



# THE PINNACLE PREP SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

May 2018

## *Principal's Corner.....*

Things are starting to heat up here at Pinnacle Prep School now that we are moving into May. Not only is the weather getting warmer but so are all the activities coming up this month!

The Pre-K through 4th grade classes went on their camping trips to Andrew Brown Park in Coppell during the last full week in April. They had a picnic, played games, went on a nature walk, played on the playground among several other fun activities. They all had a great time! The 5th through 8th graders

are very excited about traveling to Oklahoma to spend the weekend of May 4-6 camping at Lake Murray (Elephant Rock Area). They will be hiking, swimming, boating, playing games, having cookouts, and roasting marshmallows around the campfire. Several other activities will also be available.

The upper grades are still writing and presenting essays every Monday. Many students have shown a lot of improvement in their presentation skills throughout the school year and are getting very good at

speaking before a crowd. They also continue to put the principles they learned during the Dale Carnegie book study to good use at school as well as at home.

We are also very excited about all the new improvements made recently to the Pinnacle Prep School campus! We have a brand-new roof, a great-looking new paint job, a wonderful new sign out front and new flooring in the front area!

Thank you for all your support!

# STUDENT CLASSROOMS

## **Ms. Anu Math**

We are almost at the end of school year. All the students worked really hard throughout the school year. Almost all the students are one or two grade levels ahead. I am so proud of what my students accomplished. The month of May will be spent mostly on test prep and testing. We will be reviewing all concepts that we have learned throughout the school year and getting ready for final testing. Students will be working really hard for their standardized test and school final exam.

## **Ms. Bagbey 1st - 2nd Grade**

What a fantastic year this has been! We will continue to ask questions and investigate the life cycle of various butterflies and insects. In our classroom, we are getting the awesome opportunity to watch our caterpillars evolve through the

butterfly life cycle with great anticipation!

We are also very excited about Mother's Day just around the corner! We look forward to spending a wonderful time with our moms while sharing the things we made over a lovely cup of tea!

With the year close to an end, we are proud to say we are fine tuning all our reading, writing and mathematical skills. We have indeed learned a lot! And we will continue to move forward with full speed as we enhance our writing and comprehensive reading skills by building on our vocabulary and spelling proficiency.

We will be applying our reading strategies, such as asking ourselves relevant questions, finding context clues and supporting text evidence to infer and draw conclusion of stories. We will be identifying the text features and facts to support from expository

material for writing responses.

In addition, we have launched into research and analysis regarding different topics of interests using our technological skills and abilities to evaluate information we collect information.

Students will be identifying examples of halves, fourths, and eighths as we grow in our financial literacy. We will also learn to use our math skills to multiply or divide for typical and real-life situations based on equal groupings. We look forward to a great time with your children as we keep our life learning process in full speed!

## **Dr. Lynne English**

This month the class read and analyzed *The Great Gatsby*, a classic American novel written in the 1920s. Along with studying character development

and elements of the novel, students had an opportunity to engage in critical analysis of the issues of that period and how they affected the novelist's work. In creative writing they speculated about the definition and current state of the American Dream and how it is linked to personal morality. Students also worked hard on writing and polishing creative essays, fiction, and poetry to submit to several writing contests and publications. Winning entries will be published in well-known national magazines, which looks wonderful on any resume or college application, and these students have an excellent chance of seeing their work in print.

Social Studies continued with American history, looking into the Vietnam conflict era. Through the use of actual period film videos, students were able to experience the nation's unrest and polarizing viewpoints, while gaining insight into the complexity of the issues involved, both in Vietnam and in the United States as well as in affected countries allied with both sides. Then, by

extension, they were able to generalize their knowledge to other international conflicts and expand their understanding of how very multifactorial and complicated any international conflict is, as opposed to the often simplistic, black and white picture offered by popular media. It was eye-opening as well as mind-expanding.

### **Mrs. Hozie Science**

This past month, one of our classes studied the six types of simple machines — the wedge, wheel and axle, lever, inclined plane, screw, and pulley — in the context of the construction of a pyramid, gaining high-level insights into tools that have been used since ancient times and are still in use today. Several model pyramids were completed to inform and demonstrate these machines.

Some of our older students are learning about our climate. In this unit, students learn the basics about weather and the atmosphere, what influences each, and what the future might hold.

Our oldest students are studying ions and ionic bonding. An ionic bond is formed by the complete transfer of some electrons from one atom to another. When the transfer of electrons occurs, an electrostatic attraction between the two ions of opposite charge takes place and an ionic bond is formed.

Another group of students are studying types of plants. Students acquired an understanding of plants and their needs. These students even did a little science poetry.

For Sci-Fi Friday, we did some experiments related to ocean acidification. Ocean acidification is the ongoing decrease in the pH of the Earth's oceans, caused by the uptake of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) from the atmosphere. Seawater is slightly basic (meaning pH > 7), and ocean acidification involves a shift towards pH-neutral conditions rather than a transition to acidic conditions (pH < 7). Students studied what changes in pH can do to ocean organisms. We finished the lesson by watching some of WALL-E.

Finally, all our students have been working with Google CS coding. According to the Google Corporation, more than 65% of students will work in jobs that don't even exist today. "We want to help prepare them for that future by getting them excited about where computer science (CS) can take them. Computer science is a 21st-century skill that enables kids to be creators, rather than just consumers, of technology. Its emphasis on problem solving is applicable across disciplines, driving growth and innovation across all sectors of the workforce. CS First is one of many initiatives at Google focused on improving access to computer science education."

### **Ms. Jaya Math**

Students successfully completed a chapter with place value up to the hundred million place, comparing and ordering decimals. 3<sup>rd</sup> grade kids are now working on solving complex problems using order of operations (PEMDAS). Students love to solve problems using PEMDAS. Further students will be learning fractions

on a number line, compare, and order fractions, find equivalent fractions and simplify fractions.

One group of fourth grade students are working on different types of graphs like line plot, line graph, stem and leaf plot. They will also learn to find the mean, median, mode and range of the given data. The other group of fourth grade students will be learning place value up to billions place, decimal place value up to ten thousandth place, comparing and ordering decimals and estimating, multiplying and dividing decimals.

5<sup>th</sup> grade students completed learning place value till the trillions place and write the numbers in expanded form using exponents. Students are working on scientific notations and exponents. We will be working on write, translate and solve equations and expressions. One group of fifth grade students will start solving problems consisting of all four basic operations using integers, and order of operations (PEMDAS), evaluate algebraic expressions, equations and inequalities, use formulas to solve an algebraic expression.

Students in 6<sup>th</sup> grade are now working on ratio and proportions. We will work on writing and solving proportions and rates, similar and congruent figures, scale drawings and maps. Convert between fraction, decimals and percent. Students will also learn in depth to find out sale price, discount, sales tax, total cost and commission.

### **Ms. Jessica English/Math/ Science**

At Pinnacle Prep, we focus on integrated learning as well as varied learning styles. Therefore, my 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders have been participating in our classic novel studies.

My third-grade students are enjoying reading Little Women. This is a classic historical fiction novel. The students are enjoying reading about and discussing how different life, and society, was during that time period. We have talked about the language that is used and how words meant different things and were used in different contexts during that time. As always, we write journal entries every day to target critical thinking skills.

The fifth graders are still reading The Lightning Thief and will finish very soon. Along with this book, we will be conducting research on Greek mythology. When finished with the book, we will continue our research on Greek mythology and culminate in a research paper and art projects.

Our next book is Wolves of the Beyond: Frost Wolf 4th Edition. Please have this book by May 7 or before. Continue to ask your students what he or she read about during class. This is a great way to check for understanding. Simply asking questions is a useful way to reinforce learning and comprehension.

Third grade students have just completed their research papers about various Native American tribes. This included other activities as well, such as weaving our own Native American mats and creating designs for painted ponies.

Fifth grade students have just finished their most recent writing assignment: "Fantasy Hotel." Future writing assignments for

both classes include prompts where certain components are predetermined, such as characters, setting, and problems. Other topics between the classes include, "If I was a Rockstar," and "If I was a Teacher." I'm looking forward to reading both of those and what ideas the students will come up with.

3rd grade: All About Social Studies - April 30 is the start of Cowboy Week. We will learn about ranches, cowboy life, and the Wild West. Students will write about life as a cowboy and what they would do if they were a cowboy/cowgirl. We will also examine and label maps of Texas. Friday, May 4, will be cowboy dress up day; students can wear cowboy/cowgirl attire on this day (hats, bandanas, boots, etc.). We will be having our snack and read aloud time outside on that day as well as other activities, such as races and practicing our roping skills with a lasso. Future topics of study include studying the Western United States, resources, and cities of the West.

5th grade- All About Social Studies - We have started a new unit in Social Studies. We are learning about constitutional rights, trade and transportation. We will also examine various Native American tribes and resources from the five different regions of the United States. Students will also look at timelines, charts and graphs throughout our social studies curriculum. They will be creating and analyzing their own timelines, charts and graphs based on data that is collected from the student body or via internet research.

### **Mrs. Kennedy Pre-K**

April has been exciting and colorful. Our reading and writing journals continue to fill up daily. It's a great joy to have each child read to me in the morning and watch some of them complete their sentence starters. The sound spelling is on point, and they work extremely hard to follow our rule:

"Every word or syllable has to have a vowel." The illustrations in their books, and the stories that go with them, are wonderful and entertaining. I'm also proud of the progress each

student is making in understanding and comprehending the stories I read aloud each day. We've been using literature and technology to investigate our science and social studies topics.

Math time continues to focus on recognizing the visual number that completes to the number we say or count. The students have been working in centers to complete patterns, correctly count items for a number given, and practice reading and writing numbers.

Two more students joined the COUNT TO 100 CLUB and others improve daily. A couple of students have started using number lines to complete addition problems. So exciting.

Science has been filled with the metamorphosis cycle of butterflies and the water cycle. The students have loved creating each cycle of metamorphosis and learning a song about the water cycle. We've also enjoyed learning the color spectrum of rainbows and our friend Roy G. Biv.

Blue has been the color of spring as we mastered the name and growing cycle of Texas bluebonnets. Thank you, Lady Bird Johnson, for making our Texas highways so beautiful.

Camping is always a great way to culminate all of our spring education. It's wonderful to be outside using our large motor muscles and looking for more real-life examples of what we explore in class.

Manners class has really moved to using manners in context. We study different topics two days a week, read with each other two days a week, and do puzzles once a week. It is wonderful to move about the room and hear the students using wonderful manners with their peers. It's also amazing to see students as young as four years old completing puzzles and reading books.

### **Ms. Laura 1<sup>st</sup> grade**

May is all about our wonderful families and how we spend our most treasured time. Mother's Day is a great time to reflect upon our Moms and their special gifts that make their kids love them more. Our class has been preparing a lot of treats to share with the school on how we celebrate this wonderful day. Looking forward to the special memories in the works that are sure to please.

Our jingle has been in the works and will put a smile on every Cowgirl and Cowboy.

In our awaiting of May, you will truly see the May flowers from our April Showers. The student's retention of the water cycle working with the wind and solar heat is astounding.

They enjoy Technology day and it enriches our whole week with great illustration to make a mapping puzzle of knowledge complete for the kids to understand. We enjoy Bill Nye the science guy, and National Geographic for their stunning aerial views of our planet and National Treasures. These great media sources help students connect the dots.

Our class has been enjoying all the sunshine and fun with park day visits and camping this month. The physical coordination is astounding in these little people accomplishing a jungle gym activity or a bear hunt. With this Texas weather we have been able to go out every other day and enjoy all the natural vitamin D.

We are continuing our skip counting and the kids are liking our fun play of counting by 2, 3, or 5. Our students are learning their counting facts and double-digit addition facts. Repetition is the deciding factor and the more we

engage them the wonderful results keeping coming forward.

Thanks again for wonderful follow through in helping your kids become the best students instilling regular reading and sleeping patterns that proceed success.

**Mrs. Kelley  
Drama, Speech,  
Debate**

Happy May! It's hard to believe that we are in the home stretch. Students in my ELA classes are working hard to wrap up

their final books. This literature has brought about some lively discussions. The 5/6th graders have also just completed a fun hands-on project that relates to their current novel. We are continuing to work hard in both 5/6th and 7/8th grades on writing and grammar.

We are excited to finish out the year with play productions of two of the books the students have read: Twelve Angry Men and The Diary of Anne Frank. Please watch for an announcement of

date/time for this performance.

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

**Bud, Not Buddy** by Christopher Paul Curtis

**The Last Hero** by Rich Riordan

**Day of Tears** by Julio Lester

**Purple Hibiscus** by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

**Wolves of the Beyond: Frost Wolf 4<sup>th</sup> Edition** by Kathryn Lasky

# MATH

## How to Study for a Math Exam

Practice makes perfect when it comes to math - that's why your teacher assigns so many tedious homework problems! Many people try to study for math by simply memorizing formulas and equations the way they would memorize facts and dates. While knowing formulas and equations is important, the best way to learn them is by using them. Start studying early, do your homework, and ask your teacher for help if you run into any issues. Avoid cramming, try not to get stressed out, and make sure to get rest and eat well just before the test.

### Method 1 Preparing for the Test

**Look over your class notes.** After school, look over the notes you took in class that day for 15 to 20 minutes. As a test approaches, review your notes for the entire unit or chapter more thoroughly. Pay special attention to the example problems the teacher provided in class, since these will help break down how a given procedure or formula

works. If you don't have any class notes, ask your classmate for notes.

**Do problems similar to those that were assigned for homework.** Suppose you were assigned odd numbers for homework because the even numbers' answers are in the back of the book. Work on those even-numbered problems, then check your answers to see where your strengths and weaknesses are.

**Join a study group.** Different people see concepts in different ways. Something that you have difficulty understanding may come easily to a study partner. If everyone in the group is confused about something, ask the teacher for help.

**Have someone make up practice problems for you.** If you're in a study group, you can create and exchange practice tests for each other. Ask a family member or someone in your class to work on practice examples together. If your textbook has a website, see if you can download practice exams. Give yourself a time limit when taking a

practice test to simulate the real thing.

**Reward yourself for studying hard.** You deserve a break after a few hours of intense studying! Figure out some way to treat yourself after studying hard to help motivate yourself. For example, you could have a candy bar, go on a bike ride, play a game for 20 minutes, or do another low-key activity you enjoy.

**Rest and eat well just before the exam.** Try not to be stressed as the exam approaches. Get a good night's sleep the night before the exam. Have a full breakfast that morning and, if the test is later in the day, a good lunch. Try having a light, healthy snack, like almonds. This will help give your brain a little more fuel before the test.

### Method 2 Going to Your Classes

**Attend class every day.** Being there regularly is essential for learning well.

**Pay close attention.** Showing up to class is half the battle, so listen and pay attention to

the material. Seeing your teacher break down a problem on the board is key, since math is typically more visual than other subjects due to the equations and problem solving. Jot down any example problems from the session/class. When you review your notes later on, you will have a better feel for the specific lesson that was taught, rather than relying on your textbook.

**Ask your teacher any questions you have before the exam.** The teacher might not tell you specifically what is going to be on the exam, but they might give you helpful guidance if you don't understand. Asking questions about material that confuses you will also show the teacher you care about doing well in the class.—Each night after school, look over your notes. Highlight any questions you have and take them to your teacher for further explanation.

**Read the text.** Make sure you read all of the assigned text and not just the examples. Textbooks often include proofs of the formulas that will help you understand the lesson much more thoroughly. Further, if you do the assigned reading, you'll be better prepared for each class, so you'll be able to

actively participate. Actively participating or raising your hand to respond to and ask questions, will help your grade in the long run.

### Method 3 Studying Every Day

**Start studying as early as possible.** Start preparing for the test on day one of the unit. Each night after class, look over your notes from that session. Cramming the night before will just overwhelm you. If you give yourself time to study gradually, you'll have a better shot at mastering the material. In addition, you'll be able to identify weak spots and, if necessary, get extra help.

**Do your homework problems.** Most classes have assigned, or at least suggested, problems that the teacher feels are most useful. Exam problems are often similar to homework problems, so doing your daily homework is like taking a little practice test each day. If your textbook provides answers in the back of the book, use them only to check your work. If you choose to use them, try not to peek until after you've finished the assignment! Do all the work for each equation and keep your homework papers. Use them to study as the test approaches.

Never just copy someone else's homework.

**Get to know how a formula works.** It's typically more useful to understand how a formula is derived than simply memorizing it. Memorization is a good first step but getting a feel for why a formula works by doing plenty of practice problems will increase your shot at passing with flying colors. For example, you could simply memorize the sum of a triangle's interior angles, which always add up to 180 degrees. However, if you really get a feel for that formula, you could use it to solve other problems, like figuring out an unknown angle in a hexagon.

#### Tips:

During the test, you'll have a time limit, so you should start with the easier problems, and end with the harder ones.

As soon as you get your test, write as many formulas and equations down on the back of the test if you think you will forget them, or on a blank piece of paper.

Don't waste your time erasing mistakes. To save time, put a line through or scratch out any work you don't want your teacher to

consider. Of course, everybody differs.

When the test starts, first do the questions of highest point-value then the lowest.

By all means try to stay calm not too excited and not too afraid. Always proof read your work.

Don't study too hard on the day before the exam; it can be stressful. Just going through the formulae and major questions would be better.

Math can be hard, but if you focus in class, and practice your sums until you understand, you will succeed. Do not rush. Take your time, because there may be trick questions.

Practice daily.

Don't start panicking before the exam, instead just take some deep breaths and think positive like- "I will give my best in exam and will get good marks in it". This will keep you positive in exam.

## SCIENCE IN THE NEWS

**Excerpt from “Plastic taints most bottled water?”** By SHARON OOSTHOEK for [sciencenewsforstudents.org](http://sciencenewsforstudents.org)

In recent tests, bottled water from nine countries contained tiny plastic bits. The microscopic pieces may come from a variety of sources including cosmetics, clothing and packaging materials. Tiny plastic bits contaminate bottled water sold around the world, a new study finds. For now, scientists can only guess at the source of the plastic. Whether ingesting it might pose any risk also remains unknown.

Researchers tested more than 250 bottles of water [sampled from all over the world.] Plastic turned up in 93 out of every 100 of the bottles. Each tainted liter (almost one quart) held an average of 10 particles wider than a human hair, along with 300 smaller particles. But some bottles contained more — thousands of the floating specks. These really tiny bits are often referred to as microplastic fibers.

Many of these particles “are small enough to be transported through our bodies and end up in our organs,” says Sherri Mason. She is a chemist at the State University of New York in Fredonia. Plastic

pollution in the environment is nothing new. Tiny bits of plastic have turned up in rivers, lakes and oceans. Finding them has been easy. Figuring out their source has been harder.

Microplastics in water can come from larger pieces of plastic that break down in landfills and oceans. Sunlight and ocean waves also help break up pieces of plastic. Even clothes can shed microplastics. Fabrics such as fleece and nylon are made from plastic. When washed, they shed bits of plastic lint. It travels from the wash water down household drains and eventually into rivers, lakes and oceans.

Other microplastic beads go in some toothpastes and skin-care products. These beads help scrub away tooth plaque and dead skin cells. Then they, too, wash down the drain.

Plastics are made from many types of chemicals. There isn't yet enough research to know how many of these might affect human health. After all, they were never designed

to be eaten. Plastic also acts like a sponge, soaking up many types of chemicals. For example, pesticides and other toxic compounds have been found in plastics floating in the ocean. So plastic particles might ferry such pollutants into bottled water, too.

Mason worries that more and more plastic is turning up in the environment.

Part of the problem, she says, is that we use a lot of disposable plastic. Plastic bags, bottles and straws are the major culprits. "Say 'no' to straws, because they suck," Mason recommends. "And don't use plastic bags for wrapping sandwiches. There are reusable products you can use instead."

## ENGLISH NEWS

The ability to communicate effectively has always been important, but now that we're in the digital age it is essential to know how to convey and receive messages appropriately, in person as well as by phone, email, and social media.

Good communication contributes to success in any field, and recent studies have identified the vital skills that are required. These include aspects of communication that aren't typically considered, such as the following:

Listening: Active listening involves paying attention,

asking clarifying questions, and rephrasing for understanding.

Clarity and conciseness: Say what you mean clearly and directly, using language appropriate to the situation and the person you're addressing.

Friendliness: A friendly tone, a personal question, or simply a smile can encourage open and honest communication and allow people to feel heard and appreciated.

Confidence: Believe in what you're saying and follow through, while also listening carefully.

Empathy: Even when you disagree, it is important to understand and respect other points of view. Acknowledge other people's views and demonstrate that you have been listening.

Open-mindedness: A good communicator should enter any conversation with a flexible, open mind, willing to engage in dialogue for more honest, productive conversations.

Respect: People will be more open to communication if you convey respect for them and their ideas. To show respect on the phone,

avoid distractions and stay focused; in email, take the time to edit your message before sending.

Consider the format and the audience: An

important communication skill is to understand what form of communication to use, whether formal or informal, and to know what is appropriate for your intended audience.

The good news is that good communication skills can be learned and developed. The even better news is that they greatly enhance our ability to achieve goals and succeed in them.

## CAMPING

### UPPER SCHOOL

Overnight Camping for the upper school (5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>) grades will be May 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>. Students will need to bring their sleeping bags, pillows, swim suits etc.

Please review itemized list emailed to parents.

Students will be allowed to participate in additional recreational activities at the lake for instance: horseback riding, mini-golf, and paddle boats.

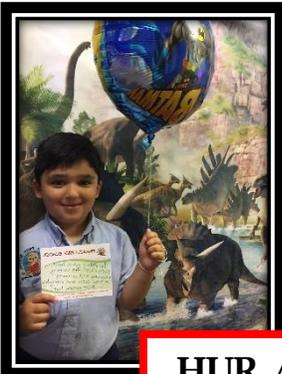
If students would like to participate, they will need to bring additional money for each activity.

# STUDENTS OF THE DAY SPOTLIGHT

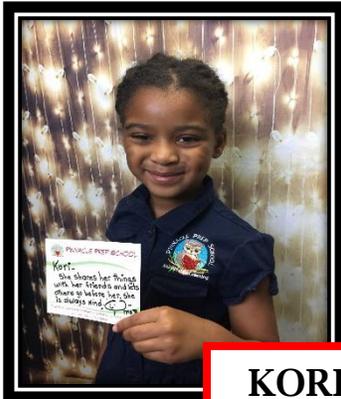
## April Students of the Day



**RAZA K.**



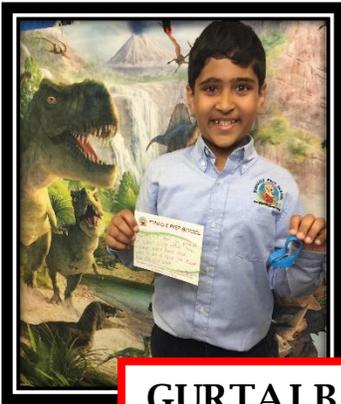
**HUR A.**



**KORI F.**



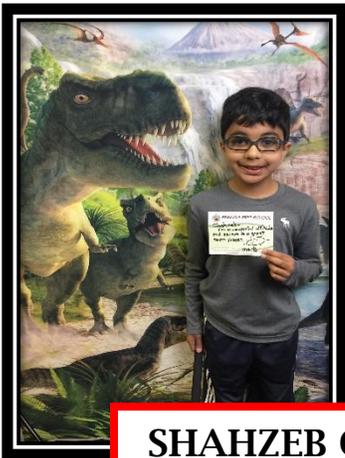
**FATIMA K.**



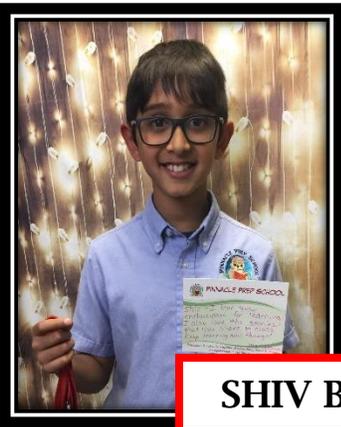
**GURTAJ B.**



**ALIZEH R.**



**SHAHZEB C.**



**SHIV B.**



**MAYSUM**

## CURRENT EVENTS

**May 4-6-** Upper School Camping  
**May 9-10-** Upper School Exams  
**May 11-** Mother's Day Tea (pre-k to 8<sup>th</sup>)  
**May 12-15-** Upper School Exams  
**May 28-** Holiday  
**May 31-** Book Reports Due  
**June 6-** Report Cards  
**June 7-** Last Day of School

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