



PINNACLE PREP SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

December 1, 2018

Wizard of Oz

We are delighted to invite you to this year's play, "The Wizard of Oz." The performances will be at the Pinnacle Prep Campus on Wednesday, December 12th and Thursday, December 13th at 7:00 p.m. Cast A will perform on December 12th, and Cast B will perform on December 13th.



Cast A



Cast B



Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held on Wednesday, December 19, 2018.

Winter break will be from December 19, 2018 to January 4, 2019.

Classes will resume on January 7th!

Pre- K and Kindergarten

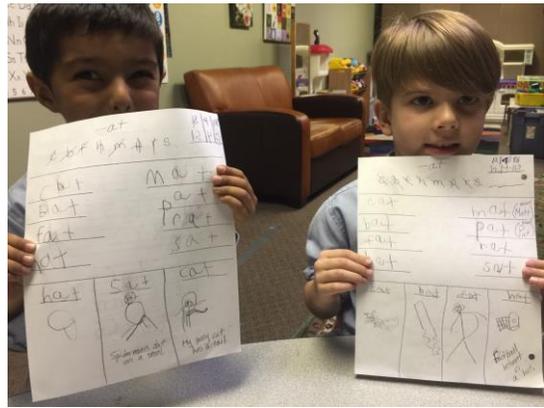
Morning circle time this month included the change to fall, learning the difference between breezy and windy, as well as the differences of cold, cool, warm or hot. They learned a song about measurements and we explored bushel, peck, barrel, and heap. I also introduced the vowels' second sound, their long sound, which says the vowel's name. We have been learning proper gender and group pronouns.

My morning class started learning to identify, create, sound out and read -at words. A few of the students grabbed the concept well enough to read beginning phonics books.

In math, we continue counting, but more importantly, we are working to identify the numbers in the -teens family.

Science and social studies were about deciduous and evergreen trees. We also learned how fall crops are eaten and stored to eat for Thanksgiving Dinner, an acknowledgement of friendships and plentifulness, as well as food for the upcoming winter.

We will be exploring the calendar, weather, and season changes. We will also learn about a variety of winter traditions and more ways to blend sounds to make words.



Pre- K and Kindergarten

November was enjoyed by all! We had great activities this month. Our class painted with autumn colors and made handprints into turkeys to share with their family. They enjoyed Rhyming Time and had lots of fun by singing Five Fat Turkeys. The students also enjoyed the book 'Twas the Night Before Thanksgiving. They giggled and laughed with each other along with the storyline of how the students brought home pet turkeys.



This December we're off to imagining our own special home with a spin off on the Gingerbread house. The classic story of the Gingerbread Man will be a delight to share and all the kids enjoy the sly fox most of all. We will continue to read aloud every day and participate in counting activities. We will continue counting by tens to 100. Students are working with consonant letter blends and long and short vowel usage during their reading time. We will start with our noun concept and continue with our directions of North, South, East and West. With the winter season upon us we will learn about the winter solstice and learn some fun facts about the moon. Our class is busy making fun winter crafts that share the love and light in all of us to make our world so wonderful.

Lower English

Happy Holidays Pinnacle Prep School students; we have all enjoyed the cooler temperatures and getting out in the sunshine.

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) or pre-cursive handwriting. We have also been reviewing comma usage and comma placement. The students will also be learning about syllables, homophones and synonyms. Students are still enjoying our “making words” lessons and our “mini sight word” books. They look forward to the books every Thursday!

Also, we are reading short stories every day in class as well as dissecting poems. Some of the themed poems include pumpkin pie, reindeer, gingerbread men and winter. You can find these poems, and other activities, in their journals. The students are writing every day in their journals for D.O.L., story responses, spelling, and other word lists and charts. The students have enjoyed writing about their favorite things, what they are grateful for and about their Thanksgiving Break.

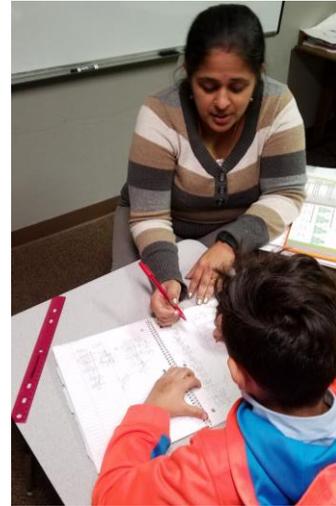
For Open House, we will be working on a special project. The kids are very excited and can't wait to show them to their parents. Upcoming assignments include: “Funny Faces,” a book of lists, and New Year's Resolutions. For every writing assignment, the students go through the writing process (pre-writing, rough copy, edit/revise and final copy). Every child receives one on one attention during the editing phase as well as mini lessons throughout the week.

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. Please be filling out the reading log that has been going home. A new book is sent home on Mondays and they are due back to school on Fridays. If your child is reading their own book at home, please fill out the log indicating the book and how many minutes they read. Also, we have started the new set of spelling lists. I wanted to see how the kids did with them this week before sending a list home. They did a great job! I'll be sending the master list home ASAP!



Lower Math

First graders did a great job in measuring length. We then moved on to money, in which kids are learning about different coins and its denominations. They are also learning about how to count money. Once completed we will learn about telling time on both digital and analog clock. The third graders worked on estimating, multiplying and dividing numbers. We will soon be starting on division of larger numbers followed by fractions. The fourth graders worked on adding and subtracting fractions and mixed numbers with like and unlike denominators. We are now working on multiplying fractions with mixed numbers and will be moving on to dividing fractions with mixed numbers.



Upper Math

Fourth Graders spent good amount of time working on order of operations and division estimation. We will continue working on Problem Solving Strategies for division. In the month of December we will continue working on Measurements. Students will work on Measurements and learn renaming units of length. Students will learn addition and subtraction of mixed Customary Units. Students will work on Customary units of Weight and Capacity. We will also start with metric units and work on metric units of length, capacity and mass. We will continue working on Problem Solving strategies and applications for Measurement.

Fifth Graders practiced GCF and LCM. In December we will be spending time reviewing addition and subtraction of fractions with like and unlike denominators. Students will be working on estimated addition and subtraction with fractions. We will continue working on Problem Solving Strategies and Applications with fractions.

Sixth Graders will continue working on Expressions and Equations. Students will work on Order of Operations. We will be translating word phrases to expressions and vice versa and then evaluating expressions with the given value of the variable. Kids will be learning concept of Open and Closed Equations and Inequalities. We will continue working on problem Solving Strategies and Applications.

Algebra 2 students did great job working on Quadratic Equations and Functions. In December we will start with Polynomial Equations and Functions. Students will start with evaluating and graphing polynomial functions. We will also practice various mathematical operations on Polynomials. Students will review factoring and solving polynomial equations. Students will be learning new concept of The Remainder and Factor Theorem and the Fundamental Theorem of Algebra.



Upper English

It's an exciting time in our English classes! Our quest to bring literature to life through the arts is progressing along perfectly. The students have learned their lines and blocking for The Wizard of Oz, and now they are rehearsing the show so that it will be a great performance. We are excited for you to see it! We are also still working on grammar lessons along with rehearsals each day.

Thank you for your help in making our show spectacular!

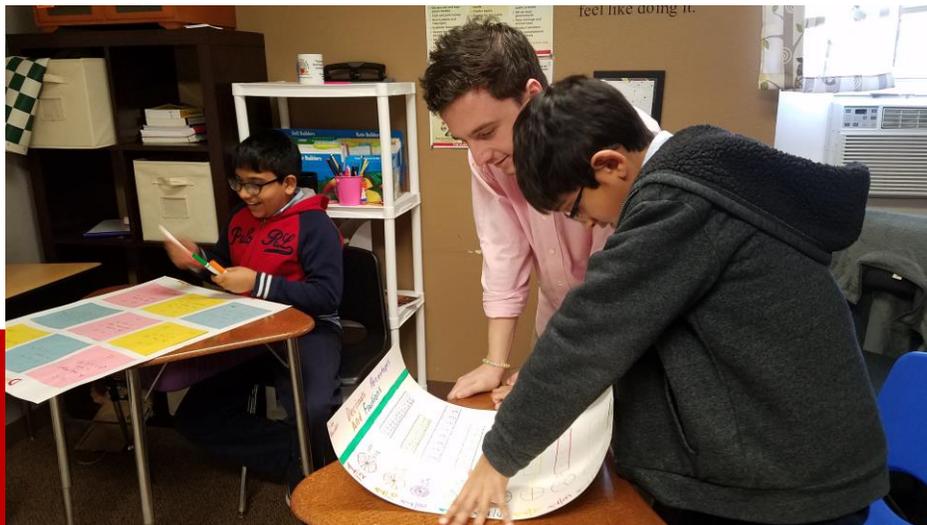


Upper History, Math & English

The eighth grade has been preparing for an upcoming cumulative examination by working on grammar, history and reading. Our grammar focus has been on capitalization and comma rules, using them correctly for practical and even more obscure cases (do you always capitalize the word “president,” if it refers to the President of the United States? What is the difference between essential and non-essential clauses?) We finished reading *Anne Frank: Diary of a Young Girl* and are now in the midst of London’s adventure classic *Call of the Wild*.

My morning math class is still grappling with operations performed on negative numbers and beginning to understand the ways that “subtraction” or “division” can be understood as the addition or multiplication by additive or multiplicative reciprocals. We’ve used both “sign rules” as well as number lines and the distributive property to help understand this concept. And occasionally, we’ll talk about other mathematical curiosities of interest, such as the existence of only a single number b such that $x+b=x$ (0, of course); the impossibility of dividing by this number; etc.

Finally, the seventh grade English class has been continuing to study American history, English language arts, and argumentative writing, punctuated by continued work on theater performance in the upcoming *Wizard of Oz* production. (If I may shamelessly plug it here: please go see it on the 12th or 13th! All of the students are working very hard on it, and it would be a shame to miss it.)



Science Lab News

For the past several weeks, many of our students have been busy with their Science Fair projects. Data collection is an integral part of an experiment but so much more goes into planning, executing, and communicating good science.

Students went through the process:

- brainstorming experiment ideas
- identifying testable questions
- distinguishing between controls, independent and dependent variables
- narrowing down a topic
- making a proposal
- developing a hypothesis
- revising an experiment using available materials
- researching a topic for background information
- taking good notes
- citing sources
- setting up a logbook for data collection and observations
- good planning for an experiment

Many students completed their data collection over the Thanksgiving break. Others have been finishing up this past week. Now the real fun begins! Students will create graphs from their data and study for trends. Data analysis, conclusions, and reflections will follow. A multi-page final lab report will take much of a week to draft, edit and complete. Finally, each student will put together a presentation board with pictures, data analysis, etc. We have some recycled boards at school or parents may purchase them. Contact the office if you have any questions regarding your student's participation in this exciting hands-on experience.

Finally, our younger students have been studying electricity and circuits. They just finished creating a fun doodle robot. With this hands-on activity, students applied their knowledge of electric circuits to design and construct a simple circuit with a motor. Now, these students can trace the pathway the energy travels from the battery through the motor and back. They also worked on distinguishing insulators from conductors as well as how to tell if a circuit is open or closed. Check out our video on Facebook.



Science in the News

The Benefits of Competing in Science Fairs — a Student's Perspective

By Shravan Ravishankar

Published by <https://www.stemwizard.com>

Science fairs can sound like torture. To many students, it is the bane of their existence. Yet science fairs are so useful and helpful for learning all kinds of life skills — the kind you don't get to learn in school. Science fairs force students to go above and beyond what is typically required of them in school projects. It teaches you interpersonal skills like how to present research or how to advocate for your own ideas in a research setting. These are skills that I and millions of other students have acquired through our experience with science fairs.

Because of the nature of science fairs, the hardest and most important part of the process is presenting the research to judges who may or may not understand the material in the project. Explaining intense research to qualified scientists can be incredibly intimidating. However, presenting and breaking down complex information is a critically important skill for students to learn, yet is typically not taught directly in school. Being able to talk to complete strangers and articulate a viewpoint is an incredibly valuable skill that science fairs help instill in students.

Another crucial piece of a science fair is the actual research process often conducted in a lab. Thinking scientifically is simple to imagine in school. Yet it takes on a much different meaning when you are initiating the project from start to finish. The experience of devising an experiment, evaluating results and coming up with a conclusion is not something that all students get. For me, getting the chance to work in a research setting with competent and experienced researchers made the process of taking on a science fair project much easier. I learned a lot; not just about solar cells, but also about the different processes used to create different sources of energy. Even though my research focused on dye-sensitized solar cells, I gained a great appreciation for the entire energy market and for the scope of the challenges facing solar energy to become viable. The ability to participate in research, connect with experienced researchers and gain an appreciation for science in the context of the bigger picture are all benefits from participating in science fairs that are nearly impossible to find elsewhere.

Finally, the scientific knowledge gained through participating is another outstanding benefit of science fairs. The research process and the ability to explain the research are both more important in science fairs, but the actual knowledge acquired during the scientific process is useful as well. Between reading papers written about past research and acquiring knowledge through experimentation, learning about the field you are experimenting in can give you a good idea about what you want to consider as a career. It can give you an indication as to what kind of degree you want to pursue in higher education. In a worst-case scenario, it can also tell you what professions you want to avoid, which is just as valuable. This knowledge not only provides a great advantage in question-and-answer sessions during science fairs, it can help you through difficult classes you may take in high school.

In summary, a science fair is a great investment of time and energy that produces amazing rewards. It can open doors to career opportunities, improve speaking skills and increase scientific knowledge. The advantages of participating in science fairs are limited only by the amount of work you put into it.

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