



The Pinnacle Prep Newsletter

SCHOOL IS IN FULL SWING!

Happy September, Pinnacle Prep students and parents. We are so excited to really begin the school year with all of you. We hope these first few weeks have been both productive and serene as we take the time to get back into the rhythm of things. We are looking forward to a fantastic school year full of exploration and adventure.

As you may have noticed, we have a few new faces around the building! There are new students, new teachers, and a new office manager. Take the time to stop by and say hello to all the new faces here at Pinnacle Prep. We are so glad these people have joined our family.

If you have yet to meet me, my name is Halie Evans, and I am the new Office Manager! I am the one responding to most e-mails throughout the day, answering phone calls, and sending out those fun Remind 101 text messages. If you have any questions about anything, please feel free to ask.

A little about me: I am 21 years old, a history major and future teacher, and currently engaged to my fiancé, Zaid. I have two dogs who love all things water related, as do I. I have been working with kids for five years and in a secretarial role for two. This job combines so many of my favorite things, and I am so excited to get to go on this journey with your family.

Sincerely,

Halie Evans

Office Manager

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MRS.ANU'S MATH LAB

Welcome back Pinnacle Prep School Students. Last school year has been a blast and I am really excited for the upcoming year.

We started the school year by reviewing Place Values, Standard Form and Expanded Form for fourth, fifth and sixth graders. For my third graders, we will be reviewing addition and subtraction with estimation. We will be working on Front end Estimation and estimating by place values. We will also be working on Larger Sums and Differences. My main stress will be on Problem Solving Strategy and Application using Addition and Subtraction.

Fourth Graders will be working on decimal Place Values. We will be working on Estimation of numbers to decimal places and also including money. We will be working on various Addition and Multiplication properties (Commutative, Associative, Identity, Inverse, Distributive). We will be spending most of our time on Problem Solving Strategy and Application.

Sixth Graders started the school year by reviewing Place Value, Expanded Form. We will continue working on Place Value and Exponents. We will be working on writing and evaluating Addition and Subtraction Expressions. Students will be learning to solve word problems by using variables and writing equations. We will be working on Exponents and Scientific Notation.

Eighth Graders started the school year by reviewing order of operations, equations, inequalities and inverse operations. We will be working on The Decimal System. Students will be working on simplifying various algebraic expressions involving decimals. We will be reviewing integers and work on Negative Integers as Exponents. We will also be working on various operations of Rational Numbers involving variables.

Some of our eighth graders are reviewing Geometry before starting with Algebra 2!

MR.OLIVER'S CORNER OF THE WORLD

Hello Pinnacle Prep! As a new teacher I feel a need to introduce myself. I'm Mr. Oliver and this is my first ever year of classroom teaching! You can guess my apprehensions when my first lesson began on a sweltering and sweaty August morning. What sort of students would I be instructing? Would they hold me in contempt, or worse, in complete apathy? As the semester has progressed, my anxieties have all but dissipated. Your students have welcomed me into the Pinnacle community, and now even children from other classes cheerily and eagerly greet me in the morning. I'm so glad to be here with your awesome kids!

My 4th graders have ran the gamut so far. Our first big project was to write an "introductory" essay, using "showing" instead of "telling" language to explain short anecdotes that the students felt were essential to share. I emphasized, perhaps over-emphasized, the importance of being vivid, specific and detailed. It is now not uncommon to hear a solemn "Be more vivid! Be more specific!" chant in the hallways of our school. Or, if our students are feeling a little more confrontational: "DON'T be vivid! DON'T be specific!", this variation accompanied by an impish grin. When our class time isn't usurped by PE, we also have spent our time reading flash fiction, refreshing our vocabulary, and practicing reading comprehension with our SRA lessons.

The enthusiasm of this class really inspires me. On one occasion just last week, I dismissed the kids to lunch and recess after an hour-long lesson. "What?", complained one of the fourth graders. "But I want to keep writing!"

As for the inimitable eighth grade class, we occasionally take breaks from our Fortnite discussions to study English literature, language and grammar. We have spent some time in both creative and analytical writing, as well as on SAT-level vocabulary, American history, and even pressing current events.

It is a well-known phenomenon that the tribe of thirteen year old boys is a band utterly immune to the charms of poetry and prose; yet our students have demonstrated themselves the exception which proves the rule. I will let them speak in their own words- Dickinson's work is "satisfying," "welcoming," "beautiful;" Saunders is "intriguing" and "awesome;" Austen is "so good." In short, I report that this class' reputation for gab should not belie the students' affections, which are towards the sincerest appreciation of beauty.



Friendship is so important!

MRS.KENNEDY'S READING LEAD-

Mrs.Kennedy's morning class has been enjoying meeting new friends, practicing manners, and learning our new songs for vowels, months, days, weather and more. We are remembering the ways to be a good friends, classmate, and audience. Routines. And procedures are so important.

Mrs.Kennedy's second class is practicing sounds and symbols, story elements, and how to blend sounds to make and read words.

Please read with your child nightly. Ask them for predictions and comprehensive questions. Have your child describe character feelings and problems or surprises they found in the story. Readers are Leaders!

IN THE LAB WITH MRS.HOZIE

We began the school year with a bang...well more like a pop. Our popcorn lab highlighted the law of conservation of mass as well as how to conduct (and document) an experiment. Students also practiced measuring skills using graduated cylinders. This particular experiment involved finding the density of several irregular objects using the immersion/displacement method. Students finished out August by learning about the water cycle and its continuous flow around us. They learned that the water cycle and its key processes affect our lands, oceans, atmosphere, and thus, all life on Earth. The ongoing need for fresh-water conservation will also be highlighted in upcoming lessons. In the coming weeks, Pinnacle science students will conduct more hands-on experiences that will contribute to their understanding of evaporation, condensation, and

Astronomers say water worlds could support life

Published on UPI.com by Brooks Hays

Scientists at the University of Chicago and Pennsylvania State University believe some water worlds could be habitable. Scientists have identified oceans on the moons of Jupiter and Saturn as a prime target for the discovery of alien life, but most assumed water worlds -- planets covered entirely by water -- are inherently unstable. However, new research suggests water worlds are more stable than previously thought. "This really pushes back against the idea you need an Earth clone -- that is, a planet with some land and a shallow ocean," Edwin Kite, assistant professor of geophysical sciences at Chicago, said in a news release. Because it takes a long time for life to develop and evolve, scientists searching for alien life look for atmospheric stability. Land is essential to Earth's approach to long-term climate stability. Across large time scales, Earth cools itself by pulling greenhouse gases from the atmosphere and turning them into minerals and warms itself by releasing carbon into the atmosphere via volcanoes. Water worlds can't use the Earth method. To see if there was an alternative approach to atmospheric stability, scientists simulated thousands of randomly generated planets. Their model tracked the evolution of the atmosphere on each simulated world. "The surprise was that many of them stay stable for more than a billion years, just by luck of the draw," Kite said. "Our best guess is that it's on the order of 10 percent of them." As their model revealed, some water worlds are born with just the right amount of carbon and are the right distance from their host star. The landless planets simply stabilize their climate by moving carbon back and forth between their oceans and atmosphere.



Friendship is so important!

MRS. BAGBEY'S BUSY BEE'S

Wow. . . what a fantastic beginning we have made! We have been brushing up on our multiplication flash cards, reviewing grammar rules for writing and enjoying the enrichment of reading fiction stories! We will be looking at our writing process steps and using our new vocabulary and spelling words in our writing responses. We are excited about to be exploring plants and animals and exploring our natural surroundings! Throughout our year, we are learning the 7 Habits of the Leader in Me and have already started on

Habit #1 Proactive. We are growing in the awareness that each of us has leadership qualities in us.

IN THE KNOW WITH MRS. KELLEY

Dear Parents,

We have had a great start to the year! I'm thoroughly enjoying getting to know your students.

We've been very busy in English and have accomplished a lot in a short time. We are finishing a short story unit this week. Various elements of literature have been covered in preparation for our study of novels, which will begin next week. Students have also worked on reading comprehension, vocabulary, writing, and grammar. We will continue on improving skills and mastery in these areas for the remainder of the year.

I look forward to seeing how much your awesome students will accomplish this year!

School is up and moving, and Mrs. Griffin's English groups have been spending the first few weeks of school reading short stories with a focus on vocabulary and reading comprehension. The students will soon be starting their first novel for the year, *A Wrinkle in Time*, and the students are excited to begin their next adventure.

Mrs. Griffin is happy to see the progress from her students in the first few weeks of work. "Their essays are getting better with each assignment. I have seen marked improvement, even in the short time school has been in session. The students love to learn, and that focus is leading to good writing. I have great expectations for this year! The students are learning to stay focused while writing, and they are also increasing their vocabulary through spelling," she states.

September promises to be a successful and adventurous time at Pinnacle Prep School as they concentrate their efforts to assure EVERY child achieves success in a helpful and quality centered fashion.

September is building these amazing students up to be ready for outer space! Our day starts with a theme and purpose of discovery. We started with the 7 Continents and learning them with direction ie. North- North America, South-South America, Antarctica West- Asia, Australia, East-Europe, Africa. Reinforced with technology via space pictures and catchy Youtube videos. We have loved learning catchy jingles to keep this information fresh in our minds!

Our class studies the world around us and how to care for our wonderful land and water. Katie Woo books are about her saving the world in reusing old toys, fixing things that have broken for repurpose, and recycling our plastics, tins, glass, and paper. I want them to be aware of these tools to move towards a better future. It's never too late to start!

Our Blasting Rockets have fun with our sounds and blending vowels and consonants to better understand their reading time. We enjoy lots of fun ways to unlock reading with picture books, coloring, and crafts. The class has different activities and constantly changing as to not cause overload on a certain theme. I would be so happy to hear about any books or games your families enjoy at home to better associate these fundamental ideas to cultivate a better understanding.

MS. JESSICA'S NOOK

My second graders and I have enjoyed getting to know each other even better this year! So far, we have been working on a variety of review items such as spelling, grammar, and handwriting. Every morning students work on D.O.L. (Daily Oral Language). During this time, students analyze and discuss sentences that have various mistakes and we make corrections. In their journal, you will see where your student has written the correct form of the sentence and sometimes identify the nouns/pronouns. We are also working on penmanship as we are starting on pre-cursive handwriting. Students are enjoying our "making words" lessons and our "mini sight word" books.

Also, we are reading short stories every day in class as well as dissecting poems. You will also find these poems, and other activities, in their journals when they are sent home later in September. The students are writing every day in their journals for D.O.L., story responses, spelling, and other

word lists and charts. We will have a prompt every week or every two weeks. We have been working on "If I was a Giant" and will soon be working on "If I Invented a Robot."

Please be reading at home with your child every night. Students need to be doing a combination of reading aloud to you and reading to themselves. You can have students write a short summary or write about their favorite part after reading to assist with reading comprehension. Also, I will be sending home a master spelling list shortly (September 4) so that you can have a master at home. On September 4, we will be on week 3 of the list.

We have had a great start to the year and I can't wait to see what the rest of the year brings. I'm positive that it is going to be fun and your students are going to enjoy all of the activities and learn a lot along the way.

MS. JAYA'S MATHLETES

It is great to welcome back everyone after a wonderful summer break. All students are working very hard. We have started the school year by revising skills that we learned last year. First Graders are busy learning to add doubles digit numbers from 1-10. They did a wonderful job playing Addition Bingo and learning double digit addition. Upon completion, we will start learning odd and even numbers, missing numbers and subtraction. The 3rd graders are learning place value of numbers, writing numbers in standard, expanded and word form along with comparison and ordering of numbers. They are also learning about counting and estimating money. We will continue to review money, adding money, compare and order money. We will also learn number line, adding and estimating larger numbers. The 4th graders reviewed place value concepts, estimation and rounding. They are now working on fractions. We will continue to work on equivalent fractions, comparing and ordering fractions, simplifying fractions, fractions on a number line and so on.

ART OF HANDWRITING

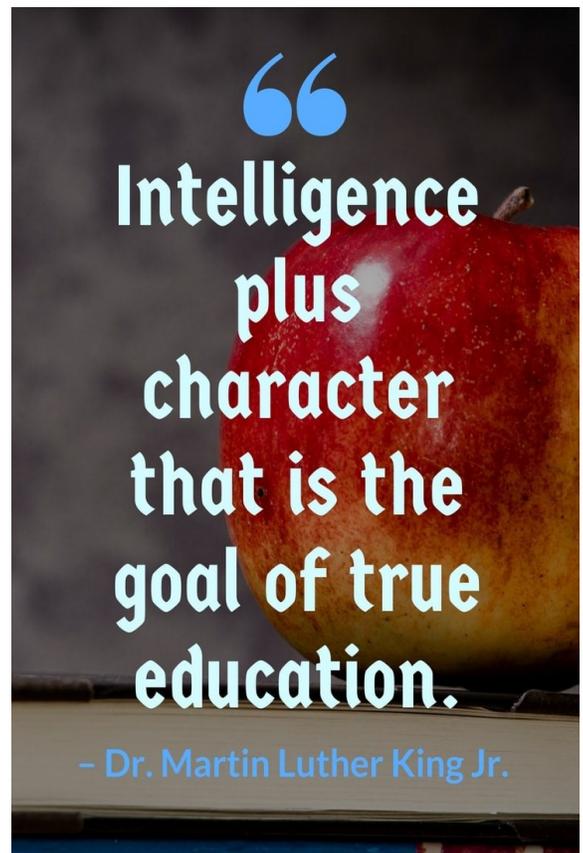
Why Hand Written Essays are Still Important
~ Stacy Griffin

Many adults can still remember the thrill of receiving a handwritten letter from a loved one for a birthday or special occasion. My grandmother's handwriting was pristine, and her words were filled with eloquence and love. The connection I felt with every card or letter was palpable. This scenario is quickly becoming a thing of the past. Handwritten letters are too "old school" for today's tech savvy students. In fact, in this technological age, many children spend more time in front of a screen than they do in face to face or personal interactions.

While technology is useful, and certainly makes life easier, it can often overwhelm and eliminate other important facets of a person's life. Many studies have shown that too much screen time can cause attention disorders. In this high paced world, we at Pinnacle Prep School feel that although technology is useful, and certainly has a place in education, that it is also vital to a student's development to learn to slow down and focus; therefore, we encourage students to write their essays by hand before typing them.

Writing out an essay by hand allows a student to slow down their thoughts enough to gain clarity and focus within their writing. This is especially vital with our young students who are just learning to write essays. As their hands scrape the pencil across the page, their minds are allowed to create connections that might otherwise be missed. Our youngest students learn not only how to form the letters, but also how they sound. This allows for faster connectivity with early reading, and ultimately writing clearly when they are older. Pinnacle Prep School takes pride in our "old school values" because they have positive and amazing results. We understand that in order for a student to truly thrive in their education, they need to be able to connect with their thoughts clearly and effectively. Hand writing their work allows this to happen.

Many of our thoughts are supported by professionals in other fields as well. Richard Gentry Ph.D. states in Psychology Today that handwriting is vital neurologically as well. Here is a list of reason why.



1. Why? Handwriting helps kids develop reading circuitry in their brains.
2. Why? Handwriting makes better writers and spellers and predicts reading and academic success.
3. Why? Handwriting makes both children – and adults – smarter! Close those laptops!
4. How? Start out with teacher modeling
5. How? Teach handwriting directly and explicitly.

Full article with details can be found at: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/raising-readers-writers-and-spellers/201609/5-brain-based-reasons-teach-handwriting-in-school>

Much like calculator dependence in math can harm students during testing and real life applications, such as balancing a bank account on the fly, a dependence on grammar and spelling software can cause students to lose their language. Hand writing guarantees that lacks in spelling, grammar, tone, and thought process are caught, corrected, and ultimately eliminated. Since what we as teachers want most is the success of your child, we at Pinnacle Prep have our students embrace the rule of write first, and type later.

IMPORTANT DATES

October 8*– No School

October 12*– No School

November 19-23*– Thanksgiving Break

November 26– Classes Resume

December 20-January 4*–

Winter Break

January 7– Classes Resume

January 21– No School

March 11-15*– Spring Break

March 18– Classes Resume

April 19*– Good Friday

May 27*–Memorial Day

June 4– Last Day of School

APPS THE WHOLE FAMILY WILL LOVE

In this day and age, censoring what your children have access to on the internet is becoming more and more difficult. How they use their device time can be crucial to their development. Feel free to read this article for some tips on how to make the most of devices with your children:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/expert-opinion/5-keys-to-parenting-in-the-digital-world/>

Apps for Every Grade

Prek-Kindergarten

- Monstapals
- Krakeln

1st-2nd Grade

- Issa's Edible Adventures
 - Learnia

3rd-4th Grade

- Code Adventures: Programming for Kids
 - Running Noah

5th-6th Grade

- Handybot
- Monkey Stick Crossing

7th-8th Grade

- Gold Rush 2
- Jumping Miner

Websites for Kids

PBSKids.org

Starfall.com

CoolMath.com

Scholastic.com

HowStuffWorks.com