout Charlotte, kids will enjoy a sizzling summer adventure exploring color, chemistry and other cool stuff.”

WHAT: UNC-Charlotte Summer Enrichment Camps

WHERE: 9201 University City Blvd

CONTACT: <http://www.summer.uncc.edu/camps/>

Charlotte, NC 28223

704-687-4447 (Eimear) or 704-687-2958 (Chuck) or 704-687-8900 (registration)

INFO: UNC-Charlotte camps “offer children and young people the opportunity to join scientists, researchers, educators, writers, and actors in the creative atmosphere of a university campus.” Middle school-age offerings include: Global Beat, MEDCamp, Chess for “Experts”, Sports Writing, and Musical Theater.

WHAT: Summer Programs at The Green River Preserve

WHERE: 301 Green River Rd

CONTACT: Phone: 828-698-8828

Cedar Mountain, NC 28718

Fax: 828-698-9201

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

INFO: Focused on environmental education and located in western NC near Hendersonville and Brevard. “Our programs provide unique experiences for gifted children using hands-on learning with professional naturalists on our 3,400 acre nature preserve.” One of the few programs in NC geared towards gifted students in grades 2-12 and has accreditation with the American Camping Association!

WHAT: Kids for Conservation Summer Day Camp

WHERE: Carolina Raptor Center

CONTACT: <http://www.carolinaraptorcenter.org/> or email Cecily Rose at crose@carolinaraptorcenter.org

INFO: “Get ready for some fun this year at Carolina Raptor Center's Kids for Conservation Day Camps. Explore plant and animal life in our Wings of Wonder camp. Indulge your imagination in Potions Class, one of many magical offerings in Hawkwarts: A Camp for Muggles. Even learn about raptor rehabilitation in our Young Veterinarians Camp. See our Education page for more information.”

WHAT: Providence Day School Summer Programs

WHERE: 5800 Sardis Rd, Charlotte, 28270

CONTACT: www.providenceday.org and go to On Campus and click on Summer Programs, or call for catalog 704.887.7006

INFO: “Providence Day School's Summer Programs offer something for everyone. Whether catching bugs or balls, singing or dancing, making cakes or snow flakes -- everyone can try something new at PDS this summer!” Topics this summer range from academics to cooking, music to explorations. Browse through program offerings and sign up early using the registration form on-line.

WHAT: All-Arts, Sciences + Technology Camp

WHERE: 1-week residential experience at one of 4 participating college campuses- NC State, UNC-Greensboro, Virginia Tech, George Mason

CONTACT: allarts@uncg.edu email or http://web.uncg.edu/dcl/web/allarts_technology/ website

INFO: Campers from over twenty states receive quality instruction in the performing, visual and literary arts as well as physical and behavioral sciences. The weeklong adventure also includes recreation, values exploration, and citizenship components, all while spending time on a college campus.

WHAT: Summer Programs 2011 at Charlotte Latin School

WHERE: 9502 Providence Rd, Charlotte 28277

CONTACT: <https://mylatin.charlottelatin.org/summercamp/> and click Summer Programs, or for more information contact Carolyn Richardson at 704.846.7277 or crichardson@charlottelatin.org

INFO: “...promotes a joy for learning and where campers can develop cognitively, socially, emotionally, and physically through growth-promoting experiences. Our coeducational day programs foster a passion for lifelong learning...” Offerings include: Geocaching, chess with USA Chess, video game creation, race car game creation, and sports!

WHAT: Summer Enrichment Camp

WHERE: Ferrum College in Virginia

CONTACT: <http://www2.ferrum.edu/fcsec/>

INFO: Academically Motivated Students currently in grades five, six or seven

Select from Two One-Week Sessions July 10-16 or July 17-July 23, 2011

“Located at Ferrum College in the beautiful foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, this residential camp offers an exciting opportunity to: pursue academic interests, explore new ideas, experience campus life, make new friends, and have traditional summer-camp fun.”