

Spring 2018

## ALL OF THE ABOVE

Sixth grade students recently completed an interdisciplinary unit in Math and Language & Literature. The unit focused on the novel *All of the Above* by Shelley Pearsall. In the novel, a group of inner-city students from a Cleveland public school set out to build the world's largest tetrahedron and earn a spot in the Guinness Book of World Records. The characters face numerous challenges along the way, but learn to work together, respect differences, trust one another, and overcome adversity.

Throughout the unit, sixth graders explored the importance of relationships, especially with regards to point of view and patterns. Students then used what they had learned and discussed to write the “next chapter” for the character in the story that had influenced them the most. Students also explored the mathematical characteristics of tetrahedrons as well as tessellations, repeating patterns of polygons with no overlaps or gaps. After learning about the tetrahedrons, the students decorated their creations with an original tessellation.

The novel provided our students with a unique opportunity to connect to a character that had a very different background, family, culture, and life experience from their own.



CONGRATULATIONS  
TO THE  
INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE ORGANIZATION  
ON ITS  
50TH ANNIVERSARY!

## FUTURE ENGINEERS



As a culminating activity for the 8th grade health classes, students were challenged to create a working prosthetic out of simple materials. This project connected with their study of the human body as well as with a junior high service project that raises money for LIMBS International.

Students had to collaborate to design and build their prosthetic to successfully pick up both a tennis ball and a ping pong ball and drop them into a box. Throughout the engineering process, groups needed to reflect on their designs, their strength, durability and comfort, as well as the aesthetics of the limb. Upon completion of the project, students had to present their limb to the class and demonstrate its success. Students were then asked to reflect and evaluate their prosthetic.

*“The design process took a while, because our original design seemed to work, but we needed to add more to our prosthetic.”*

*“I’m very proud of how we did and I gained a new respect for not only the people who design human prosthetics, but the people who have to use them.”*

*“I was pretty proud of our prosthetic. It was fairly difficult to come up with ideas but we spread out the work evenly in our group, and completed the task.”*

*“In the few class periods we had to work on the project, we worked diligently to get our prosthetic limb made. We put a lot of thought into it, including functionality, design, looks and comfort.”*

The students were extremely engaged throughout the process and readily took on the challenging work of an engineer.



## PRINTMAKING AROUND THE WORLD



Sixth graders were the first to break in the art room's new printmaking supplies, which were generously funded through purchases from LCA's Artsonia online gallery. The sixth graders had a multicultural printmaking experience, exploring artwork from Ghana, Japan, and Mexico and then using printmaking, a new medium for most, to create their own versions.

From Ghana, the students learned about adinkra prints, which are colorful cloths printed with symbols that are hundreds of years old. These cloths are important to the culture, and generally used for ceremonial purposes. The students created their own symbols, and then stamped these onto colorful paper to mimic adinkra cloths.



The art of Japan brought us the wonder of gyo-taku, or Japanese fish

printing. The students

learned that artists in Japan are heavily influenced by Japan's proximity to the water and their relationship with nature. Japanese fishermen would print their fish in order to capture their biggest catches. The sixth graders



used rubber fish to learn about this type of printing, and had a blast experimenting with something brand new.

Oaxacan animals are a type of Mexican folk art that depicts colorful, patterned and whimsical animals. The students are using a process called a trace monotype in order to create their own animal in this style. They are adding color to these prints using colored pencil.

## FOURTH GRADE INQUIRERS

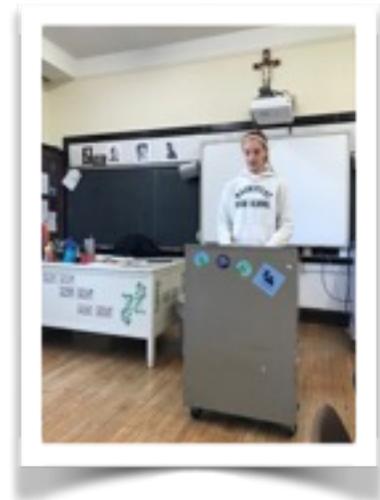
As our 4th graders studied Ohio's part in the U.S. Civil War, they tried to understand the culture of our country at that time. They read and studied the reasons for the war; they learned about the pain and injustice of slavery; they discussed the different economies of the North and South, and how these not only led to the war, but deeply affected its outcome. They were inspired by the work of the abolitionist movement and considered what it would be like to break an unjust law, like the Fugitive Slave Act.



These students were so engaged, asked important questions, and had so many meaningful discussions that they wanted to extend their learning about this important time in our country's history. They quickly got to work creating timelines, graphs, charts, posters, Google Slides and PowerPoints that covered a variety of topics including comparisons of resources between the North and South, letters from soldiers, the Gettysburg Address and other political documents, abolitionist newspapers, casualty statistics, maps of forts and military colleges, important battles, the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* — there was no stopping these inquisitive fourth graders!

## LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Throughout their *Animal Farm* unit, 8th graders identified a variety of propaganda techniques that were used by the antagonists in the book, such as fear, bandwagon, and repetition. Students identified the negative effects that propaganda had on the more vulnerable characters in this novella. For their summative assessment project, students independently chose a moral issue to argue for or against. Students argued for more access to clean water, to increase rights for women living in third world countries, to outlaw puppy mills, etc. During the drafting stage, students were required to thoughtfully insert propaganda into their speeches as a means to explore whether or not propaganda can be used for ethical purposes. Following each speech, presenters answered a variety of audience questions, which often sparked critical-thinking discussions. While the word “propaganda” may hold a negative connotation, students found that it can be used for positive purposes, if appropriately used.



## CARING FIRST GRADERS

This spring, first grade, along with the help of their 8th grade buddies, made rosaries for the veterans at the Veterans Hospital. Rosary packets were donated by the Catholic War Veterans and were assembled by the children at Lakewood Catholic Academy. Each veteran received a packet containing a rosary, a handmade card and a note informing them of who made the gift.

Once the packets were completed, Fr. Joe Piskura, retired chaplain and Vietnam veteran, came to LCA's chapel and blessed the rosaries. Students participated in a mini-rosary prayer service. Each child was given a holy card of Our Lady of La Vang, patron saint of Vietnam.

Some of the rosaries were given to veterans at the VA hospital. Those who received them were deeply touched.



## LIVING HISTORY

Sixth graders brought Ancient Egyptian history to life as they transformed the Dining Hall into a Wax Museum. Students chose an aspect of Egyptian culture and then developed a character who would be able to speak on that topic. They researched the topic, created a costume, constructed a prop and shared their findings through a brief, memorized speech. The museum was filled with a myriad of characters from a pharaoh explaining common religious practices and a potter illustrating the

innovations of her craft, to a slave retelling her experiences serving the noble class and sharing her recipe for bread. The students remained still as statues until prompted to come to life, reciting their speech and then returning to stillness. The project was a dramatic but meaningful way to present what they had learned.



## COMMUNITY PROJECT

Eighth grade students at Lakewood Catholic Academy were the first cohort to participate in the International Baccalaureate Community Project. The IB Community Project aims to integrate student interest and talent with the needs of the world. The project challenges students to engage in sustained, self directed inquiry, demonstrate skills required to complete an extended project, communicate effectively in a variety of contexts, take significant action, and appreciate and reflect upon the process.

In preparation for our Community Project Exhibition, students prepared visual summaries of their projects. They benefited from the opportunity to share their personal journeys with supportive members of our community. The exhibition was a celebration of the inherent goodness of each individual and of the collective potential of this generous 8th grade class. Visitors to the exhibition were able to cast a vote for projects in two categories: the project they felt had the greatest impact and the project that was presented in the most creative way. When the votes were tallied, there was a tie for the impact award between Max Artbauer's interviews with Veterans and his partnership with Mission 22, and the refugee tutoring project undertaken by Conor McGuire, Charbel Nakhle, and Will Armsworthy. Earning the highest number of votes in the creative category was Libbie McNamee. Libbie created and sold beautiful elephant themed artwork and the proceeds were donated to an organization focused on ending elephant poaching. LCA will donate \$50 to each of the winning causes and each student will receive a prize as well.





We began this process in the fall, challenging students to identify a need in the local or global community for which they felt a passion. Many students chose to perform direct service, for example, tutoring refugees or visiting the elderly. Others chose to research a need and then act as advocates for a vulnerable population. Still others chose to serve indirectly, using their talents to raise money or collect resources. Fourteen LCA faculty members served as supervisors, helping to guide and mentor students through the project.

One of the common elements of the projects was to reflect upon the seven pillars of Catholic Social Teaching. Students identified which pillar was reflected in their own project. Group discussions reinforced our call and responsibility as Catholics to make time to work for justice.

We learned so much in this inaugural year of the project. While there is certainly room for growth, we are very proud of the wide variety of ways in which these 48 students engaged in the world, took action, and grew through the process. In the words of Mother Teresa, "Not all of us can do great things, but we can do small things with great love." As our students prepare to leave us, we are confident that they will continue to use their gifts to make a difference in the world.

