

GAZZETTE

SMOC

Editorial

Message of The principal

Facing our Faces of Fear

We see each other every day, yet we meet new people even if the same people are the ones who stay. We hide ourselves because we are afraid to face the mistakes that we did and the ones that are yet to cross our way. It's not easy to fake a smile, to swallow a scream, to hide a tear; it's not easy to feel the pain and suffer with this misery that you call fear.

Is it the fear of knowing your true self, the person behind the mask? Is it the fear of finding out that you are actually an awful person- a monster hiding to cover up the sins that will forever last? What is it that you expect to find if you open that forbidden door at last, that door that joins who you are right now with who you used to be in the past?

To be able to face the people who are near, you need to ask yourself these questions first: "Who am I? Why is my image so unclear?" If you could answer these questions you hold so dear, these questions that define you, release you, and relinquish you from all that is unclear, only then would you be able to read between the lines of what is up, and what it is that lies behind.

People will look into your eyes and they will find the answers to your questions, for they are that door into your soul, that deep ocean your fears will eventually drown into... You will be confused for you thought no one knew about the shame you tried to hide for all those years, the sadness you never spoke about ringing so loud in your ears. There will come a time when you won't be able to take it any longer, you will search for answers you seek from or in total strangers we pass by, but you will never really find them and you will keep on wondering why.

All we see is a reflection of our own faces, a reflection that is filled with repulsion and distaste that are amazingly outrageous. We fail to accept the flaws that flow in our blood, we fail to express the truth that never really seems to fill up our cup, we expect people to understand and verify our different faces when we ourselves fail to identify the one true face that lies beneath all the other faces. We fail to be courageous, courageous enough to let go of the past, hold on to what's important, and let go of whatever it is that wasn't built to last.

Let's face our faces before these leeches take hold of our hearts, and suck the life away. Facing our faces is the truth behind all that is unclear. Facing our faces is the mystery we drowned into and started to fear. Facing our faces is the one thing our souls need to reveal all that is, all that was and all that will ever be that we hold dear...

Nour Kabbara - G12 HP

مع الربيع الآتي أكتب إليكم أيها الشباب...
 أكتب إليكم لأن الروح قوية فيكم.
 أكتب إليكم لأنكم لستم الجيل الذي يُتقن البكاء على الأطلال.
 أكتب إليكم لأنكم قادرين أن تعترفوا بأخطائكم وتنمضوا من سقطاتكم.
 أكتب إليكم لأنكم لستم من الذين يحملون المؤامرة مسؤولية هزائمهم المتتالية.
 أكتب إليكم لكي تحطموا الأصنام التي لها عيون ولا تُبصر ولها آذان ولا تسمع.
 أكتب إليكم لكي تُسكتوا أصحاب الألسنة الخشبية واللغة الرتيبة.
 أكتب إليكم لكي تواجهوا بإرادتكم القوية استسلامنا لقدرية التاريخ.
 أكتب إليكم لأن نضارة عقولكم قادرة أن تنقذ عالماً لم يعرف جيلنا كيف يحافظ عليه.
 أكتب إليكم لأن فيكم حيوية قادرة أن تحوّل مساراتنا المنحدرة إلى قمم النجاح.
 أكتب إليكم لأنكم قادرين أن تصنعوا ما لم يعد جيلنا قادراً أن يصنعه.
 أكتب إليكم لأنكم تجرأتم الخروج من أقبية الخوف وشرّعتم نوافذ قلوبكم على أشعة الشمس.
 أكتب إليكم لتنتطقوا بلغة جديدة تحرك العقول لأنها تحاكي القلوب.
 أكتب إليكم لكي تصنعوا لأنفسكم مستقبلاً لا تخجلون به أمام أولادكم.
 أكتب إليكم لأننا سنمنا الظلمة والظلال.
 أكتب إليكم لأنكم تحملون الرجاء.
 اكتب إليكم على رجاء أن لا تبقى كلماتي إليكم ... مجرد كلمات...

الإيكونوموس جورج ديماس





A Visit to the Elderly Nursing Home

In a humble attempt to commemorate the efforts mothers in general give for the welfare of their children, our school organized a visit to St. George Nursing home.

The aim of this visit wasn't only for entertainment but also to spend time with the old people who have no one beside them, and to show them that they surely have some people who are ready to talk to them and visit them as well. At the same time some of us had the chance to reveal their talents like

for example I had the privilege to play on my guitar and share happy moments with the elders. They seemed to really enjoy the activity and the mothers over there were very interactive and they all sang along. Some read a story that was quite catchy; others shared with them riddles and jokes. Not to mention all the games we played with them like memory card game...

I think our visit was a good idea for we felt that we have brightened the day of the old folks. Unfortunately, we sometimes tend to forget about the old ones and we get busy with our own lives forgetting that those people- who are all mothers- devoted their lives and time for their children and even grand children.

We have definitely learned from this experience that we should at times stop everything we are doing and think of others. Here, I encourage everyone to spend more quality time with their families and loved ones. A hug and a sincere kiss given to our mothers can make their day and show them that we acknowledge their devotion and appreciate their continuous efforts.

Talal Raad - G7A



L'Engagement social commence à l'école

Partant des objectifs principaux des écoles orthodoxes de Beyrouth qui visent à «aider l'apprenant à construire une personnalité bien équilibrée et intégrée pour une bonne interaction avec la communauté à laquelle il appartient» et dans le but de favoriser chez les jeunes apprenants l'esprit de l'initiative en vue de contribuer au changement de la société, plusieurs activités sociales ont lieu au cours de chaque année scolaire (en plus des activités permanentes qui se déroulent automatiquement chaque année comme le « Food Sale » et le « Civil Day » et dont l'objectif consiste à initier les apprenants aux bonnes attitudes sociales).

Pour les aider à couvrir leurs besoins, « Al Majal » a lancé le projet de vente de produits que les apprenants de l'institution (souffrant de retard mental et ou physique) préparent eux-mêmes dans leur petite boulangerie. Des visites hebdomadaires à nos écoles ont été organisées afin de leur permettre d'augmenter la vente de leurs produits. Ceci leur a permis non seulement de pourvoir à leur argent de poche mais aussi de développer leurs capacités de communication et de s'intégrer dans la société.

En plus, les apprenants de l'EB8 dans les trois écoles sœurs, ont rendu visite aux apprenants de « Al Majal » dans leur institution et ont participé avec eux à leurs activités et tâches quotidiennes (cuisine, classe de mathématiques, classe de diction...). Cette visite s'est avérée très bénéfique pour nos apprenants puisqu'elle leur a permis de mieux accepter l'autre dans sa différence et de l'aider à dépasser ses difficultés.

D'autre part, le projet «Les Bouchons Roulants», organisé par «Arc-en-Ciel», a été lancé dès le début de cette année scolaire. Le projet consiste à collecter les bouchons en plastiques qui seront vendus ultérieurement à une usine qui les recycle et en fabrique des ustensiles en plastique. En contrepartie, « Arc-en-Ciel » recevra pour chaque tonne vendue le prix d'une chaise roulante. Ainsi, les objectifs de ce projet portent sur l'aspect humain et social d'une part et sur l'aspect environnemental d'autre part. La participation de nos apprenants à ce projet est remarquable et les bouchons en plastique commencent à s'amonceler!

Les apprenants du cycle primaire ont organisé la vente des produits réalisés durant l'heure d'activités environnementales. La somme collectée a financé la production en version « Braille » des livres ayant le premier

prix dans la compétition d'écriture « Write your Drumbeat » (organisée par le Département des Bibliothèques). Ces livres Braille seront offerts aux institutions qui s'occupent des personnes aveugles.

Dans le cadre des activités sociales également, les apprenants de l'EB9 à BAC et ETD ont visité le « Foyer Saint Georges » à l'occasion de la fête des mères. Diverses activités ont été préparées à l'avance et animées pour les personnes âgées au foyer. Suite à cette visite, les apprenants ont eu l'opportunité de rencontrer les vieux et de faire connaissance avec leur mode de vie au sein du foyer et ainsi d'apprécier l'expérience et la sagesse de leur âge.

En parallèle à ces activités, nous avons évidemment le «Youth Stewardship Program» dans les cycles secondaires. Ce programme consiste à ce que chaque apprenant accomplisse 150 heures de bénévolat dans une institution pour obtenir son diplôme.

Toutes ces activités contribuent au développement de la personnalité des apprenants aux niveaux personnel, relationnel et social et les encouragent à œuvrer pour une vie pleinement réussie.

Rana Ghandour - Responsable du Département des Activités Extra-Scolaires

Extra-Curricular Activities: Life outside the Classroom

In the presence of many technological distractions, children tend to stay inactive and rely on technology for their entertainment. This tendency is being dealt by our school on several levels among which the Extra-Curricular Programs. For the second year, learners are participating in the "Intermediate and Secondary Clubs" where they are acquiring personal and professional skills, in addition to discovering their talents. Moreover, the clubs contribute to the development of values and the promotion of the theme of the year which is clear in the outcomes of the various clubs.

This year, Clubs like Robotics, Advanced Spanish, Bande Dessinee, Reading Circle, Canvas, Hip Hop, and others were added to the program in addition to keeping the old ones like Drama, Graphic Design, Chess, Folk Dance, and Athletics.

An interview was conducted with a number of learners and monitors about these activities. Here are their impressions:

Learners who have participated in Bande Dessinée and Spanish admit that this participation has benefited them vastly since they now know how to express themselves in a new "language". As for Bande Dessine, "[we are] merging real life with humor that conveys a message," says Imad Al-Fil (G11 SE). "We enjoy Spanish since we want to learn how to use a 4th language," says Shireen Shaikho (G10). "The Spanish club is simply an open horizon to new cultures, new ways of living, new countries...besides being a new language acquired," says Mrs. Rita Daher, the Spanish instructor.

Learners in the drama club liked the way they

expressed themselves freely. That was also reflected by the monitor who said, "Le théâtre est un moyen de découverte et d'exploration de soi-même et des autres." (Miss Andre Naccouzi). In the Canvas club, the monitor was very happy that such an activity was chosen since it is considered a Lebanese Heritage. Learners in that activity also expressed that it is "a tranquilizing and amusing experience" (Nour Rahhal G12 LS).

Robotics was newly introduced this year in our schools. This club helps promote brain activity and encourages learners to develop their creativity. During the first semester, three kinds of robots were completely done. One walks until it reaches the edge of the table and then turns to continue its way. Another can shoot a small ball. The third can follow a predetermined path. Learners are proud of their "little inventions" and are anxious to build more and more robots.

Of the modern world, the Hip Hop club was added to the list, and learners are really enjoying the experience they are having with their instructor. "My learners expressed their positive feedback about what they got to know until now and the challenging and funny atmosphere of the sessions," said Mr. Wassim Haddad. As for those in the Folk Dance club, they enjoyed "the stress relieving experience" they had while they were dancing (Sara Bitar G11SE and Aya Itani G11S).

Over the past years, a number of true talents have been discovered through the school's extra-curricular activities. This was very noticeable with some of "Kteib Zghir" Heroes who are now building a career in the Art field.

Omar Zmerli (G11 SA) & Rana Ghandour (Head of the ECA Department)



Mother, My Darling...

Mother's Day was so memorable since the Preschool classes welcomed precious guests: "Their Mothers". In fact, On March 21st, 22nd, and 24th, the classes were blooming with joy and excitement as everyone celebrated this occasion. Festivities were launched by greeting the mothers, dancing together, and showing them the colorful classes. Then, everyone was off to the game zone where there was a variety of entertaining activities. The competition was intense among all groups. Finally, the celebration was wrapped up by singing lovely songs full of emotions before offering the mothers hand-made gifts. On this day, everyone shared unforgettable moments with their wonderful mothers!!



حنينُ الأم

سموتِ بِعِطَانِكَ مُتَفَانِيَةً
وَرَائِحَةَ الْيَاسْمِينِ الطَّاعِيَةِ
وَصَوْتِ كَلِمَاتِكَ الْمُتَنَاعِمَةِ
وَمُدَاعِبَاتِكَ الْخَنُونَةِ الْغَالِيَةِ
وَحَوْفِكَ عَلَيَّ مِنَ النَّسَمَاتِ الْآتِيَةِ

حَنَانِكَ يَا أُمِّي الْغَالِيَةِ
وَأَخَاطِ قَلْبِكَ بِأَقَاتِ الرَّهُورِ
أَشْتَاقُ إِلَى تِلْكَ الْأَيْدِي
إِلَى دِفْءِ حِضْنِكَ الْكَبِيرِ
إِلَى وُجُودِكَ يَرْعَانِي بِجِدِّ

محمد دبيق_ (الخامس أساسي)

عيدُ الأم

يَجْعَلُ الْفَرِحَةَ نَعْمًا
أَدْخَلَ الْبَهْجَةَ فِي الْبَلَدِ
أَهَذَا كُلُّهُ حَنَانٌ فِي قَلْبِكَ؟
وَتَجْعَلِينَ الْجَنَّةَ تَحْتَ أَقْدَامِكِ
لَأَلْتَقِطَ مَعَكُمْ كُلَّ السَّعَادَةِ
وَحُبُّكَ فِي قَلْبِي إِلَى الْأَبَدِ
وَصَوْتُكَ نَعْمٌ يُضِيءُ كُلَّ سَبِيلِ
بَعِيدٍ أَوْ قَرِيبٍ عِيدِ سَعِيدِ

عِيدِكِ عِيدُ الْأُمِّ
هَذَا الْعِيدُ مِنْذُ أَنْ كُنْتُ وَوَلَدٌ
يَا أُمِّي وَأُمُّكَ وَأُمَّكَ
تَدْخِلِينَ الْعَالَمَ فِي أَحْلَامِكِ
بِحُضْنِكَ تَأْخِذِينِي فِي إِجَازَةِ
يَدَاكِ كَانَتْ أَرْجُوخَتِي وَإِنَا وَوَلَدٌ
بِبِسْمَتِكَ تُشْفِينِ كُلَّ غَلِيلِ
سَأَقُولُ لِكُلِّ الْأُمَّهَاتِ مِنْ بَلَدِ

جاد سليمان_ (السادس أساسي)

أمي

أمي يا كلَّ الأمان
أمي يا حِضْنَ الحنانِ
يا نُورًا أضاءَ طريقي
يا حَبِي الْغَالِي الْحَقِيقِي
ماما يا لحنِ الوجدانِ
يا همسةِ الحبِّ وموجِ الحنانِ
في عيدِكَ تَزْهَرُ الْأَلْوَانِ
وَبِحَبِّكَ يَنْطِقُ قَلْبِي الْوَلَهَامِ
أمي يا أُنْكَى الْعِطُورِ
لَكَ قَبْلَةَ وَعَقْدٌ وَرُهِورِ

يارا عقاش_ (السادس أساسي)



أمي

يا من اعطتني الحياة
وأهدتني أول القبلات
سهرت بجانبني في أحلك الليلات
عندما أكبر سأعوضك عن كل التضحيات
يا أرق قلب رأيته أنت في نظري أحسن الامهات
وليد فرشوخ- الثامن (ب)

في المطالعة

في كل عدد من إصدارات الـ "Gazette" تجدون تلك الزاوية المخصصة للمطالعة، نظراً إلى أهميتها حيث أظهرت دراسات أجريت في أوروبا أنّ الأطفال المعرضين للمطالعة في أعمار مبكرة، تنمو قدراتهم التعليمية، الذهنية والتربوية، بنسبة قد تسبق أعمارهم بحدود السنتين. ومن هنا تنطلق النشاطات التي يقوم بها قسم المكتبات في مدارسنا، والتي تندرج تحت الشعار السنوي العام، والقيم التي تعمل على بنائها مع ذوي متعلمينا، والتي نحاول من خلالها أن نطور وسائل جديدة وموجّهة إلى مختلف الشرائح العمرية، لحض المتعلمين على حبّ المطالعة في أشكالها المختلفة.

في ما يلي لمحة عن أبرز النشاطات والبرامج التي أجريت هذا العام:

١. مسابقة التأليف Write Your Drumbeat: شارك فيها متعلمو الصف السادس حتى الصف الثاني عشر، وأما الفائزون فهم: عماد الفيل Sakura Blossoms، مجد شدياق Life, death...and everything in between، رنيم شيّا Losing My Grandfather، ويوسف سقلاوي The Olive Tree.

ولمذه المسابقة وجه آخر يكمن في رغبة متعلمينا في مشاركة إنجازاتهم مع أفراد آخرين من مجتمعنا،

tices in the olive orchard, and the Mill where the olives are pressed and transformed into Green Gold that is the Extra Virgin Olive Oil.

Awareness about traditional natural resources, traditional foods, and cultural traditions among the new generation is necessary nowadays to orient them towards environmentally friendly practices, good quality and healthy foods, and more facing faces rather than internet connected people.

Nadine A. Awar - Mother of Lynn - G4D,
Rami - G8A & Nour - KG2 D



إذ ستمّ طباعة الكتب الثلاثة الفائزة في المراتب الأولى على طريقة Braille، الكتابة الخاصة بالمكفوفين. وستوزع على المراكز المتخصصة التي تُعنى بهذه الحالات.

٢. حصة المكتبة الأسبوعية: أصبحت هذه الحصة جزءاً من الحصص الدورية لصفوف المرحلة الابتدائية الأولى، حيث يتم تقديم أنشطة مختلفة، لتعريف متعلمينا إلى قواعد المكتبة وتقنياتها، إضافة إلى المطالعات القصصية والنقاشات والنشاطات التي تشمل ثقافات وشخصيات مختلفة. وقد شهدت جدران مكتباتنا على أعمال المتعلمين التي أنجزوها واجتمعوا في تزيينها، وكانت كلها مستوحاة من القصص والأنشطة السابقة الذكر... والجدير بالذكر هنا مساهمة عدد من متعلمي المرحلة الثانوية في التحضير لهذه النشاطات.

٣. إشراك الأهل في أنشطة المكتبات:

• شهدنا للعام الثالث على التوالي، مشاركة أمهات المتعلمين في المراحل الابتدائية الأولى والثانية، في نشاط "Mother's Reading Week" بأعداد كبيرة (١٥٠ طلب للمشاركة). كما قامت الأمهات بتحضير أنشطة متنوعة كالأشغال اليدوية، الأفلام الوثائقية والتمثيل...

• وشهدنا للعام الثاني، المساهمات السخية التي

of pride among classmates because they get to share their special Mom with their friends. The Mom in this activity makes an intervention in an environment where she is usually absent, that is the school. The privilege of being there in the classroom of her child and classmates, makes it an exciting experience for the Mother, where education and pleasure are mixed to blend into a special feeling that inhabits her soul, thus creating hope that this positive and rewarding experience can be repeated the next year; hope that the "Mother's Reading Week" will become a school tradition that we can build on.

This is the third year that I participate in this activity with my children, and this year I chose to introduce the children to one of our country's most precious natural, agricultural and traditional treasure: the olive tree. So I picked a comic -strip story developed in the framework of L'Olio Del Libano Project "Socio and economic support for the families of producers in the olive growing marginal regions in Lebanon". The story is entitled "the Green Gold-A Magical Journey" and it aims at raising awareness among the new generation about the Extra Virgin Olive Oil and its health benefits, the use of Good Agricultural Prac-



شارك من خلالها الأهل وأولادهم في دعم مشروع تنمية مكتبات الصف وتغذيتها، في قسم الروضات والمرحلة الابتدائية الأولى. وهدفنا الأساس من هذا النشاط يكمن في تحفيز المتعلمين على روح المشاركة وترك أثر في صقهم من خلال تدوين كلمة صغيرة لأصدقائهم داخل القصة التي يقدمونها.

إننا ومن خلال هذه الأنشطة التفاعلية، إضافة إلى تغذيتنا الدائمة لمكتباتنا بكل ما هو حديث ومستحدث من كتب، ووسائل تكنولوجية، نحاول مع متعلمينا التغلب على الصعوبات التي تعترض طريق الكتاب والمطالعة في مجتمعنا، وقد لاحظنا تطوراً ملفتاً في نسب الإعارة خلال الأعوام الأخيرة. وبذلك تطمح المكتبة إلى ألا تكون مخزناً يحتوي على مجموعة كبيرة من الكتب والمجلات منظمة فوق الرفوف، بل لتتحول إلى نقطة إلتقاء ينطلق منها الفرد إلى الصف والمدرسة ومنهم إلى المجتمع.

فريق المكتبات

فيما يلي مقالين لأمهات شاركن في الـ Mother's Reading Week. ورجين أن يشاركوننا تجربتهم وقد أبقينا المقالين باللغة التي وردونا بها:



An experience to live

Although it was not the first time, however the feeling is the same: an overwhelming joy. Maybe to some people, it is just a story telling session but for me it was a different experience. With all the kids around me sitting on ground, looking with their exciting eyes and ready to express their ideas even before asking, we start reading " Mousey the firefighter". Ziad, Lara, Jawad, Mohammad, Tatiana and more shared reading with me. Riwa and Amjad liked the yellow jacket and the helmet of Mousey.

It was a fifteen minutes of sharing joy and enthusiasm and we ended it with sharing cakes, warm goodbye and a promise to repeat it again.

Dana Charif - Mother of Ziad Charif (3A)

"A Magical Experience"

The "Mother's Reading Week" activity acknowledges the beneficial contribution of the mother in helping her own child and his classmates in the quest of becoming life-long readers. This activity not only has educational benefits, but also emotional fulfillment to both mothers and children thus creating a bond between parent and child, and a feeling

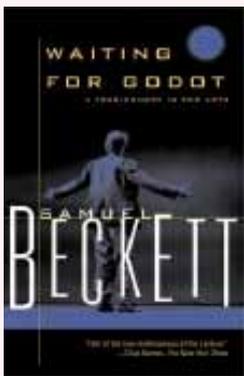
Book Review:

The 48 Laws of Power- Robert Greene

Have you ever thought about how to act in a working area or in a domain of competition? These are things you can learn when you read "The 48 Laws of Power" by Robert Greene. This book reveals to you the secret of success and leads the way to power through 48 laws that you ought to follow in order to possess power and subsequently enhance their status. I highly recommend this book for secondary learners since it prepares them to confront life.

Tala Kadi- 12 SE

Waiting for Godot- Samuel Beckett



Written back in 1953, Waiting for Godot is a tragicomedy that lights out the reality of the human experience. It revolves around two men who have nothing to do but wait for "Godot". Their existence is a serendipity in itself. I find the story funny, yet very deep. It clearly depicts man's quest for the location of meaning since the plot clearly arrays our quotidian life in terms of the ways we interact with different people and events at different stages of life. I chose this play since it also relates to our school theme, "Facing Faces". It shows that humans have many faces, and that they generally tend to hide one or more of these faces, in order to conceal certain ideas and beliefs. Finally, this play will indeed remain a classic, and I recommend that everyone read it.

Frindle - Andrew Clements

As for the youngsters, a very inspirational book called "Frindle" is recommended. This book discusses the story of an elementary learner who wonders why a pen is called a "PEN" and not something else. He decided to call it Frindle, but he faces great struggles in making society accept this new word he coined. I chose this book since it shows youngsters that perseverance will help them reach their goals in life. Also it shows youngsters the importance of self-confidence, and how self-confidence and perseverance can help them reach prosperity. This message is important since kids need such support in the current uproar of society.

Omar Zmerli - G11 Sc.



Going on an Egg Hunt

Spring has blossomed on the premises of our school.

On the first of April, our Grade 1 learners joined KG2 learners in an exciting egg hunt for an early Easter celebration. Learners were divided into two big groups and eggs were hidden in both playgrounds. Following the instructions, each learner searched for his/her own egg with enthusiasm; they were hopping around like little bunnies in hope to find the hidden egg.

It was a pleasant morning seeing all of those happy faces sharing the joy of discovering the places of the chocolate eggs and then eating them.

Ms. Youssra Jarrouj
Grade 1 Homeroom Teacher



The Two Monsters

After reading a story together in class, grade 3 B learners were very touched with the message of the story. It is about being tolerant and seeing things from another perspective. The learners were so eager to act it out. And I was so excited to witness the result of their hard work. This simple activity helped make reading a more entertaining and participatory experience for learners.

Everyone was consistent in practicing every recess. Then, they presented it in front of their peers. They prepared the props and divided the jobs and the parts among each other. They also assigned stage managers!

The starlets were so great that they acted out the play in front of other grade levels in the Lower Elementary Division.

The story is called The Two Monsters written by Davis McKee. The two monsters lived on either side of a mountain. Sometimes they talk through the hole in the mountain, but they never see each other. One evening, they got into a silly argument about whether day is departing or night is arriving. The dispute escalated into a rock throwing fight, which eventually destroyed the mountain, but enabled the monsters to see each other's point of view and live together as friends.

This fun book is interesting for all children. It has a meaningful and delightful message to help children understand tolerance.

Who said that change is not made by a small group's initiative? These learners were enthusiastically spreading a message of peace and a note to all that we don't have to have the same perspective in order for us to be friends.

Mrs. Ghina El Dana - G3 Homeroom Teacher

Youth of Today

When talking about youth, most people tend to think about shy youngsters with ideal behavior, or in other words, as well balanced persons exhibiting a highly spiritual life according to absolute moral values, and whose behavior demonstrates qualities such as righteousness, honesty and humility in everything they do. But what we forget is that our youth do not live in isolation; rather, they are dependent on their families, friends and teachers as they go through the transformation to become who they are in adulthood.

Making this transformation easy involves providing youth with an atmosphere in which they feel safe. Creating such an atmosphere includes the assurance of confidentiality, a non-judgmental approach and recognition of the youth's personal autonomy.

This is achieved in our Intermediate Division by the Youth Talk Program, in which many lively topics are discussed in class from different perspectives, enabling learners to reveal their thoughts and opinions freely in front of others in a well organized manner. Throughout the debates, learners learn how to respect each other's differences and point of views, how to deal with each other in a way that considers many important humanly approaches including honesty, humility and righteousness. And most important, they learn how to evaluate information to form a balanced opinion and cast away prejudice.

Our learners were asked to write something about this session, and the following are samples of the answers that were obtained:

"During Youth Talk I gain a lot of information that helps me in my life. I gain the chance to hear stories from different people and different perspectives". (Rayan Hilal- G8)

World Artists

Art is considered to be a very important and essential subject matter in the early childhood curriculum since it helps learners express their creativity, gain control of their fine muscles, and explore a wide variety of materials. Furthermore, exposing young generations to Art and helping them discover masterpieces of well-known artists will definitely inspire them and widen their horizons.

At SMOC, our kindergarteners were introduced to two famous artists "Piet Mondrian" and "Henri Matisse" whereby they were able to produce simplified versions of their works. Mondrian valued harmony and order in his paintings. He used primary colors and simple horizontal and vertical lines in order to create a unique artwork. Matisse, on the other hand, was famous for his mixed-media collages.

Our KG2 learners got engaged in many activities related to the techniques these two artists used. First, the teacher read a story tackling the historical background of

"My favorite part of this session is the sharing of thoughts and giving our opinions without being judged". (Nour Tannir - G8)

"It helps us solve a problem that we may be going through" (Firas Rafeh - G8)

"It is a helpful and useful session which might be the only way for some students to express their ideas, fix their problems and find the answers to their questions". (Mira Mubarak - G8)

"Youth Talk gives you the chance to understand other people's beliefs and spiritual experiences. What makes Youth Talk special is that there are no limits for your opinion. Be free to express yourselves..." (Reem Dahdouli- G9)

"Youth Talk is a session in which we can reflect our opinion about a specific idea. What specializes this session is the fact that it opens our eyes about topics that are important to us. It educates us about life and introduces topics that we will deal later on in life"... (Ali Slim- G9)

Finally, we can say that, for us, the youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow.

Michael Khattar- Youth Talk teacher



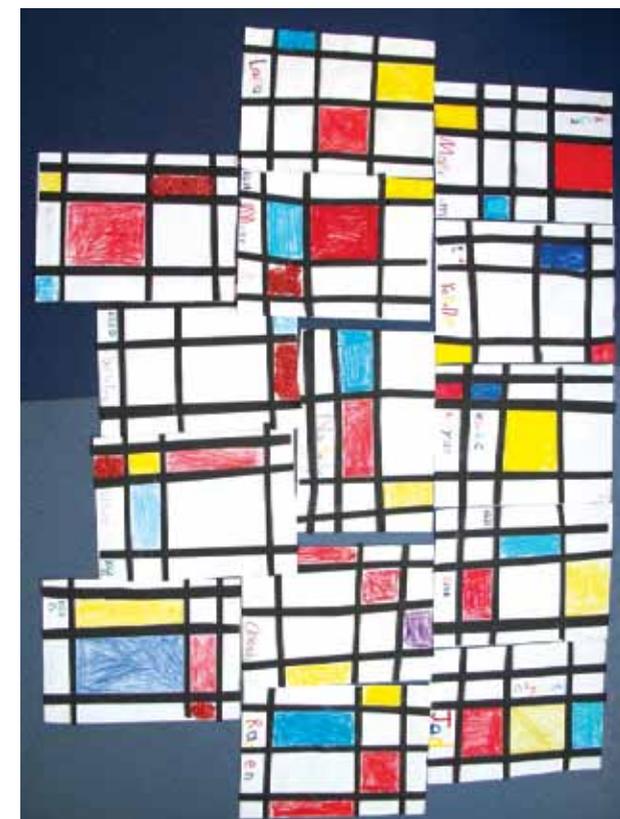
Learners expressing through art their love for their moms



the artists. Then, examples about the artists' works were displayed to the children. Finally, they made little art projects similar to Mondrian's and Matisse's.

Exposing our learners to some of the world's great artists was a productive and fruitful experience, because they got familiar with different art techniques which will surely help them build up their artistic skills and lay the foundation for future learning.

Zeina Kobeissi (KG2 Teacher)





Nursery's Recycling Experience

It is never too early for children to learn to care for the Earth and about environmental and friendly activities such as recycling. Recycling is the process where recyclable materials like paper, plastic, glass, metal, are reconstituted into new products or materials. As part of the "Planting" theme, Nursery learners were introduced to the importance of recycling the land's valuable resources through an interesting activity that enriched their knowledge. First, learners were invited over to the Recycling Center. Teachers, then, described how and why people recycle and the types of materials that can be recycled here at school (paper, plastic bags, boxes, paper cups, plastic cups...). Learners sorted recyclables into recycling boxes. Every individual was given a few recyclable items and encouraged to deposit each item into the appropriate box.



Learners had fun while learning important cognitive skills such as sorting, relationships, and classification. In addition, they learned the importance of taking care of our earth and its precious resources through recycling, reducing, and reusing items.



Sharing The Planet

As global citizens, we have a personal responsibility to take care of the Earth and all of its inhabitants.

Here at SMOC, Grade 3 learners covered a unit tackling various themes like natural resources, rights means and responsibility, in addition to tolerance and respect. We conducted many activities that helped us learn more about these themes, like recycling papers in the Agri-area, acting out a play, creating advertisements, reading books, watching movies, singing, listening to songs and much more. We performed the song "Heal the World" in front of other learners to share what we have learnt about sharing the planet and to raise awareness about natural resources, rights and responsibilities, and tolerance and respect.

Rola Soubra - Wafaa Kebbé - Nursery Teachers

Mrs Ghina Dana - Grade 3 Homeroom Teacher



Mural showing animal habitats

As an integration project among English, Science, and Arabic subjects, Grade 2 learners created a mural that showed animals in different habitats. The learners enjoyed putting their imprints in the desert, forest and stream they have previously painted. The preparation phase was a real fun spent among the learners whereby they enjoyed painting and cutting pictures of animals that belong to these habitats. It was really amusing to see the learners' eyes sparkle with delight. Finally, the mural was then supplemented with the Arabic awareness tips about the importance of natural resources in our lives.

Mrs. Zeina Hossary - Home room teacher- G2



Facing Faces

Facing faces compassionately describes our daily spiritual stirring of our emotions when meeting others; from people, to animals, to things, or simply of nature that surrounds us. Emotions stir within us, and ideas rush to our minds of possible actions that may better our lives and others. Feelings of frustration may seep into our souls but one must not give up. The road is long and difficult. One must not lose hope.

When we are young, we dream big dreams. As we get older, we realize that change comes slowly but surely as one perseveres towards one's goal.

Concentrating on our theme for this year, facing faces, is basically our heart's reaction to others. It is my personal opinion that all people are equally equipped with a delicate and sensitive heart that reacts beautifully



to surroundings. The heart that is within us acknowledges and whispers to us of potential paths to take. I believe that when one listens to his heart and acts on it, then and only then, one starts on a remarkable journey of life. Life is a balance of give and take, harmonious and full of surprises and coincidences.

Facing faces is a very personal experience, as one may choose to react to others or not. Some acknowledge their heart's desire and keep it as a food for thought, and others may shut these ideas from one's mind and rationalizes them as being nonsensical. In effect, when one advances or takes action to the needs of others, his own needs are also met somehow without much worrying. This recipe for living accompanied with traces of thought from one's own experience opens the door to a harmonious peaceful coexistence with others.

Randa Haddad (Mother of Hala Haddad- G7A)

Monday April 4th- GRADE 12'S Final Assembly

Farewell it is; Grade 12 had their final general assembly with Mrs. Issa and the rest of the secondary division, where they were given the opportunity to give advice to their younger friends and an insight about their journey.

Mrs. Issa displayed a video exposing real life situation concerning heroes that faced different obstacles and were put in various situations where they found themselves fighting for what they believed in and for what they aimed for; Mrs. Issa wanted to emphasize that even though sometimes we do not exactly win, we should never be defeated. Even though people do not always accomplish their specific goal, they still learn a lot all through their way to success while going through all the ups and downs.

The learners were asked to give their opinion regarding the moral of the video and relating it to their own experiences throughout their scholastic year at SMOC; some of their comments were: "I have faced a lot of obstacles here in school which I learned to confront in order to move forward" – Jad Abdel Malak. "Never take the people that you see here every day for granted; those are the people who help you when you need it, and support you on your way to success. Always work hard especially when you know it gets you to the highest places and take advantage of every moment here" – Reina Jurdi.

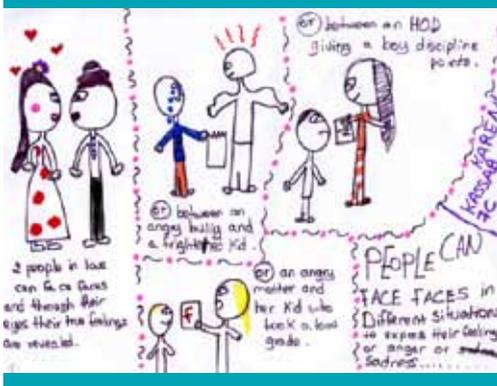
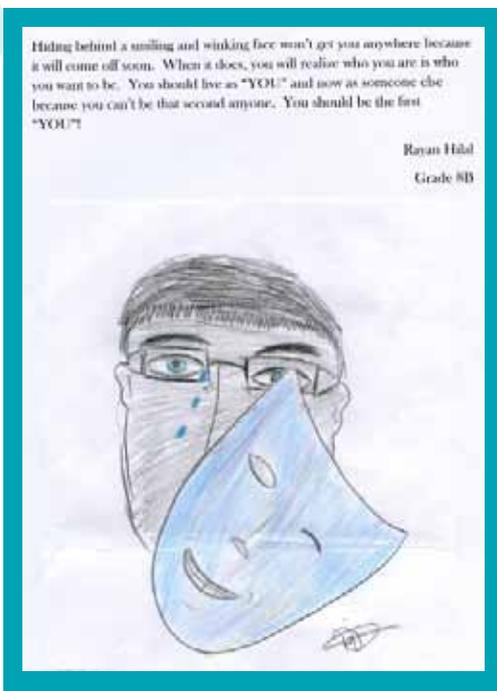
"We have been here for so many years and we have been waiting for this moment for so long. Here we are today looking at ourselves, we have grown; we are going to a stage where we become independent, where we let go all the people who gave us a hand, and as hard as it really is for us, we are leaving this place with confidence and a smile on our faces" – Rawan Dgheim.

We grew up here; we went through the easy and rough times together and even though it was a long journey, in the end we summed up all that we've acquired here to let it out in the outside world.

Unaware of the significance of every lesson we have been taught here, every situation we've surpassed and every advice we've been given has helped prepare us for that big step we will be taking soon. Mrs. Issa showed us the video that is directly related to everything we've been through here, wanting us to know that we should be proud of what we have accomplished and where we are now, noting that everybody at school have contributed in helping us flourish and have accomplished their roles not only as teachers, but as educators and parents as well.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every member of this institution, and dedicate our appreciation to all the support, help, advice, and education that was given to us, for all the things you have granted us led to where we stand today.

Reina Jurdi. 12SE - Rawan Dgheim. 12 LS



Facing Faces

The cycle of life depends on one's actions. The decisions that every single human faces in life depend on his perception and understanding. And the choice he makes affects his life permanently. Facing new obstacles in life is part of life itself. Along with it comes the fact that we face new human beings from whom we learn about life through their stories and experiences. However, facing others is not only restricted to humans facing

humans, it can also be related to humans facing objects and animals, like blind people living along with dogs- who are to them more than family. We are also in a century where we face new technologies because it is part of life's constant developing communication. Therefore, we must be ready to face anything thrown at us. But the crucial question lies in HOW we are to face life because the decision we make will for sure shape the steps we take later on.

Rami Awar - Grade 8A