

GAZZETTE



Editorial

All our dreams can come true...if we have the courage to pursue them -Walt Disney .

Yes, it takes courage to get us where we want to be, it takes guts to make us the people we wish to be. Wrestling in this endless battle, each one of us carries with him unlimited hopes and aspirations, infinite goals waiting to be reached. Today, we endure the power we have generated over all those years, that strength that has grown within us in this school. Throughout every day of our life, we are learning something new, and now, we have acquired the courage to face faces; the faces of our opponents, the faces of our supporters, the faces of our loved ones, and most importantly, the faces of our own. We are learning to face faces, thus getting ready to face life's difficulties. Life itself is a series of challenges that may seem so difficult at a point, yet so simple after conquered. We are submitted to numerous burdens in every step we take, obstacles that stand in the way of our success; however though, we have been taught to walk past these barriers , we have been raised to forbid these fences to get in the way of our accomplishments. Optimism is the mother of all triumphs, and man must be positive in everything he does, even in his worst days. He must be grateful of what God has provided for him, even if it is not what he desired, even if it is not what he has longed for.

10, 9, 8...3, 2, 1... It's a new year! Time is flying, years are running ahead of us, and that is why we must take advantage of every moment, grasp each opportunity, & prevent time from getting ahead & beating us. We are approaching a new year, opening a new page, setting new goals and aiming for the golden pot! Watching the movie of our own creation, us being the heroes and the leading stars, we find no ending; here in this tale, the hero doesn't die, he is able to save himself and get back on the right track after being lost in an isolated desert, that desert we all pass through along the road to victory, that place which reveals all the power hidden within our souls, the instant where we allow ourselves to observe our past, explain our present, face the faces, examine our actions, justify our weaknesses, rectify our flaws, foresee our future, and finally, define our destiny.

Today, I am walking my last steps in this school, in this society that has made me a person I am proud to be, that has prepared me for the great challenge of all, life. I walk my last steps here knowing I am ready for a new beginning, faithful in myself and in my ability to face the worst, and the best, but most importantly, to face life.

Rawan Dgheim- Grade 12GLS

Message of The principal

Speedy pace and busy schedules are the overwhelming symptoms of today's culture. Goals to achieve problems to solve, appointments to keep, jobs to finish, places to go, due dates to meet, and the list does not end. Plenty of action and movement, yet it seems that we are unable to go anywhere. Keeping ourselves busy, spending our life running to complete our work impeaches us to stand for a while and look into the mirror of our soul.

Facing ourselves into the mirror of our souls! What for? To have a look at who we are and what we are becoming, I would say. To have some rest and do some meditation, questioning our deeds and omissions as well, could be an answer too. To thank God and praise Him for His many blessings upon our lives is definitely a right one.

This inner exercise requires no schedule to follow, no problems to solve; no due dates to meet; no telephone calls to receive; no television to watch; no PlayStation to stick to, nor internet to surf on. Saint Paul says: "Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold". It is very easy to fall into step with the world's way of thinking and behaving and taking over us the world's attitude about life. The pressure of the crowd sometimes takes us into the wrong direction. It is easy to follow the lines of least resistance. When our lives fail to embrace discipline and our desires become selfish, it is time to stop and reevaluate our lives.

Reevaluation requires courage and strength. God gives power to the weary and increases the power of the weak who seeks His protection. Those who hope in God will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles. They will walk and not be faint.

History is a great teacher. Experience is a hard teacher. Only by taking time to reflect on yesterday and honestly evaluate its successes and failures we can learn and prepare for this new-year to come. Your willingness to learn and to adjust positively from mistakes and shortcomings will largely determine how far you will travel the road to success. If possible, it is always best to give tough situations extra time for creative thinking and effective action. Jumping to hasty conclusions and reacting according to false assumptions or subjective impressions leads to failure and disappointment.

The ill situation of our country is the result of untruthful attitudes and unclear vision of most of the political leaders when the wellbeing of citizens and their secure future is at stake. Our country is suffering from empty idealism, expressed by meaningless and suspicious speeches relentlessly repeated. Colorful eloquent and strong words alone cannot heal nor solve problems. The attitudes of many leaders are most of times in contradiction with their words. Their personal interests prevail when major issues of public nature are in the balance.

Honest behavior and genuine attitudes reach the hearts easily and there is no need to enforce them by interminable and repetitive loud spoken and strong discourse. An enlightened heart cannot be fooled by charlatans. Those who are not driven by the noises of the world can discern good from evil.

Most of the overwhelming politicians' speeches are the produce of their fears. Fear engenders fear. Sincerity alone goes to heart and bring it to peace and serenity. I urge you not to be victims of fear you will be driven by rage consumed by hate. Hatred is the byproduct of fear. You are entitled to live without fear. You have the right to live in peace with dignity. Dignity cannot be dissociated from Liberty. Do not lose hope. Good will prevail, if you keep hope. Only if you keep hope and act as free persons you will not be ashamed to face your face in the mirror of your soul.

Stand up for the year to come. You will make of it a time of peace, a time of prosperity and a time to accomplish your dreams. With this hope I wish all a Merry Christmas and happy New Year.

Father George Dimas



Read? Yeah... Why not?

It is a well-known fact that when there were no televisions or computers, reading was a primary leisure activity. People would spend hours reading books and traveling to lands far away-in their minds. The only tragedy is that, with time, people have lost their skill and passion to read. There are many other exciting and thrilling options available, aside from books. And that is a shame because reading offers a productive approach to improving vocabulary and word power. It is advisable to indulge in at least half an hour of reading a day to keep abreast of the various styles of writing and new vocabulary. We started giving reading as daily homework so that we promote reading among our learners.

For this reason, we interviewed Dr. Najla Bashour, author of many children's books so that we would know about the importance of reading across ages. This is a summary of our interesting conversation.

It is observed that children and teenagers who love reading have comparatively higher IQs. They are more creative and do better in school and college. It is recommended that parents inculcate the importance of reading to their children in the early years. Reading is said to significantly help in developing vocabulary; reading aloud helps to build a strong emotional bond between parents and children. Children who start reading from an early age are observed to have good language skills, and grasp the variances in phonics much better.

Reading helps in mental development and is known to stimulate the muscles of the eyes. Reading is an activity that involves greater levels of concentration and adds to the conversational skills of the reader. It is an indulgence that consistently enhances the knowledge acquired. The habit of reading also helps readers to decipher new words and phrases that they come across in everyday

conversations. The habit can become a healthy addiction and adds to the information available in various topics. It helps us to stay in-touch with contemporary writers as well as those from the days of yore and makes us sensitive to global issues.

When you read, you are creating connections throughout the brain. Specifically, neurons become interconnected as knowledge is obtained from the content in which you are reading. Dendrites of neurons in the brain connect to axons in a different pattern as we obtain knowledge. The more connections one has, the greater cognitive abilities one acquires (e.g., memory, thoughts).

So... READ... read for fun, for information, for relaxation. Read alone, read with a friend, and read to somebody... just read!

By Ms Ghina Dana - G3 Homeroom teacher

Small things I can Do to Make BIG Difference

• I can change the world by reading books
Sami Rifai - Grade 1c

• Change my behavior and my dad will be happy
Mostafa Jammoul- Grade 1c

• Give books to read... Adam Saab..Grade 1A

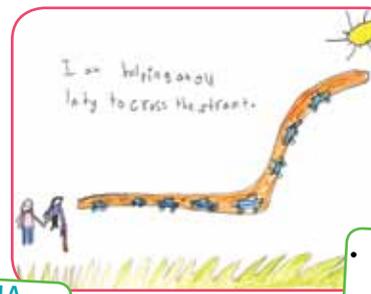
• I will be a firefighter... Mahmoud Sidani- Grade 1A



• Ride my bicycle instead of riding a car. That way I would reduce the carbon footprint we leave behind.... Firas Koleilat..Grade 11SA

• If people don't have food, I will get a job for them... Farah Ballout..Grade 1A

• Say sorry if you make mistakes and forgive your friends if they make mistakes... Dunia Shbaro- Grade 7B



• Stay in your country and support it...
Salwa Itani...Grade 11SA

• Integrate solar power into your house...
Mohammad Haidus...Grade 11SA

• Recycle and collect cans. Go green.... Tarek Halabi..Grade 11SA

• Become friends with those who are lonely...
Said Ghalayini...Grade 12 SE

• Don't use hair spray that harms the ozone layer...
Hussein Bourji Grade 7A

• Keep the smile. It is contagious... Nancy Ghazzawi.. Grade 12 SE

• To make a difference start with yourself. Yara Shidiac 11SA

To be continued...

”مؤلف الشهر“، ”ماراتون القراءة“، و”رزمة القراءة“. الأول يقوم على الطلب إلى المتعلمين أن يجروا بحثاً عن المؤلف المعتمد (صفوف الحلقة الثانية من التعليم الأساسي)، ومن ثمّ يعرضونها على متعلّمي الحلقة الأولى. وفي ذلك مشاركة فعالة تربوياً بين متعلّمي المرحلتين الأولى والثانية. ويقوم مشروع ”ماراتون القراءة“ على اختيار ممثّلين عن كلّ صفّ يتغيّران مع تبديل القصة، لقراءة القصة وعرضها أمام رفاقهم، تميّماً للاختيار أفضل ناقلين للمرسلة، وأفضل ممثّلين. وفي ذلك ما يحوّل المطالعة نشاطاً مسلياً وأكثر حيوية. وأمّا ”رزمة القراءة“ فخلاصتها تحضير رزمة شهرية لكلّ متعلم، يقوم بتسجيل قراءاته عليها بمساعدة الأهل (مع ملخص عن كلّ كتاب يحتوي على: اسم الكتاب، المؤلف، الرسّام، إضافة إلى ”أكثر ما أحببت في القصة“)، وتسلّم شهرياً إلى المكتبة لعرضها، مرفقة برزنامات المتعلّمين وملخصاتهم عن المطالعات التي تمّت، ومن ثمّ اختيار أفضل صفّ (كمّاً ونوعاً من حيث المطالعة). وفي هذا النشاط مشاركة بين الأهل والمتعلّمين في متعة المطالعة.

رزق الله الحلو - رئيس دائرة اللغة العربية

على المتعلّم أن يكتسب عادة المطالعة والتعامل مع كتابها على اعتبار أنه ”خير جليس“.

في الانتقال إلى الشقّ العمليّ، فقد يكون من المفيد مثلاً أن يتواصل التربيّون المعنيّون ويضعوا إستراتيجية تقوم على مقارنة جديدة للتثقيف، بعيدة قدر الإمكان عن ”واجبات“ ملء ”بيان المطالعة“ والتلخيص المقرون بتقييم وبعلامات بالخطّ الأحمر وإن لم يكن عريضاً... وفي هذا الإطار يمكن تحفيز المطالعة من خلال مسرح الدمى أو رسم أفضل شخصيّة أو رسم القسم المفضّل من القصة - واختيار قصة وتغيير نهايتها ولكن استناداً إلى الصّور الواردة فيها... كذلك يمكن تأليف قصص وعرضها في المعرض الذي سيُقام في أيار المقبل ضمن أسبوع اللغة العربيّة للصفّ الثالث الأساسي... وأمّا الهدف من كلّ ذلك فهو جعل المتعلّمين يعتادون ارتياد المكتبات...

والخطوة اللاحقة تكون في تأسيس مكتبة في الصفّ لاستعارة الكتب أسبوعياً (مشروع إشتري كتاباً واقرأ ثلاثين)، وتلك مرحلة أخرى من مراحل ”الدعم السّلس للمطالعة“، يليها تنفيذ مثلث مشاريع:

12 كتاب لـ 6 صفوف وأنشطة على قاعدة ”خير جليس“

ما قد يبدو من المستحيلات، في عالم اليوم ومع أجياله البانعة، قد لا يكون في الواقع على هذا النحو... فأنت تغرّر في نفوس المتعلمين عادة مطالعة الكتب العربيّة، يحتاج إلى حلقة جامعة بين حلقات عدّة، ولكنّها ما زالت مفقودة. وأنشطة المطالعة ”الدخيلة“ على الصفّ المدرسيّة، ينتفي أثرها مع انتهاء النشاط ولا يبني عليها. وهي إلى ذلك تبقى جسماً غريباً، أو ضيفاً وإن عزيزاً - سَمّها ما شئت - على المنهاج المدرسيّ الجافّ، بالنسبة إلى عدد من المتعلّمين.

وتشترط تلك الحلقة المشار إليها عنصرَي التّكامل والاستمراريّة لتكتب لها مكوّنات التّجاح، وهي تُعنى بالعمل مع المتعلّم منذ الصفّ الثالث الأساسي إلى التاسع. فقبل الثالث يكون المتعلّم شغوفاً بما يسمعه من معلّمته من أخبار تتعلّق بـ ”الأرنوب محبوب“، و”دبدوب“، و”طارق“ الذي زاد طولها، وقويت عظامه، وبات قادراً على المساعدة في قطف الرّيتون... وبعد التاسع يكون من الصّعوبة بمكان

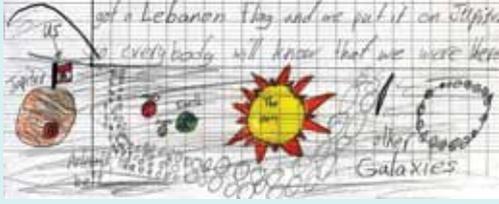
Have a Glimpse at Our Learners' Creative Writing!

A Day On Jupiter

Open-ended questions focus on learners' understanding, their ability to reason, and their ability to apply knowledge in less traditional contexts. Learners are asked to seek their answer based on debate and creativity. They are advised to trust their understanding of the topic as well.

Open-ended questions foster learners' creativity in a context away from the traditional use of questions. Learners used writing skills they learned in a scientific context as part of Integration to describe a Day on Jupiter.

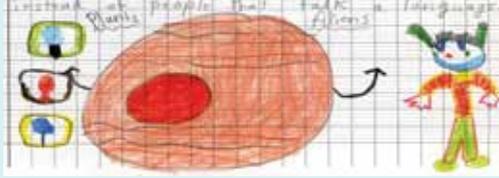
Roula Sarouja- Science Teacher -UE



A Day on Jupiter

One day, my mother received a message from Nasa- a Space station, it says that we have to go to Jupiter. My mother thought they were joking, we went to the launch and I was so eager yet my mother was afraid. We went into the rocket and we heard the count down, then, it launched to Jupiter. We saw aliens and the storm was gigantically strong. We got the Lebanese flag and we put it on Jupiter so everybody will know that we were there.

Karim Darwich - Grade 4



Life On Jupiter

Jupiter has life on it, it is a huge planet that is made up of gas. I know this sounds confusing, but it is real. I went on a trip to Jupiter and it was amazing! There was a restaurant in the Great Red Spot. They made me Jilk Shake and Jookies. I also won Miss Jupiter. Jupiter has mysterious plants and aliens instead of people that talk a language.

Zeina Al Khalil - Grade 4

بسرعة أمامه من دون أن يلاحظها والفريق الثاني رش المياه على جهازه الإلكتروني فبدأ الدخان يتصاعد والشرارات تتطاير و بلحظة انزلق هذا العملاق المتمرد بجسمه الحديدي بسبب قشر الموز وهوى على الارض محدثاً صوتاً صاخباً .

وأخيراً قضي على الشرير بفضل ذكاء و تضامن الجميع وشكلت لجنة للتخلص من بقايا هذا المدمر وعادت الحياة إلى المدرسة.

ديالا غلاييني-كارم صعب-نتالي سيف الدين-لؤي حصري-نزار ضو - ماري شحادة -وسام المقدم -جويل شيخ علي



ذهلت الزوجة للمنظر و ركضت إلى زوجها حامله الحبة وهاتفة: "أنظر ماذا وجدت في رأس السمكة . " لم يعط ربيع أهمية للأمر و قال لها: "تابعي عملك إنها زجاجة لقد تطف الله بنا و لم نبتلعها في الحساء." و لكن الزوجة لم تقتنع بكلامه و خبأت الحبة في الدرج.

في اليوم التالي وبعد ذهاب ربيع إلى المخبز اخرجت الزوجة الحبة و توجهت إلى متجر المجوهرات الموجود في البلدة .

ذهل صاحب المتجر لما رأى و قال لها: "إنها من المجوهرات النادرة و الثمينة جداً" و ثمنها لما بالآلاف الدينارات لم تصدق هذه المرأة ما سمعته فتوجهت إلى البيت مذهولة وأخبرت زوجها القصة .

صرخ ربيع بأعلى صوته من شدة الفرح و بدأ يشكر زوجته و تقبيل يديها لأنها لم تصغ إليه وترم الجوهرة ووعدها بحياة سعيدة مع الأولاد عند بيع الجوهرة .

وهذا ما حصل فباع ربيع الجوهرة و بنى قصرًا جميلاً و مخبزاً كبيراً كان الأكبر في المدينة و كل المدن المجاورة و قدم لعماد بعضاً من المال و عاش حياة سعيدة.

روي الخطيب-ياسمين قبلان-نوراسمسارزادة-ياسر تفاحة-ساشا غريب-رسيل صعب- الصف الخامس الأساسي



و محدثاً أصواتاً غريبةً مما اثار الرعب و الخوف الشديدين في صفوف المتعلمين و ازداد خوفهم عندما أقرب من البوابة الرئيسية محاولاً خلعها و تحطيم الجدران. عندئذ بدأ المتعلمون يفكرون بخطط و طرق مناسبة للإيقافه و التخلص منه.

و هكذا قرروا نصب فخ لهذا العملاق المدمر فقاموا بتقسيم أنفسهم إلى مجموعات، الفريق الأول قام بنشر العراقيل أمامه و الفريق الثاني أحضر أكبر كمية ممكنة من الماء و قشر الموز.

و بينما كان المارد في طريقه إليهم رموا قشر الموز

ربيع و السمكة

كان ربيع رجلٌ فقيرٌ يعيش في قرية نائية . و كان يعاش من الخبز و الطعام و بعض القروش التي يتقاضاها من الرجل البخيل-عماد- صاحب المخبز الذي كان يعمل فيه.

ربيع ابٌ لثلاث اولاد و زوج لامرأة تشاركه مرارة الفقر و العذاب، أما اولاده الصغار فكانوا ينتظرون ما سيحضره والدهم يومياً من بقايا اطعمة ليتمكنوا من سدّ جوعهم.

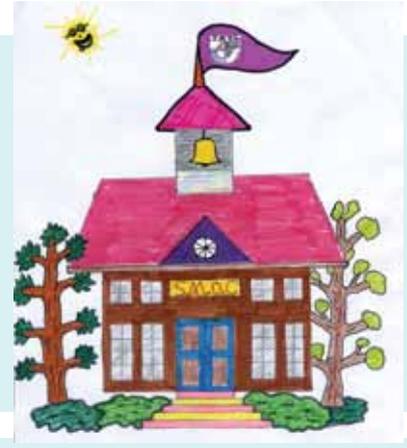
في صباح يوم من الأيام، مرّ بائع السمك أمام المخبز منادياً على سمكه الطازج. ناداه عماد و اشترى منه سمكاً طازجاً و أمر ربيع أن ينظفهم و يجففهم من الماء. نفذ ربيع أوامر معلمه وعلقهم أمام العجّانة. و بينما كان يعد غلة النمار جاءت قطّة و التهمت السمكات تاركة رأسها و بعض الحسك , ذهل عماد لهذا المنظر و كالعادة ألقى اللوم على ربيع فخرج من المخبز غاضباً و مستاءً .



عندما نظر ربيع إلى بقايا السمك مكلماً نفسه قائلاً: "يمكنك أن تأخذ هذا الحسك و هذه الرؤوس و تطلب إلى زوجتك صنع حساء للطعام الاولاد بما أنّ عماد لم يدفع لك اي شيء عقاباً على ما فعلت."

دخل ربيع على زوجته برؤوس السمك و أخبرها ما حصل معه و طلب إليها تحضيرها.

بينما كانت الزوجة تضع رؤوس الاسماك في القدر سقطت حبة كبيرة تشبه المجوهرات



المارد المتمرد

في إحدى المدن البعيدة ,كان هناك مدرسة كبيرة تضم مئات المتعلمين و المعلمين كانوا يحضرون إليها يومياً من أجل التعلم و كانت الحياة المدرسية فيها جميلة جداً فهي قائمة على المحبة و التعاون .

في يوم من الأيام، و بينما كان المتعلمون يدرسون، سمعوا فجأة أصواتاً صاخبةً تصدر من الخارج فأطلقوا بسرعة و التفتوا نحو مصدر الصوت، فوجدوا رجلاً آلياً كبيراً يحمل مطرقة كبيرة و يريد هدم المدرسة. راح يركض في كل الأنحاء و الإتجاهات رافعاً يديه

Relieving Stress

Maybe some of us wonder if preschoolers undergo stress. The answer is yes. Stress of our children is embodied by physical or emotional situations that alter their lives' balance. Another way to describe stress is "pressure on the outside that causes pressure on the inside". Though many of us think that preschoolers' lives are always light hearted and happy-go-lucky, yet it is quite important to think seriously about their feelings and behavior because it will affect their teenage years in later stages.

Generally, our children's behaviors offer clues to whether they're stressed out or not. Some

may become increasingly aggressive while others may become withdrawn. A good child care environment offers tense children communication secrets, provides them with personal space "time alone", keeps routines and consistency, and also keeps laughter and fun. But most importantly, it provides them with abundant gross motor activities. Skipping, jumping, and running are bare necessities to develop gross motor skills and also to extend energy and relieve stress.

The gross motor activities can vary from action songs and games like "Simon Says", "Follow the leader", "Shadow" to Karate or Ballet activities that can extend throughout their lives. One of the activities that our

preschoolers perform is crossing the mid-line. This simple activity improves laterality (awareness of left and right sides of the body). It also improves spatial orientation (awareness of the body position in space and in relation of other objects or people). And finally improves major muscle coordination.

All these activities and many others have unique ways to melt defiance and temper, improve posture and body control and transforms misbehavior.

Conclusively, gross motor activities along with all the above mentioned factors are keys to relieving our beloved children from stress.

Nada Kanafani - Preschool Teacher



Off with the Old Computers... Little Laptops Are Here to Stay!

Computer Skills are becoming a fundamental part of education. Crucially, recent studies in the field of education have shown that learners who are trained to type efficiently and use basic computer functions such as

word processing, email and web browsing prove to have a significant advantage over computer-illiterate learners. For this reason, and in parallel with the Computer Department's continuous efforts to promote interactive learning and integrate technology in the classroom, SMOC began empowering learners with individual laptops. By September 2010 learners at SMOC witnessed the tremendous change the Computer Lab underwent early this year. The lab is now mobile and currently being transported to every classroom. While some might regard the use of laptop as an opportunity for distraction, utilizing portable computers in classrooms can yield several significant benefits. The use of laptops seems to have created a sense of excitement about learning in general. As a result, learners are much more

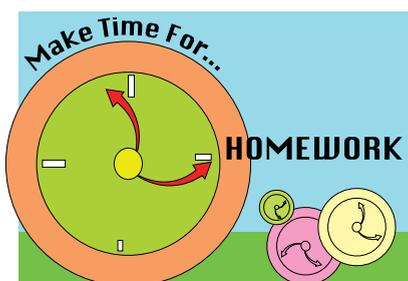
eager and interested in conducting research, writing, and carrying-out projects. Another potential benefit is that these laptops have enhanced the learning experience at SMOC, allowing it to compete with contemporary pedagogical processes, keeping students more focused and on task. A third benefit is that these laptops also contributed to a general sense of discovery of the learners' computer skills.

In short, laptops, as part of our modern society, are here to stay! SMOC's major approach to equip every learner with a laptop aims to help the youth cope with their modern environment, expand their horizons, and train them on how to employ their acquired computer skills as they prepare to go off to college.

By Judy Maamari (Homeroom Teacher-3 D)

Beating Samy and Your Worst Fear

Sick of low grades? Fed up with Samy getting the highest grade at school and you spending most of your time trying to work out a schedule to finish the accumulated study material and bemoaning your bad luck. Well here are seven secrets to be a "Samy" and even beat one!



First, you have to make studying a habit worth having as it is a requirement and a necessary part of the learning process. Set up a schedule and follow it. Start small, only 10-15 minutes, and then build up to longer amounts on a daily basis. But watch out! Be realistic and discerning and set up a reasonable schedule you can easily follow.

Second, create the "Right" study environment. Do not attempt to study while your younger brother is playing Mortal Combat with his Samy at the other end of the internet line.

Do not procrastinate in order to beat Samy at Mortal Combat because he'll beat you at the exam. Always try to find a quiet comfortable stable place of study that can mimic that of your final exam. Time! Time! Time, it is money so use it wisely.

Thus, third maximize your time but make sure you take a break. Search for your peak performance time and make use of it. However, don't study when you're too tired because it is a waste of your valuable time.

Fourth, use study aids to your advantage: reviews, your own questions, flash cards, videos, practice exams... All these can add some more life into your studying and help you involve all your senses which can improve your performance. Remember, effective studying is a result of active involvement, not just passive rehearsal. It is a "Mortal Combat" where you need all your physical and mental skills.

Begrudge the "history" part of the process? Here is secret five. Remember to use memorization tools. Associate something familiar to you with facts you need to remember. In addition to recitation and repetition, use Acrostics, Acronyms, Rhymes, and Imaging Techniques. For example, to remember the sequence of adjectives in English, remember the site "sash.com" – size, age, shape, color,

origin and material. After all, you are making use of your highest-ranking interest – the internet.

Secret six is visualizing your success to tame and appease your fears. Think positive and remember how you will feel "when you succeed" and more importantly when you become a rival of "Samy". Duplicate this "mental attitude" and imagine yourself in the exam room. Inhale an exhale to puff out your stress. This relaxation response you developed will be recalled by your body during the exam.

Last but not least, don't cram the night before. Have you ever got up to go to your exam and found out that your car tank is empty or even arrived at the exam room to discover that you had left your ID at home? To avoid this, always stop studying after dinner on the night before the exam to do something you like – go for a long walk, hit some golf balls... and double-check everything you need before the exam-car, material,...

At the end, make sure you get a good night's sleep and forget about your nightmare, "Samy". If you use the auspicious suggestions, explained above, you should be well prepared and you'll beat all the potential Samys from the first round.

Orly Hasbini - Science Teacher (UE)

Video Gaming Addiction

Every holiday, millions of people relish the idea of spending time at home, away from work, from school, indulging in their favorite activity and sharing it with their friends, spending hours and hours playing video games.

Video game is no longer an activity you enjoy in the arcade centers, or simply a joystick that steers Pac-Man around the maze eating away those dots and running away from the evil ghosts. Playing video games has come a long way from simple means of leisure to a common requirement in every home. With gaming devices (consoles) such as Xbox, PlayStation, PC and Wii to portable devices such as PSPs and DSI, gaming is now available to all ages and genders, online and offline. Internet has established a new channel of communication and resources for gamers, turning casual gamers to frequent, if not extreme, gamers.

While some might reckon this technological advances and inventions as an add bonus to a lineup of activities that can be enjoyed and harmlessly occupy free time, millions of people around the globe are experiencing what can be only depicted as the dark side of video gaming. Addiction is lately being closely associated with video gaming and video gamers. With thousands of incidents emerging with every survey and research, specialists are paying attention to what can one day be described as a mental disorder (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders has proposed to include video

gaming as an addiction in its next version).

With online gaming such as EverQuest and The Sims, people found more ways to be interactive with other gamers in life-like situation and scenarios, and what starts as a harmless experience becomes an addiction to some people as it slowly causes them to lose grip on reality and become completely consumed in a world of their creation, a world they believe they can control. The internet and public surveys are filled with stories about broken marriages, friendships, relationships, school suspensions, and work terminations caused by the obsessiveness of such games.

The following are major symptoms that can appear on children with gaming addiction:

- 1- Spending most of non- school hour on the computer or playing video games.
- 2- Falling asleep at school
- 3- Not keeping up with assignments
- 4- Worsening grades
- 5- Lying about computer or video game use.
- 6- Choosing to use the computer or play video games rather than seeing friends.
- 7- Showing irritability when not playing a video game on the computer.

As for the physical symptoms

- 1- Sleep Disturbances
- 2- Back neck aches
- 3- Headaches
- 4- Dry eyes
- 5- Failure to eat regularly or neglect personal hygiene.

At the end, you must know your limits. Not playing is not the solution to gaming addiction. If you don't play, you'll be depriving yourself from something you truly enjoy. You just need to learn how to control your urges and learn to become bigger than your video games. Hang out with friends, play sports, and have an active life outside "life". Video games are not the problem it is irresponsible people who are the real problem.

Nadine Sleiman - Intermediate HOD- SMOC

Find 8 differences between the 2 Santas



ندوات لتفعيل التعاون بين الأهل والمدرسة

خلال العام الدراسي المنصرم تمّ إعداد ما يزيد على العشرين ندوة أخذت شكل لقاءات بين مجموعة من الأهل وبين مسؤولين في المدرسة عن دوائر وبرامج مختلفة. في كل ندوة كان المسؤولون يعرضون لمجموعة الأهل الحاضرين مضمون وأهداف وطريقة العمل في الدائرة أو البرنامج موضوع اللقاء. وهكذا، تم توضيح أمور كثيرة هي في أساس العملية التربوية لكنها تبقى غير ظاهرة أو معروفة. ومن أبرز ميزات هذه اللقاءات أنها كانت تتم على صعيد ضيق، الأمر الذي أفسح المجال أمام الحاضرين بعرض أفكارهم وآرائهم وتساؤلاتهم بشكل مباشر وفاعل وبناء. ولأن هذه التجربة كانت ناجحة، وبهدف نشرها على عدد أكبر من الأهل، سوف تستمرّ هذا العام أيضاً مع مجموعات مختارة جديدة لعرض مواضيع عديدة توضح فلسفة المدرسة التربوية ورؤيتها المستقبلية، بحيث يزداد التعاون مع الأهل ويتوطد من أجل تفاعل مستمرّ هو في صلب الحياة التربوية.

إيلي ضعون-منسق البرامج التربوية



Youth Stewardship Program

YSP according to our learners

One of the many advantages of being a learner at Saint Mary's Orthodox College is its YSP program. In addition to developing mental ability, it builds learners' personalities and helps them develop greatly on the social level. As a new learner at SMOC, I was intrigued and interested to experience YSP. Helping others is something I had always loved to do and with this program, the school is actually providing me with the chance to accomplish something in this regard. The fact that I know I can put a smile on someone's face and serve my community as well is simply amazing. **Jad Bitar- 11Sc. A**

I guess one of the YSP program's goals is to expose us socially and make us experience several types of work or different jobs that we might actually want to consider in our future and outside school. I have worked with AUB-IBSAR as a volunteer. The work was environmental, related to planting and learning how to take care of nature. Other than general information about types of plants and conditions that satisfy their needs to survive, we learned about different planting areas in a variety of villages around Lebanon. I found it something to be done from the heart and I actually forgot that it was about 150 hours I had to finish in order to graduate. It became personal! For in the end, nothing but practice and experience makes perfect.. and it was a perfect experience. **Aya itani- 11Sc. A**

"My son is finally cured from cancer" is the best and most rewarding phrase I heard during my work at the AUBMC's Children cancer center as a part of the youth stewardship program of our school. Working in the fundraising department of this association taught me a lot of things besides the office work skills (filing, documentation, data entry, shipment procedures, etc). It taught me a lot about life, endurance, faith, and strength. Furthermore, this experience made me feel that I am part of something huge because with every surviving child, I acknowledged that the little things that I am doing can make a big difference and subsequently create change in the community. This reminds me of Mother Teresa who once said, "we can do no great things, only small things with great love" and this was the greatest lesson I learned from the YSP experience. I learned that it is the thought that counts and that it is not the big changes and glowing campaigns that make you a "helper" in the society. It is these little things and the little thoughts that count the most. Finally, working in the youth stewardship program and particularly with the cancer center made me realize the suffering around, it opened my eyes to what's happening in our community, it taught me how to face the obstacles and tragedies of life, and most importantly it made me recognize how much change I can make with the little actions I take. **Tala El Kadi-Grade 12SE**



Samira Shatila G6A

البيئة

هذه البيئة هدية من الله
هي نعمة بل هي جنة في أحضاننا
أحضنوها ولا تدمروها
إنها أمانة من الله وليست ملك لنا

فلو كانت الأرض تتكلم لقال: "ساعدوني واحموني
إن جبالي الشامخة، و سهولي المنبسطة، و شمسي
المتلألئة، و أشجاري الخضراء، و مياهي العذبة...
كلها نعم وُجدت لأجلكم
إرحموني يرحمكم من في السماء."

محمود قبيلان السادس

التصحّر

إن التغيرات المناخية والإنبعاثات السامة للغازات و
التلوث البيئي أسباب مباشرة للتصحّر.

من خلال مطالعتي لمقالات علمية عن ذوبان الثلوج
في القطب بسبب ثقب طبقة الأوزون وارتفاع درجة
الحرارة على الأرض و و قلة هطول الامطار و كثرة
انبعاث الغازات الملوثة من المصانع والسيارات ... و
رمي النفايات و عدم تدويرها و الصناعات النووية...
أستنتج أن الإنسان هو المسؤول الوحيد عن كل هذا
الدمار.

لذلك أطلب من الدول أن يوقفوا إيذاء الطبيعة و أن
يبحثوا عن حلول للإنقاذ.

كفى!!! أوقفوا التصحّر!!!

هادي هاشم السادس أساسي

ظاهرة اختفاء النحل

"إذا انقرض النحل عن وجه الأرض، فيبقى للإنسان
أربع سنوات للعيش" - ألبرت أينشتاين

قال "أينشتاين" هذه العبارة من غير منطلق أنّ النحل
على وشك الانقراض بل للدلالة على أهمية النحل هو
الذي يلعب دورًا هامًا في تلقيح ورود النباتات التي
تصبح ثمارًا فيما بعد

قد لوحظ في مختلف أنحاء العام اختفاء مفاجئ غير
مبرر للنحل، هناك نظريتين بهذا الشأن:

١- الأولى تقول أن النحل يختفي وبمجر قفيره كنتيجة
للأمراض المنتشرة بسبب الاحتباس الحراري.

٢- نظرية ثانية تقول أن السبب هو ذبذبات الهاتف
"الخلوي" أو الغير سلكي الذي يخرق نظام القيادة
عند النحل، وهذا يعني عدم عودتهم إلى قفيرهم،
وبمعنى آخر أنّ النحل لن يعود إلى قفيره في حال
وجود هاتف غير سلكي بالقرب منه.

"الانحيار النظامي الجماعي" أو Colony collapse
Disorder يحدث عندما يهجر سكان القفير بشكل
مفاجئ، تاركين ملكتهم، البيض، وبعض العمال
المصابين بأمراض متعدّدة وخطيرة. معظم النحل
الذين تركوا قفيرهم قضا ووجد آخرين قرب القفير
المهور لكن لا نفع منهم بعد ذلك. هذه الظاهرة
انتشرت في أوروبا وأميركا خاصّة في الولايات
المتحدة وألمانيا وأسبانيا وبريطانيا واليونان
وإيطاليا والبرتغال...

المشكلة هي أن معظم زراعات العالم تعتمد على
تلقيح النحل. أما الحكومات لم تعمل بعد على هذه
المشكلة بشكل جدّي، فلا أحد يعرف مدى تأثيره
وماذا سيحلّ بالعالم في حال انقرض النحل؟

بحث ودراسة علي دكروب

ونام حداد - الثامن أساسي

La Motricité Fine

Que font nos tout petits dans la cour? Ce n'est
pas encore l'heure de la récréation! Ils ne sont
pas dispersés et autour des tables ils sont
regroupés! Ah bon, ça y est je les vois, ils sont
en train de bouger leurs petits doigts!

Perles, peintures, fils et papiers...tout est là,
bien prêts... Ils sont en train de travailler leur
motricité fine.

Tous les mardis, les enfants de la petite
section se dirigent vers la cour, se divisent en
petits groupes et travaillent avec beaucoup
d'enthousiasme. Différentes activités ont
été prêtes pour les aider à développer leur
motricité fine. Bientôt, nos tout petits seront
capables de bien manipuler les ciseaux, de
bien tenir le crayon, de boutonner et déboutonner
leur chemise, de visser et dévisser
des couvercles... Ils seront beaucoup plus
autonomes et travailleront adroitement avec
différents outils.

Les diverses activités proposées sont axées
autour de différents objectifs. Ainsi, certaines,
dites « sensorielles », visent à développer la
prise de conscience des mains comme par
exemples: faire les empreintes des mains
avec de la peinture ou travailler avec du sable.
D'autres visent à développer la force muscu-



laire au niveau des mains et des doigts:
presser des bouteilles en plastique pour faire
couler la peinture, essorer une éponge, mani-
puler des pinces à linge ou même pressant
des compte-gouttes.

Le déliement digital est travaillé à travers
d'autres exercices comme le coloriage avec
les cinq doigts. Les activités d'enfilage,
de tricotage et de construction ont pour
objectif de développer la coordination oculo-
manuelle et le contrôle du mouvement.

Allez-y les petits! Nous vous attendons ce
mardi et tous les mardis pour jouer, s'amuser
et expérimenter différentes situations. Tout
cela dans le but d'arriver à bien coordonner
les mouvements manuels. Alors, à bientôt!

Gretta Bou Issa - Psychomotricienne

UE General Assembly

When the UE learners gathered in the auditorium for the general assembly and listened attentively to the lyrics of the song "The Climb"; each let go of his imagination to grab the picture of a girl facing life, moving on, overcoming obstacles and maintaining strong will.

Here are some of the "quotes" that our UE learners shared with their Head Of Division, Mrs. Nariman Kadi

Ali Assi-G4A

It is not always easy to move on in life. There will always be an obstacle and it might be hard to pass through it, but no matter how hard it is to pass the obstacle, you must try your best to do what it takes to move on. God created obstacles not to block the way of living, but to make living better.

George Issa-G4C

There is always going to be another mountain to climb, but there will always be another chance in life and it doesn't matter how fast you get there. It doesn't matter how many things you are going to face, you should always try to do it and you shouldn't give up.

Marya Maknieh-G6C

"There is always going to be another mountain, I'm always gonna want to make it move". There will always be another problem where you should be ready to solve and find a solution for it.

Leah Faroukh-G5C

I will never give up whatever happens and I will always have another chance for everything in my life. If I have a dream that I want to be true I should do it because I have lots and lots of chances.

Nathalie Shatila-G5C

I was touched and I understood that there are obstacles in life that we would have to face before we reach the end. We should be strong enough to face those problems or obstacles throughout our path of life and before reaching the top of the mountain.

GREEN Christmas



I'm dreaming of a GREEN Christmas
Just like the ones I used to know
Where global warming is absent
And the surroundings are pleasant
And people care for the life they own.

I'm dreaming of a GREEN Christmas
With every recycled Christmas card I write
May your days be healthy and bright
and may all your Christmases be GREEN
I'm dreaming of a GREEN Christmas!!

Edited by Ms. Anita Moutchoyan from the
Original song White Christmas



Facing Faces

The terminology of "Facing faces" according to the "Journal of Personality and Social Psychology" is the study of the cognitive aspects of physiognomy which in turn is the art of reading personality traits from faces, dating back to ancient Greece.

Through all the common features in our faces, one main aspect distinguishes each and every one of us, and that is our personality. It's not the shape of the eyes or the curve of the smile that distinguishes us. It's how we look at things, how we analyze them with our inner eyes, our mind and heart; it is to what we smile with a compassionate smile-with love or hate. All these little aspects in our souls make the difference in facing the faces. The easiest way to follow is to belong to the crowd, but it's important to identify ourselves. Never lose faith in the simple truth. Each different aspect of our personality defines every decision we will be making.

The beautiful faces of our children brighten the path of our future. We need to insure that they can tell right from wrong so they are properly equipped to make the right choices. We cannot judge someone only by their looks. There is more to a person than their color of his/her skin, their origin or their race. Because unfortunately, stereotyping is a common taboo that we all fall into. We should treat others with an open heart and mind. Despite all the differences in cultures, respect to others should prevail. We should empower our children with the wisdom to tell right from wrong; with the virtue to treat everybody else equally irrelevant from where they come or what they believe in. Treat others the way you would like them to treat you.

Although the Greeks believed they could tell the personality of people by looking at their face, we can mold the personality of our children by accepting and respecting others and leading them by example.

Rana Farroukh AlBarbir

Mother of Badreddine (Grade 2) and Ahmad AlBarbir (Grade 1)



Lyn Mahmoud KG2



Alain Shehimi G8A

The Real You

When you meet new faces

In different places,

You may try to change your personality

You'll even try to push through reality.

If you make friends that way, this won't be true,

Simply they wouldn't be friends with the Real you.

If you want to make friends,

Be who you are

You will find the real you

Who is not that far.

I think the lesson that this poem sends:

Don't change yourself to make new friends.

Diana Gorab - Grade 7

"Facing Faces"

This year's theme can mean several things: Facing one's fear, facing obstacles, or facing other people. Each one of us has a different definition of the term "facing faces". The importance of this theme in our lives is that if we don't face anything or anyone, we cannot evolve or change as human being. After all we are living together and learning from each other. No sane man can live isolated. If we don't communicate with each other we can never survive in this crazy mixed up world.

We can also learn from this to face the problem or challenge. Hence, if there is any type of obstacle or problem standing in our way, we should at least try to narrow it down, or else, it's going to get more complicated and irritating.

For example, a common problem that most students face is being weak in certain subjects. Most of them deny the problem and try deviating from it, while others try working on themselves to become better. If the outcome of their hard work wasn't as satisfying or as they expected, they should seek help from the adults who are more experienced. Our teachers and parents can direct us on the right track and can point out the mistakes we have committed through the way and give us tips on how to avoid repeating such mistakes, had it been a scholastic issue or an ethical one.

This is why cooperation or "facing" other human beings is necessary and important because without them, we cannot build a disciplined and proper society.

Bottom line is, the theme this year can be defined in many ways and all the ways lead to being bold enough to fight back what someone may consider to be an "obstacle" in his/her life.

Maya Saleh - Grade 8

Facing Others

Face those people
No matter whom
they are.

Tell them what's
wrong

And don't ever go
far.

Tell them what is inside you
Even if it will hurt.

You might think it is hard
But it is always good to try.

You might think it is not right
To stand upright.

However I tell you this is the only way
to face men.

Take a deep breath and face them.

Let them know who you are
And who you want to be.

If you just try

I'm sure you will thrive.

For the person you face

Will understand what you are trying to say.

And feel that you don't want to run away

You just have to face

And everything will be okay.



Facing the future: To be or not to be

In an era where breaking discoveries in Math & Sciences are taking place every day & where humanity is overcoming challenges in the fields of renewable energy & communication, one wonders about the characteristics that the person ought to develop to ensure the conservation of his/her individual uniqueness on one hand & the efficient engagement in this overwhelming process on the other hand.

We read about theories that address the "nature" of knowledge & its role in helping the individual develop the characteristics that lead to success. We hear claims stating that knowledge perishes quickly & thus one must focus on developing the ability of creating knowledge & transforming knowledge (Theory of organizational knowledge creation) rather than on simply acquiring explicit knowledge. An interesting challenge at this point is to identify the relationship that should be built between knowledge acquired through formal education (school, university ...etc.), knowledge built up through exposure & personal traits developed through experience & practice. This explains the evolution of the new concept of "knowledge management" where learners are not only expected to acquire knowledge from various resources & different contexts but they are also highly urged to develop the skills & the competencies that lead them to manage the acquired knowledge efficiently.

In his book "The global Achievement Gap", Harvard professor Tony Wagner identifies what he calls the seven survival skills for career, college & citizenship. The first skill that he discusses is "critical thinking & problem solving". It is imperative that we provide our children with the chance to experience real life problems at home & at school. Let your child help you in tasks such as assembling a present, planning an event, fixing a broken object. When the teacher assigns a homework or a project, resist telling him the solution & don't over help. Instead, provide support by asking the questions that allow the child to analyze the problem in order to find the solution. The second skill is "Collaboration across networks & leading by influence". The ability to work effectively in a group & to lead a team is an essential skill for success. Encourage your children to join teams & work in groups such as clubs. Most important when the child encounters a problem with a teacher or a team member, help her in practicing what should be said but allow her to say it so that she learns how to advocate herself in the future. "Agility & adaptability" is the third skill mentioned by Wagner. Flexibility is an important skill in a rapidly changing world.

When faced with the unexpected, one should be able to think & find alternatives. Model flexibility & teach your child to think on her feet instead of getting upset because the world does not end when plans change. The fourth skill is "Initiative & entrepreneurialism" which reflects the importance for children to be active & to think beyond the task given to them. Once your child finds his way into an activity, help him take it to the next level, discuss with him his initiative, allow him to plan it appropriately & to build it on solid basis. Help your child build "effective oral & written communication" skills. These skills are extremely important in every career. Assist your child in becoming clear & precise in verbal & written communication by allowing him to engage in debates, social gatherings, & presentations. Have him write thank you notes, greeting cards, read his work & give encouraging comments. The ability of " Accessing & analyzing information" is of major importance for success & leadership. Nowadays, computers & smart phones provide a glut of information, the challenge is to be able to differentiate between the " gems" & the "garbage". Research with your child in order to find the answers to her questions & discuss the findings by asking about the source & by talking about the markers of good information. The last skill discussed in the book is "curiosity & imagination". Encourage in your child the ability to ask good questions. This is important in building an inquisitive character that helps the child keep up with today's changing world.

Parents & educators have a vital role in bringing up the best in children by giving them the right mix of challenge & support combined with thoughtful adult mentoring. With the rapid transformations we are witnessing, our kids need to be comfortable with complexity, they must be able to see the past & the present, connect the dots, & think about the future & act for making it better.

Bilal Basha - Math Coordinator and Maha Makki - Project Consultant

Dunia Zeidan - Grade 8



Going Green this Christmas!

Saving the Planet is no longer just about Global Warming, or technological advances. This is why we decided to go GREEN this Christmas. The thing is, our school has been advocating the 3 R's of going green for some time now. These are: Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle. At SMOC, as part of the going Green campaign, the learners have collected 7-Up cans in order to make a tree out of reused cans. They are also collecting water bottle caps to donate to charity. Students are learning the benefits and uses of material that they usually throw. This is only a small part of many more activities related to this issue to come along as the year progresses.

Facing Faces

Lying might get you something, but when people find out that you lied it will be hard to face them. One day a girl named Jana lied about her grade and signed it herself so her mother would not be mad that she got a low grade.

When she received her report card, Jana had to give it to her parents to sign it and return it back. She had forgotten that she had signed a test and did not show it to her mom. Unfortunately, that day marked the truth that should have been conveyed. The mother discovered her daughter's betrayal- betrayal of her trust.

Nothing is harder on a mother than to face the fact that her own flesh and blood is an image of someone "fake" and untrustworthy.

This day resembled a very important lesson in Jana's life. She could never forget her mother's face and how disappointed she really felt. This lesson was passed on to Jana's children and that is never to forge a signature.

Lying or cheating might be your escape from reality but it will always come back to get you in the future and you will need to face the faces of the people you lied to.

Nour Mashaka - Grade 8