

GENEVA SCHOOL

MAGAZINE

SUMMER 2017



This issue: **THE ART OF
DISCOVERING TRUTH
IN COMMUNITY**
How Geneva School is Advancing
Classical Education Through Shared Inquiry

**THE LOST TOOLS OF LEARNING:
FOUND**
by Gregory Alan Thornbury

GENEVA SCHOOL MAGAZINE

SUMMER 2017

HEAD OF SCHOOL

Rim Hinckley

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Kevin McDonald, Chair
Michael Koh, Vice Chair
Christine Bishara, Secretary
Daniel Matheson, Treasurer
Carol Chen
Camille Kampouris
Edward Morgan
Carolyn Parlato
Alex Ray
Rim Hinckley (ex officio)

EDITORS

Dana Gage
Joanne Lu

CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Gregory Thornbury

OUR MISSION

The Geneva School of Manhattan exists to provide a time-proven classical education within a biblical worldview. We inspire students to love learning, pursue excellence, and become leaders in scholarship, virtue, and faith.

COVER

Students at a Shared Inquiry session in Central Park

CONTENTS

- 1 FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL
- 2 THE LOST TOOLS OF LEARNING: FOUND
- 4 ALUMNI REUNION
- 5 SECOND GRADE IN TIMES SQUARE
- 6 SHARED INQUIRY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM
- 7 SPEECH AND DEBATE
WAX MUSEUM
- 8 GENEVA GALA
- 9 THE ART OF DISCOVERING TRUTH IN
COMMUNITY
- 17 GENEVA KNIGHTS
- 18 EVENTS
- 22 THE CLOISTERS
- 23 ART
- 24 INVEST IN THE FUTURE
- 24 DEAR MS. HINCKLEY



FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL



“In order for the students to engage in dialogue, they need to read deeply, know how to ask questions of the text, and learn how to interact with their peers.”

At The Geneva School of Manhattan, we educate young minds. We desire each student to develop a lifelong love of learning, an abiding love for God and his Word, noble moral character, and a critically-thinking mind. These goals can only be reached with timeless curriculum and wise teachers; they cannot be reached with relatively new technology-centered learning.

In my early years of teaching, I taught mathematics and computer science. I taught students how to use computers, as well as a programming language called “Basic” (I know I am dating myself!) At that time, personal computers were not standard fare in every home, as only the very affluent had the means to purchase computers for personal use. Today, it is quite different! Children have nearly unlimited access to computer technology on laptops, tablets, and phones.

As we know from both first-hand experience and research, our children are spending an appalling amount of time in front of screens each day. What are they filling their minds with during that time? Are they gaining anything worthwhile from screen time? Recently a parent told me they removed all electronic devices and mandated no screen time for a week. She said there was a remarkable difference in how her children interacted with one other as a result.

We want our students to know how to communicate and engage in a meaningful conversation with their peers and with adults. In order to do so, they need to read deeply, know how to ask questions of the text, and learn how to interact with their peers. These important reading and interpersonal skills cannot develop when the young mind is constantly being entertained with a technological device.

Instead of spending classroom time on ever-changing technology skills, we teach the timeless skills of reading, public speaking, and discussion. Our practice of Shared Inquiry is the heart of the classroom through which we give formal training in reading, interpreting texts, listening to others, and speaking articulately in a discussion. In the formative years of the young child, we strive to safeguard precious classroom time by instilling lifelong values—the reading of great literature, the art of skillful writing, the craft of debate, and the wisdom of dialogue.

Technology skills can be learned easily, but careful reading, critical thinking, and cogent writing are habits that are reinforced over the years and cannot be learned with ease when the child is grown. These early years are very critical times for us to develop great habits, and God gives us a limited amount of time to instill these qualities in our children. My desire is to steward these years to the best of my ability and with the best of timeless wisdom.

“Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it” (Prov 22:6).

With gratitude,

Kim Hindley

THE LOST TOOLS OF LEARNING

by Gregory Alan Thornbury

FOUND

“Sayers was confident that children are capable of far more responsibility and acuity than our modern age would have us to think.”

Sometimes the greatest cultural insights come from the most ordinary of places. For Dorothy Sayers, one of hers came from a quasi-depressing office in her first job after graduating from university. Sitting in her office at the advertising firm Benson's in London in 1921, she began to wonder how people could be gullible enough to believe the slogans she and her colleagues were writing. By the time she presented *The Lost Tools of Learning* in 1947, Sayers had answered her own question: the entire education system in the West was based upon teaching students simply what to think. Ideology had trumped thought.

She knew that it was not supposed to be this way. Sayers came from Oxford, where she studied medieval literature and was among the first women to graduate from the storied institution. Oxford and Cambridge were different from other institutions. In tutorials, the dons with whom she studied expected her to come prepared to argue a thesis, to think critically, and to never accept a conclusion without making it her own. “Although we often succeed in teaching our pupils ‘subjects,’ we fail lamentably in teaching them how to think. . . . They learn everything except the art of thinking” (*Lost Tools*, 10).



Sayers knew there was a deep irony in this turn of events in history. What separates the West from the rest has been our emphasis on self-governance, checks on institutional power, and a firm resistance to any form of demagoguery. By the time she had written *The Lost Tools*, Europe had been brought to its knees by national socialism and fascism. Totalitarianism was beginning to cover much of the planet in darkness. But Dorothy Sayers understood that the courage to resist always begins in the mind, in our imaginations.

What was her strategy to preserve civilization? Go back to what worked in the first place. Sayers proposed a return to an education based upon the medieval Trivium: grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric. Each stage was age appropriate and built upon the last. In the grammar stage, students learn Latin and exercise their minds through rote memorization. Every subject has a grammar. In mathematics, for example, it is the multiplication table. Think of this stage as a capacity planning exercise. Next, students progress to the dialectic stage in which they learn the rules of logic and begin to distinguish between valid and invalid inferences and which arguments are sound. In the rhetoric stage, students learn to express themselves in eloquent and persuasive ways. All of this culminates in the student being able to own arguments for themselves, to propose their own ideas based upon research, to offer a thesis. If you cannot summarize your case in a clear, propositional manner, everyone can see you're caught in a muddle.

Sayers was confident that children are capable of far more responsibility and acuity than our modern age would have us to think. She queries: "When we think about the remarkably

In order to preserve culture, Christians must rise to the challenge of making the case for how faith informs work.

early age at which the young men went up to university in, let us say, Tudor times, and thereafter were held fit to assume responsibility for the conduct of their own affairs, are we altogether comfortable about that artificial prolongation of intellectual childhood and adolescence into the years of physical maturity which is so marked in our own day?" Who can argue that that modern welfare state has not capitalized on the the psychology of dependence over self-reliance and industry? Imagine what Dorothy Sayers would say to today's new media filled with self-assured snap judgments on the internet, all of which are framed by advertising slogans and other sorts of propaganda. Her prescription would be the same as it was in 1947: classical education, now more than ever. Only a person who can think around a problem is in a position not to be the problem.

A good education is only the foundation. Sayers further believed that in order to preserve culture, Christians must rise to the challenge of making the case for how faith informs work. Speaking to a group in Eastbourne, England in the aftermath of World War II, she wondered aloud: "How can anyone remain interested in a religion which seems to have no concern with nine-tenths of life?" ("Why Work?" in *Creed or Chaos?*) The Church must be invested in how to parlay a proper educational foundation into a program to understand one's vocation and career.

The nineteenth century German scholar Johann Herder once defined culture as "the lifeblood of a people, the flow of moral energy that keeps a society intact." From whence does this "flow of moral energy" come? Surely it begins in the home, and surely it is developed in the classroom at the developmental stage when minds of children are filled with wonder and awe about the world around them. As such, the Christian community has a solemn responsibility to get it right – to not give the Empire the droids that they're looking for. We must look to the past, to the tradition that has served us so well. As G.K. Chesterton once so memorably observed: "Tradition means giving votes to the most obscure of all classes, our ancestors. It is the democracy of the dead" (*Orthodoxy*, 48).

Let the polls open and the voting begin. If I don't miss my guess, it's going to look a lot like Dorothy Sayer's *The Lost Tools of Learning*. And that's why what's happening in the classroom every day at Geneva School in New York City matters so very much.

Dr. Gregory Alan Thornbury is the President of The King's College in New York City and father of two Geneva School graduates ('15, '17).





— GENEVA SCHOOL —

ALUMNI

Reunion



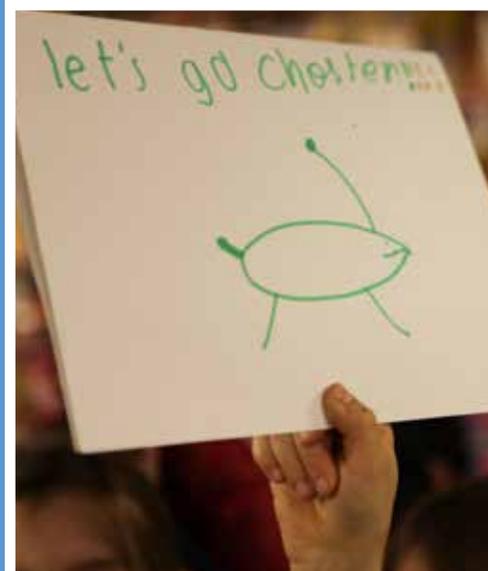
Our annual Geneva School Alumni Reunion was held at the East campus on Friday, January 6. It was wonderful to see various alumni from our thirteen graduating classes and hear about their stories and updates.

Oh, the places you'll go!



SECOND GRADE IN TIMES SQUARE

At Geneva School, we love reading classic works of literature. After reading *The Cricket in Times Square*, Second Grade went on a special outing to appreciate Chester Cricket's adventures. Their first stop was the Bellini newsstand in Times Square, where Chester made new friends and played his beautiful music. Next was a lunch in Chinatown, remembering Mario's feast with Sai Fong. Lastly, in honor of the Bellini family, the class stopped for some gelato in Little Italy!





Shared Inquiry Across the Curriculum

When students visit the Metropolitan Museum of Art (as they often do), they demand answers. They point to a painting or a sculpture and inquire: “What does it mean?” That’s what we want them to ask, and by the time they’ve reached the Upper School, they’ve been trained to ask this question of every cultural artifact, old or new.

A text can be a poem, a painting, a song

Shared Inquiry gives them the tools to answer this question. They know how to begin with a reasonable proposition based on clues from the text. A text is much broader than a piece of literature—a text can be a poem, a painting, a song. Every film is a text that can be “read” using the tools of Shared Inquiry. After reading the text, the students know how to clarify their own assumptions using the questions and rebuttals of their friends. Through Shared Inquiry, they know they’re not likely to come up with better answers on their own; they need a community to question and clarify their thinking.

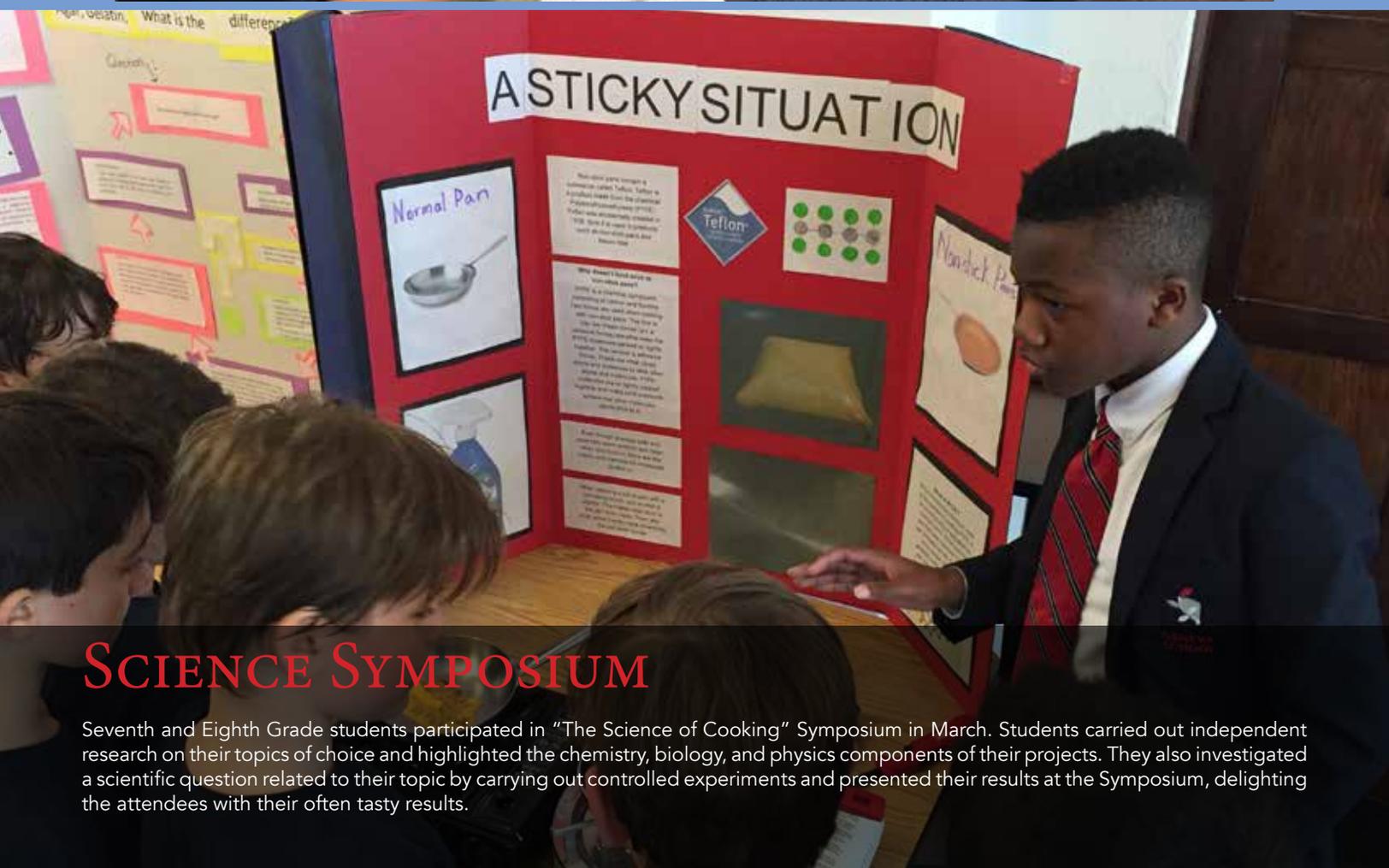
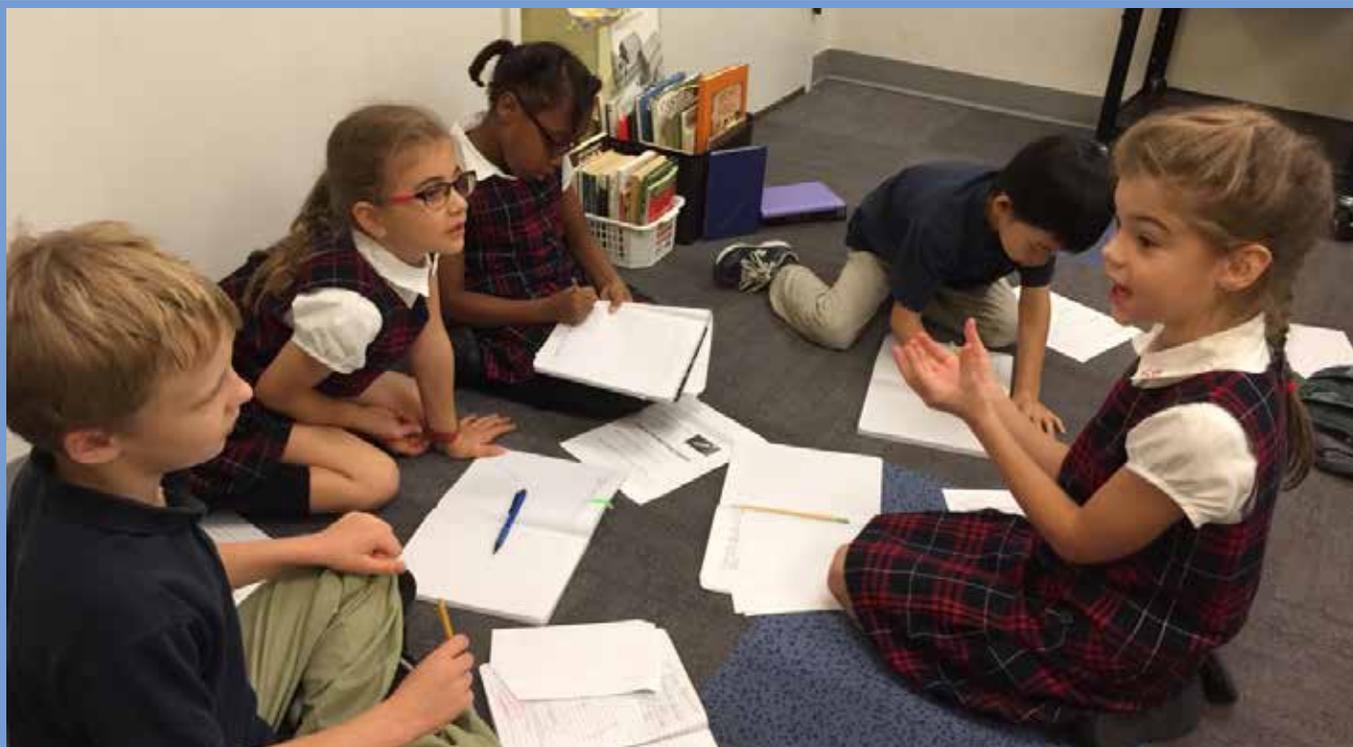
The tools of Shared Inquiry work for every part of the curriculum. In history, the students learn facts and patterns. But then they ask the question, “What does it mean?” Specifically in history, they ask, “What did it mean then?” and “What does it mean now?” Working through this process is the only way to use the wisdom of the past and escape the necessity of repeating its mistakes.

In science, observation is the first step, but after data is collected, it must be interpreted accurately. So much of scientific debate today rests not on data, but on how to interpret the data. A classically-educated student should know how to ask: “What does it mean?” and set out confidently to answer it, always open to having their opinions and reasoning challenged.

And what more important place of study can we use these tools than in Bible class? Ms. Kristin Smith, Upper School Bible Teacher, regularly holds Shared Inquiry sessions on topics studied in her class. Through Shared Inquiry, students are creating good habits of correctly interpreting the Bible and discovering what it means for their world.

Shared Inquiry Across the Curriculum

In science, observation is the first step, but after data is collected, it must be interpreted accurately. So much of scientific debate today rests not on data, but on how to interpret the data. A classically-educated student should know how to ask, “What does it mean?” and set out confidently to answer it, always open to having their opinions and reasoning challenged.”



SCIENCE SYMPOSIUM

Seventh and Eighth Grade students participated in “The Science of Cooking” Symposium in March. Students carried out independent research on their topics of choice and highlighted the chemistry, biology, and physics components of their projects. They also investigated a scientific question related to their topic by carrying out controlled experiments and presented their results at the Symposium, delighting the attendees with their often tasty results.



SPEECH AND DEBATE

by Tim Goodwin

The Geneva School Debate Team aims to help students formulate and defend arguments rooted in the three modes of persuasion: ethos, pathos, and logos. This is accomplished in two ways: first, we challenge our debaters to think eternally, which ultimately impacts the way they live and interact with our current society. We want to build the students' biblical worldview through expanding a student's ability to soundly argue on all grounds. A student who holds the ability to argue on the grounds of any subject is capable of having sound theological doctrine in his or her own life. As the student argues ethical standpoints all across the board, they are doing so in the context of truth. We believe

that the student will reach maximum learning capacity when they understand how to argue their opposition by *being* their opposition. Second, the team strives to exhibit integrity, leadership, and a passion for learning. As a result, the debaters learn the art of public speaking and the craft of cogent case writing. They become critical thinkers and wise debaters who know when to interject subjective thought and when to listen in a world of pluralistic philosophies. Geneva School debaters desire to use their spiritual and academic gifts in service to others, bringing honor and glory to God. These things equip them for great success through the rigor and challenges of life.

Geneva School began competing in the New York City Urban Debate League (NYCUDL) tournaments this year. Our first year debaters placed among the top teams in every preliminary tournament and qualified for the City and State championships.

NYCUDL New York City Championship

Open Public Forum

Jason Lu and Njomeza Pema: Fifth
Njomeza Pema: Third top speaker

Congressional Debate

Sasha Solton: Eighth

NYCUDL New York State Championship

Open Public Forum

Jason Lu and Njomeza Pema: Third
Njomeza Pema: Second top speaker

Novice Public Forum

Darcy Green and Emily Knapp: Ninth

Darcy Green received the prestigious Top Debater award for displaying character and sportsmanship.

The **SECOND GRADE WAX MUSEUM** featured historical characters from ancient times that came to life to tell their stories when tapped on the shoulder.



Geneva Gala 2017

The Geneva School community gathered at the New York Athletic Club for the annual Gala in March. Guests enjoyed a silent auction with hors d'oeuvres; followed by a seated dinner; live music with Bray Wilkins, Kajsa Wilkins, Sydney Goodwin, and the Jason Tiemann quartet; a speech from Ben Grizzle; a video by Nathan Rissman; and a live auction led by Brook Hazelton. The inaugural Spirit Week Challenge was a smashing success! Proceeds benefited the Scholarship Fund and arts programs.





From *The Lost Tools of Learning* by Dorothy Sayers

“However, it is in the highest degree improbable that the reforms I propose will ever be carried into effect. Neither the parents, nor the training colleges, nor the examination boards, nor the boards of governors, nor the ministries of education, would countenance them for a moment. For they amount to this: that if we are to produce a society of educated people, fitted to preserve their intellectual freedom amid the complex pressures of our modern society, we must turn back the wheel of progress some four or five hundred years, to the point at which education began to lose sight of its true object, towards the end of the Middle Ages.”

THE ART OF DISCOVERING TRUTH IN COMMUNITY

How Geneva School is
Advancing Classical Education
Through Shared Inquiry

“In the highest degree improbable.” Those are the odds Dorothy Sayers wagered that her ideal educational plan would ever be implemented. But if she could have looked seventy years into the future, she would have been delighted to see hundreds of new schools in the United States with a curriculum plan based on “The Lost Tools of Learning,” the essay Sayers presented at Oxford in 1947.

Sayers was not the only voice for classical education; there were others before her, but for many, Sayers provided a blueprint for a return to what worked so well in the past. Classical education is a growing movement and will continue to develop and change in the coming years. Geneva School, for the past twenty years, has grown along with the movement. While holding on tightly to the Trivium and Quadrivium as an objective ballast, Geneva School is constantly designing and implementing better curriculum and teaching practices. Head of School Rim Hinckley serves on the board of The Society of Classical Learning, an organization that gathers the best minds in the movement to expand and develop classical education.

Moving Past the Grammar Stage

Most of the efforts within the classical education movement have been focused on the grammar stage, for the grammar stage sets the foundation for all further learning. Other than a few books on logic and identifying fallacies, precious little is available for the next important stage, logic. The logic stage, also called the dialectic, is the time when students use the foundational skills and the storehouse of memory they’ve built in the grammar stage to develop their natural disposition to question everything and to sharpen their skills in logic and reason. Dorothy Sayers calls this stage the “Pert stage.”

Sayers remarked, "It will, doubtless, be objected that to encourage young persons at the Pert age to browbeat, correct, and argue with their elders will render them perfectly intolerable. My answer is that children of that age are intolerable anyhow; and that their natural argumentativeness may just as well be canalized to good purpose as allowed to run away into the sands."

To enhance instruction in the logic stage, Greg Gunkle, Dean of Academics, looked for a practice that would foster skills in logic without isolating it from the rest of the curriculum. What was needed was a holistic and community approach to reading and interpreting texts that required sound reasoning, argumentation, and debate. He asked students to go far beyond making arguments and avoiding fallacies; he wanted them to practice these skills in real-life scenarios that really mattered. Mr. Gunkle reached back to a practice he had discovered earlier in Philadelphia. It was called Shared Inquiry, and it was developed by the Great Books Foundation, an organization founded on the ideas of Mortimer Adler, the great educator and champion of classical education in America.

Shared Inquiry is a discussion group approach that trains students in a close reading of a text, logical induction, and friendly debate. Most discussion groups, while providing high student involvement, too often devolve into a sharing of personal opinions and feelings because discussion leaders are not equipped to keep the group grounded in the text. The students themselves often fail to listen to one another and lead the group toward new insights. The practice of Shared Inquiry brilliantly solves these problems with a simple solution: asking the right questions.

The heart of Shared Inquiry is the interpretive question. An interpretive question is any question about the text that can have at least two different legitimate answers. Having more than one valid answer gives the discussion space for discourse and reasoning, the way a comprehension or personal opinion



question would not. And here's the linchpin: when answering the question, the student must defend their answers with evidence taken from the text.

Looking at the Text

Mortimer Adler in his classic work *How To Read a Book*, taught that reading a book meant looking at the text several times, not just once. A Shared Inquiry discussion never begins without multiple pre-readings of the text. Students are guided through several reading exercises in the days preceding a Shared Inquiry. A strong understanding of the text is secured before any discussion takes place. To begin a discussion, the students sit in a circle along

Kindergarten read "The Frog Went A-Traveling," a Russian folktale retold by Vsevolod Garshin. The tale is about a frog who heard the ducks talk about the South and decided she wanted to go, too. The frog journeyed off with the migrating ducks but never made it to the South due to her careless mistake. Over the course of a week, Kindergarten students asked questions and shared their opinions about the story. On one of the days, they focused on the characteristics of the frog. Students described the frog as "clever," "greedy," "selfish," "curious," "impatient," "no self-control," and "boastful." They also reflected on the ending of the story and were then asked to answer the question, "Do you feel sorry for the frog?"

With Shared Inquiry, students have the opportunity to read a rich story, but also to dig deeper into text, explore complex ideas, and extend discussion to cover all realms of thinking and issues. Students are not limited to one thought or one conclusion with Shared Inquiry; the nature of creativity stretches across the discussions and careful study of the texts.



with the group leader. The leader asks an interpretative question and then gives the students a minute to write down their answers. After the students are finished, one student reads his answer and the discussion begins. Students can agree, disagree, or build on one another's answers, but they must build their arguments from the text itself. Citing page numbers and reading from the text is common in these reading groups, and in their efforts to defend their opinions, students learn to look past surface impressions and carefully examine what the author actually said. As the students mature and the texts become more complex, the students learn not to trust first

Fourth Grade

After reading *The Jungle Book*, students responded to the question, "Was keeping the man-cub, Mowgli, in the jungle the right thing to do?" In the section of the story they read, the wolf pack that took Mowgli in had debated the same issue at the Council Rock. Here are some excerpts from the students' journals:

"I agree with Shere Khan that men should be men, not men living like wild animals. So, I say no."

"I think it was the right thing to do, because if they had not, he would have died."

"I think it was the wrong thing to do because on page nine it says that Mowgli's parents had run off, so they should return him to his parents."

"No, it was not wise to keep him in the jungle because Shere Khan might kill him."

"In the book, Baloo says, 'There is no harm in a man's cub. I have no gift of words, but I speak the truth. Let him run with the pack and be entered with the others.' One of the reasons I think Baloo is right is because he teaches the Law of the Jungle and knows the law well."

Writes teacher Ms. Bruestle, "Our Shared Inquiry time teaches students how to listen to each other well and know that their contributions are worthwhile to the success of our overall discussion. Before any student is allowed to share their original thought in my class, they must paraphrase the remark made by the student before them. Additionally, students receive high marks for connecting their comments to comments made by other students before them."



Fifth Grade read a delightful short story by Randall Jarrell, called "The Bat Poet." After carefully reading through the story twice, they shared all the questions they had written. After sharing their questions, they decided on a "keeper question," which they would use to guide their discussion. Their question was, "Why would a bat want to write poems?"

A story about a bat who writes poems seemed silly to some of us, at first. As they began discussing why a bat would want to write poetry, though, they saw that the story was anything but silly! The goal is for students to be careful readers, readers who notice things, who don't merely give a story a cursory reading and assume they understand it. Shared Inquiry gives them valuable practice in achieving this goal. They also compel students to support all of their points with evidence from the text. Every time participants make a comment, they share the passage in the story which led them to the conclusion. This grounds their discussions in truth and drives students to think critically about every claim they assert. In every Shared Inquiry discussion, they discover aspects of the story that they had not noticed or understood before! As they read and discuss, students become diligent, meticulous, and thoughtful readers. This habit of reading will serve Geneva School students long after they have left the School.

During their most recent discussion of "The Bat Poet," Alberto remarked that the bat wrote poems because he was inspired by the mockingbird. He used this passage as evidence for his point: "The bat fluttered to the nearest branch, hung upside down from it, and listened; finally when the mockingbird stopped for just a moment he said in his little high voice, 'It's beautiful, just beautiful!'"

Later on, the mockingbird was irritated that the bat had written a poem about the mockingbird. Kate remarked that the mockingbird did not like the poem because it told the truth about him, citing this quotation from the mockingbird: "'You just haven't any idea!' the mockingbird went on, his eyes flashing and his feathers standing up. 'Nobody but a mockingbird has any idea!'" Kate went on to posit that, like the mockingbird, we do not often like to hear the truth about ourselves.

responses. Instead, they look carefully for subtle nuances and shades of meaning.

The benefits of such a practice can hardly be overestimated. In a day when "fake news" can be difficult to distinguish from "real news," and media become ever more superficial and hurried, what is more needed than for young people to learn how to read a text and draw sound inferences? Schools have long neglected logic training, and the fruit of that neglect was noticed by Sayers as far back as 1947:

"Has it ever struck you as odd, or unfortunate, that today, when the proportion of literacy throughout Western Europe is higher than it has ever been, people should have become susceptible to the influence of advertisement and mass propaganda to an extent hitherto unheard of and unimagined? Do you put this down to the mere mechanical fact that the press and the radio and so on have made propaganda much easier to distribute over a wide area? Or do you sometimes have an uneasy suspicion that the product of modern educational methods is less good than he or she might be at disentangling fact from opinion and the proven from the plausible?"



The wisdom of the logic stage is more needed today than it was in 1947, and Shared Inquiry is an engaging and integrated way of inculcating the reasoning skills our students need.

Discussion Among Friends

Debate usually connotes antagonism and divisiveness, but in a wisely-led classroom, debate can, and should, foster friendship. One of the goals of Shared Inquiry is to teach how to disagree with one another without getting one's feelings hurt. The ability to distinguish between an opposing opinion and an enemy is the very thing lacking in our society today; it's a habit that must be tutored and trained in our students and tutors alike. We must form the habit of friendship and devotion to truth which is had only when we can discuss ideas apart from personal offense and myopic cultural bias. Shared Inquiry lowers the sensitivity element. Students build on one another's arguments in the discussion and learn the habit of listening. A student isn't allowed to introduce a new thought without relating it to something she has heard discussed in the group. Within those parameters, she constantly listens and compares her own insights with those in the group. This allows the members to forge new insights

and reach truths they could not have reached on their own. As early as Kindergarten, the students are taught how to disagree respectfully by using specific phrases: "That's a good point, but have you considered what happened on page x?" Or "I understand your point of view, but from page x, I think this is a better way of looking at it."

Early Practice: Shared Inquiry in Kindergarten to Second Grade

In the early years, students are still learning to read and building their vocabularies and comprehension skills. With brilliant selections from the Great Books Foundation, the students pre-read, read, and re-read short stories before participating in a reading group discussion. Teachers are trained in reading strategies that focus the students on the text. For example, for one reading, a student might write a C in the margin each time a character acts with courage and an S for each time the same character does something sneaky. Another assignment might be to draw a picture of a scene, including at least three specific details from the text.

These reading exercises form the habits of looking closely at texts, rereading texts, and most importantly, having a thorough knowledge of a text before having a discussion or making any conclusions about it.

Beginning the Logic Stage: Shared Inquiry in Third Through Sixth Grades

As early as Third Grade, students are capable of having lively classroom disagreements, and it's time to channel those strong feelings into something good. Their capacities for induction are developing at this time, so they are able to draw conclusions while still focusing on the text. One way to energize the classroom is to ask a value question about the text. For example, when one reads *The Jungle Book*, a Fourth Grade selection, an interpretive value question might be: "Should Mother Wolf have taken Mowgli in?" In answering this question, a Fourth Grade student has many things to consider. Why was Father Wolf hesitant? Were any of Shere Khan's arguments valid? What would the consequences be? What was Mother Wolf's underlying motive?

Even unusually quiet students get involved when their sense of right and wrong is on the line. And as they search in the text to defend their initial opinions, they learn to see their friends' points of view and the flaws in their own arguments. One of the most satisfying things that can happen in a

Eighth Grade conducted a Shared Inquiry on *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury. To prepare for the discussion, they performed a syntopical/comparative reading of *Fahrenheit 451* and excerpts from Neil Postman's *Amusing Ourselves to Death*. First, students implicitly established that there is more than one book, author, and genre relevant to particular questions raised by Ray Bradbury. Second, students brought the authors to terms based on previous discussions and notes facilitated by Mr. Terrell. This also involved a detailed, individual inspection of each text and the establishment of a neutral set of propositions.

After these first two steps were completed, students were then able to discuss, in the form of a Shared Inquiry, whether or not and to what extent each text related to the questions put forward by *Fahrenheit 451*. Specifically, students discussed where *Fahrenheit 451* belongs on the continuum of dystopias between Huxley and Orwell. This manifested itself in an hour-long debate over whether, based on the text, the people or the government was more responsible for the book's eponymous milieu. In other words, was *Fahrenheit* a cautionary tale about state control and autocracy, or the collective dumbing down of culture and the trivialization of public information? It was a lively, multilayered conversation. Several students came in with one idea and ended up changing their minds. Other students added to their original propositions with facts or insights gained through conversation. All walked away with more questions than they had time to answer, a clear sign that this project had not been in vain.



"During Shared Inquiries, everyone's ideas are able to be heard and we are able to debate in-depth topics. I particularly enjoyed the session on *Fahrenheit 451* because I was very interested in the topics. Everyone learns how to create their own ideas and opinions, and we often walk away with changed ideas as a result of the sharing of opinions." ~Angelica



"Listening to fellow classmates share their views on the book at hand opens up a whole new world of thought." ~Asher



"I came in believing that there could only be three answers to the question. Through our Shared Inquiry, I not only realized that there was a universe of other answers, but my ideas also became refined and changed. This is mostly why I love Shared Inquiry. Every time, you grow and learn from your classmates in a respectful, rigorous environment." ~Carolyn



"Shared Inquiries put a whole new level on the story and make it real to life. They are awesome and a great way to share opinions about a text in the context of community." ~Aidan



We had a Shared Inquiry on *Fahrenheit 451* where we discussed where Bradbury's take fits on the continuum of dystopias. Many of us believed it fell closer to the Huxley side, but some had the opposite opinion. There was one student, however, that made the observation that Bradbury in fact overlaps the two. That's the best part about Shared Inquiries...they always bring something new to the table." ~Kate

Shared Inquiry is to see a student actually change his mind. After a fruitful discussion, a common follow-up technique is to ask the students to write down whether or not they still hold to their initial answer. Sometimes students will modify their answers, but it is not uncommon for them, after listening to their classmates, to abandon their original thoughts altogether.

The Rhetoric Stage: Shared Inquiry in Seventh and Eighth Grades

Many consider rhetoric to be the art of persuasion, but according to Andrew Kern, director of the Circe Institute, rhetoric is “the art of making decisions in community.” Kern uses *The Iliad* as the ideal book of rhetoric, where characters deliver formal speeches whenever a group decision needs to be made. The community’s fate, then, is tied to the ability of wise leaders to persuade with wisdom and reason. When Sayers observed the debates going on around her, she was not optimistic:

“Have you ever, in listening to a debate among adult and presumably responsible people, been fretted by the extraordinary inability of the average debater to speak to the question, or to meet and refute the arguments of speakers on the other side? Or have you ever pondered upon the extremely high incidence of irrelevant matter which crops

up at committee meetings, and upon the very great rarity of persons capable of acting as chairmen of committees? And when you think of this, and think that most of our public affairs are settled by debates and committees, have you ever felt a certain sinking of the heart?”

When Seventh and Eighth Grade students at Geneva School engage in Shared Inquiry, they are preparing themselves for the day when they will sit around discussing the most pressing issues of their times. Will they know how to look past the propaganda and be able to “read” their times? Will they know how to collaborate with their peers instead of just arguing with them? Will they know how to distinguish fact from feelings?

At Geneva School, teaching students to live and lead with integrity is more important than test scores. The practice of Shared Inquiry is the community practice designed to prepare students to engage with others with their minds and their hearts. After years of practice, the students will acquire more than reading comprehension skills; they will have life-long habits of learning within a community. Dorothy Sayers could not imagine a modern school with a classical curriculum, but in *The Lost Tools of Learning*, she gave us the tools to reimagine our future and build a school where students learn not *what* to think, but *how* to think.



When Seventh and Eighth Grade students at Geneva School engage in Shared Inquiry, they are preparing themselves for the day when they will sit around discussing the most pressing issues of their time. Will they know how to look past the propaganda and be able to “read” their times? Will they know how to collaborate with their peers instead of just arguing with them? Will they know how to distinguish fact from feelings?



ALUMNI SPEAK



“It inspires me to ask my own questions that go beyond what is taught in class.”

“

Shared Inquiry is a method used for one to learn to read for himself. Shared Inquiry is based on questions (that is why it is called an inquiry!). It is a discussion that originates from questions about the text. There are three types of questions: factual, interpretive, and evaluative. Factual questions ask about the story, plot, and characters: the facts. These questions are used to make sure that everyone understood what has happened in the book (“Who is... ?”). Interpretive questions have two or more answers that can be supported with evidence from the text, and there is no right or wrong answer; however, every claim must be supported by the text. These questions stem out of motivation of characters and the meaning of what is said (“Why did the character... ?”). Lastly, evaluative questions ask what one thinks about the morals and ethics of the character’s actions (“Should the character have... ?”). After reading through the designated passage, everyone comes together in a circle to discuss and debate their own views, always referring back to the text. As everyone gets more confident in this process, the readers are encouraged to ask questions of their own.

I was introduced to this process in Seventh and Eighth Grades. At first, I was very unsure about what to say or what evidence from the text could be used to support my claim. However, through experience, I learned to annotate and look in the text for questions and answers of my own. I became more confident, even to the point of leading a few Shared Inquiries myself. This method of reading has benefited me a lot. It inspires me to ask my own questions that go beyond what is taught in class. Shared Inquiry helps people read for themselves by asking good questions and taking into account all the different interpretations, beliefs, and worldviews hidden in a book.”

— Timothée Kampouris ('16), Xavier High School

“

I’m grateful for my experience with Shared Inquiry at Geneva School. In preparing for each session, I learned how to read actively and to mark up my books with comments and questions. I always read the text once for the overall story and again to focus on parts of the narrative I used to form my opinions and arguments. These habits continue to help me with much of my high school reading. During Shared Inquiry sessions, I learned what kinds of questions to start with for the best analysis and discussions. I always made sure I had direct evidence from the text to support any opinions I offered to the group. The format also caused me to listen to others who had perspectives and insights that were new to me. Working together, we were able to come up with more fully formed ideas than we would have created independently.

Using the technique of Shared Inquiry, my teachers provided me with a model of how to read deeply and then discuss and analyze the most important ideas in a text. My experiences with this method have given me the skills necessary to participate in similar discussions in my English and history classes this year to write theses for my essays and papers.”

— Amelia Kauffmann ('16),
Trinity School



“The format also caused me to listen to others who had perspectives and insights that were new to me.”

GENEVA KNIGHTS

by Coach Jaime Gonzalez



The **Girls' Volleyball** season boasted a spectacular first season in games against Grace Church School and Bank Street School.

The inaugural Geneva Knights **Cross Country** season saw great success in its mile-and-a-half meet at Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx. The competition involved nine schools, with Geneva School being represented by five Upper School students. Geneva School finished in second place out of nine schools. Eighth Grade students Samuel Gage, Jason Lu, Sasha Solton, and Asher Tiemann all finished in the top half of the field.

Geneva School's **Soccer** season included several firsts. At the conclusion of the first half of the Seventh and Eighth Grade opener, down 1-0 against Bank Street School, Christian Laviscount stole a pass at midfield, creating a breakaway opportunity. Laviscount netted the goal, his first career goal in a Geneva Knights uniform to tie the score at one. During the fifth minute of the Fifth and Sixth Grade game against Manhattan Country School, Jonah Stancil went top-shelf for his first career goal, giving the Knights a 1-0 lead. The Geneva Knights rallied around a serious injury midway

through the season to midfielder Emma Cook. Cook fractured her left arm in an attempt to block a kick in the defensive zone against Cathedral School, sidelining her for the remainder of the season. The Knights, playing for their teammate, put forth two superb performances to finish the season.

The Geneva Knights **Basketball** Team experienced great success throughout the course of the season. In the second Seventh and Eighth Grade game of the season, Geneva School found itself trailing 8-2 out of the gate at Churchill School midway through the first quarter. Jason Lu of the Knights forced a critical jump-ball turnover in the front court, arguably the turning point of the game. Christian Laviscount drained a twelve-foot jump shot, pulling the Knights to within two points. With two minutes remaining in the game, and the score tied at 24, Sixth Grade student Jonathan Tirelus made a running one-hand floater through traffic in which he switched the ball from his right hand to his left hand in mid-air. Tirelus finished with seven points, all of which came in the fourth quarter, resulting in a 29-24 win.

In a Fifth and Sixth Grade Geneva-Bank Street matchup, Jaden Kim converted on a jump shot off of an offensive rebound, giving the Knights a two-point lead that would never be relinquished. With a minute-and-a-half remaining in the game, Jeremiah Gage provided the Knights with a critical insurance basket by nailing a ten-foot jump shot. This gave the Knights a four-point lead, as they would eventually prevail 24-18. The Knights remarkably forced Bank Street into eight fourth-quarter turnovers to their one turnover, sealing the victory.

Geneva returned to Bank Street the following week for the season opener of the girls' Knights basketball team. Geneva Knight Faith Moy drained a baseline step-back jump-shot to give the Lady Knights a 12-10 lead. Geneva School would later get another field goal from Moy, as she led all scorers with eight points, lifting the Knights to a 14-10 victory. Mia Chandy got on the board with four points, and Maria Long added two points, sealing the first girls' team win in program history.

EVENTS

Seventh and Eighth Grade Retreat



In September, Seventh and Eighth Grade students enjoyed a three-day retreat in Connecticut with the theme "Encountering Jesus." They experienced worship through song, teaching, group discussions, team building exercises, and various indoor and outdoor activities.

Community Worship Morning

Geneva School parents gathered once each trimester to worship in song and pray for the School faculty, staff, students, and families.

Father's Prayer Meeting

Geneva School fathers gathered every month to commit the school to God in prayer.

Parent Education Events

In our November event, Geneva School parent Dr. Margaret Yoon gave an insightful and inspiring talk on "Managing Academic Stress on the Body, Mind, and Spirit". Dr. Yoon is a board-certified child and adolescent psychiatrist with a specialty in family therapy.

In April, our Dean of Instruction Tessa Tiemann encouraged parents of young children to help cultivate habits of beauty in "Beautiful Beginnings."

Family Apple Picking



Geneva School enjoyed a beautiful day at Pennings Orchard on October 15 with apple picking, hayride, corn teepee, farm animal zoo, maze, and lots of fun!

New Parent Reception



New and returning parents gathered together on September 27 for food, wine, student performances, a parent speech, and warm company.

Student Council Elections



Upper School held its Student Council elections in early October. Candidates first submitted a written application, which was followed by a campaign speech to their constituents.

Spelling Bee



Geneva School held its annual Lower and Upper School Spelling Bee on November 18 and 21, respectively. Congratulations to all our human spellcheckers on a job well done!

Caroling at The Salvation Army



In December, Third and Fourth Grade students sang carols at The Salvation Army during their lunch service and handed out cold weather accessories. Afterwards, they delighted passers-by as they sang about the birth of Jesus, our Savior. Thanks to Music teacher Kajsa Wilkins for this sweet time of song and service to our city!

Christmas Concert

Students young and old participated in the annual Geneva School Lessons and Carols concert. "Heaven and Nature Sing" featured Scripture readings on the fall of humanity, the promise of the Messiah, and the birth of Jesus, interspersed with the singing of Christmas carols, including "With Us Now", a composition by Geneva School parent Jenn Petersen.

Thanksgiving Feast



The entire school enjoyed a wonderful Thanksgiving Feast at our West campus. Afterwards, music theater students presented the Geneva Dramarama afterschool showcase, a collection of skits and songs from different shows and books. What a delightful start to Thanksgiving break!





Spirit Week

Geneva School showed true spirit all through this fun and event-filled week, which included a snow day, Pajama Day, Pi Day, Pie Day, Character Day, NYC Day, and the finale, Red/Blue Day. On Pi Day, Sixth Grade student Emily Knapp recited 1,075 digits of Pi, breaking her year-old record of 1,001 digits.



Grandparents' Day



Geneva School welcomed grandparents and special friends to the school in April, where they were treated to classroom visits, student-led tours, and refreshments.

Easter Chapel



Parents, faculty, and staff joined the Geneva Lower and Upper School at our West campus on Thursday, April 13 for our annual Easter Chapel, where we remembered Jesus' death and resurrection, and the hope of new life that we have in Him. The students led the session with worship, scripture recitation, an original song, message, and choral performances.

Poetry Festival



After our Easter Chapel, Geneva School was treated to our annual poetry recitation festival, "Poet's Garden," where each class was represented by its top two winners. Congratulations to our contestants, who brought immense joy as they presented "the best words in the best order!"

This year's Poet's Garden winners are:

Kindergarten through Second Grade

- 1: Enzo Meneses, "Cockroaches"
- 2: Julian Koh, "The Mountain and the Squirrel"
- 3: Annarose Grizzle, "The Wind and the Moon"

Third through Fifth Grade

- 1: Kensington Tallman, "Adventures of Isabel"
- 2: Gabriel Chadban, "Eldorado"
- 3: Luke Harris, "Father William"

Sixth through Eighth Grade

- 1: Asher Tiemann, "Every Riven Thing"
- 2: Jaclyn Markham, "As Kingfishers Catch Fire"
- 3: Njomeza Pema, "Love Calls Us to the Things of this World"

Fifth and Sixth Grade in Boston

In April, Fifth and Sixth Grades enjoyed a wonderfully educational trip to Boston, where they enjoyed a boat tour of historical sites along the bay, a walking tour of the Freedom Trail with 18th century guides in costume, and a stop at Minute Man National Historical Park, site of the "shot heard round the world!"



Seventh and Eighth Grade in Washington, D.C.

As part of a pair of annual trips to the nation's capital, this year students enjoyed a visit to the Capitol, a guided tour of Arlington Cemetery, and a play at Ford's Theater.



Mother's Day Brunch

Incoming and current Geneva School mothers enjoyed brunch and a reminder message of God's sovereignty from Head of School Rim Hinckley.



Spring Concert

The schoolwide concert "Creation Sings" featured songs that relate to the seven days of creation, replete with snapping crocodiles and buzzing bees, culminating with the finale *What a Wonderful World*.



Eighth Grade Graduation

The School celebrated its fourteenth graduating class with the annual Eighth Grade Banquet and a graduation ceremony. The address to graduates was delivered by Joshua Crane, Head of School of The Stony Brook School.

Celebration Day

To cap a wonderful school year, a highlight was presented by every grade in the School, from ancient Egyptians to a history timeline recitation to a Broadway-ready rendition of "Electricity."



THE CLOISTERS



Third Grade concluded a wonderful study on Christianity in Britain with a magnificent field trip to The Cloisters in early October. In class, the students discussed monasteries, scriptoriums, refectories, and the overall life of a monk. As the students quietly walked through the Cuxa Cloister, they carefully used their senses to smell the flowers in the garden and hear the chirping birds in the air. The students also gazed at stunning tapestries displaying a story about a mystical unicorn. It was wonderful to see their imaginations come alive as the tour guide asked them to point out the beautiful attributes of the tapestries. The class favorite was a statue of Saint Roque of Montpellier. The story of this saint is an epic journey that begins when he contracts the Bubonic Plague and culminates at the point of his miraculous recovery.

Art by Avery Reed, Lower School art teacher

"That's, well, rather...unusual," Caroline (Third Grade) remarked when discussing the flying characters in Marc Chagall's *Over the Town* (1918). "I can see a face—see? Here are the eyes, the nose, and the mouth!" exclaimed Lukas (Second Grade), while studying Wassily Kandinsky's abstract depiction of music in *Composition VIII* (1923), in which there is no literal face.



Chagall, Marc. *Over the Town* (1918)



Kandinsky, Wassily. *Composition VIII* (1923)

Children are constantly looking for meaning, using what they know about the world (that humans don't fly and basic shapes combine to make more complex images) to see and understand. And it is this insatiable curiosity and unhindered ability to express their thoughts and emotions, that makes art class at Geneva School so exciting.

Each new project begins by first studying several works from historical or contemporary artists. Students take time to notice details and discuss both the techniques used and the ideas conveyed in the work.



Takatoshi Sano. *Title unknown.*



Arcimboldo, Giuseppe. *The Librarian.* Date Unknown.

Take for example Mannerist painter Giuseppe Arcimboldo (1526-1593). In "The Librarian", Arcimboldo portrays a librarian in its most literal form: a pile of books for a man who organizes books. When studying his work, Fourth Grade pondered how we tend to size people up according to their parts rather than seeing each person holistically, as the mysterious, wonderful being he or she is. Students then responded to Arcimboldo by using objects to create portraits of themselves in their sketchbooks, knowing full well that their object-filled drawings do not even begin to capture the essence of who they are.

Japanese folk artist Takatoshi Sano has a series in which she draws people, animals, and villages secluded in tunnels and holes underground. Second Grade students discussed how Sano created incredibly simple work, yet gave us just the right amount of visual cues to communicate the people, homes, and animals are buried underground (rather than somewhere else in the world). Students then thought about what it might feel like to be so isolated and alone, like the people buried underground, and whether they had ever experienced that feeling before. Some vigorously nodded their heads, while others had never experienced such isolation. The artwork and the willingness to ask hard questions gave the class the space to understand each other on a deeper level.

Art, be it visual, musical, or written, can give us the language and imagery to express our interior lives. It opens up the ability to have hard conversations about identity, pain, beauty, loneliness, prejudices, and dreams. Teaching the students to see color, shape relationships, and read visual storytelling awakens them to understand other perspectives, new ways of experiencing the world, and their place in the larger story of humanity. And, as their teacher, to cultivate and empower the students to creatively express their deepest selves is an immense privilege.

Invest in the Future

CONTRIBUTE TO OUR SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The Geneva School of Manhattan exists to provide a time-proven, classical education within a biblical worldview. We inspire students to love learning, pursue excellence, and become leaders in scholarship, virtue, and faith.

One of the founding tenets of the School is the opportunity to provide an affordable education to diverse Christian families, including those in full-time ministry. The resulting Scholarship Fund has provided financial assistance for up to two thirds of School families and has ensured broad diversity in our student population.

Since 2004, our graduates have embodied our Portrait of a Graduate: They exhibit integrity, leadership, and a passion for learning. They strive for mastery in all areas of academics, the arts, and athletics. They have learned the art of public speaking and the craft of cogent writing. They are critical thinkers and wise debaters, able to discern truth in a world of pluralistic philosophies. They desire to use their spiritual and academic gifts in service to others, bringing honor and glory

to God. They are equipped to succeed in a challenging and rigorous high school environment. They strive for excellence in all aspects of life and seek to be leaders in scholarship, virtue and faith. This is classical Christian education at work.

In contrast to most Manhattan private schools, Geneva School's student population represents New York City in its ethnic, geographic, and socioeconomic diversity. Our current student population consists of nearly 50% non-white, 50% financial aid recipients, and families from Manhattan, Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, and New Jersey.

It is crucial that we continue to provide a generous level of financial aid to ministry families, particularly with the cost of living in New York City increasing from year to year. Education remains a main priority for potential ministry leaders. Securing a school placement for their children is a criterion for many leaders in their decision to accept a ministry position in New York City. Geneva School remains the sole classical Christian school in the city and is the top consideration for many ministry families.



“When we first sensed that God was calling us to New York City to plant a church,

our hearts leapt. We knew deep down that this was what God was asking us to do, but we immediately began asking questions like, “What does ministry look like in New York City? How do you raise a family here? Where should our kids go to school?” At the time, our two children were going into Fifth and Seventh Grades, which are not easy ages to move to a new school, let alone a big new city. Every person we had talked with in New York had told us to check out The Geneva School of Manhattan. This turned out to be the best piece of advice we could have gotten. I remember calling Geneva School to get more information, and I spoke with the Admissions Director for over an hour. She shared with me all about the school and empathized with my hopes and fears. I can honestly say that Geneva School has been an incredible blessing to our family in countless ways. Academically, it has challenged our children to become the best students they can be in a loving, gospel-centered and grace-filled environment. The teachers at Geneva School care about the students deeply and make a concerted effort to understand their individual strengths and weaknesses. At a time when our children were missing their friends back home, Geneva School provided an environment where they felt safe, welcomed, and loved. It quickly became a community of friends for all four of us. Geneva School has truly made New York feel like home for us.

Branden
and
Jenn
Petersen

church
planters

We believe God is up to something here in New York City through a groundswell of church plants, and The Geneva School of Manhattan, through its extremely generous financial aid for ministry leaders, is playing a huge part in it. Because of the generosity of Geneva School, our family has been able to not only transition smoothly, but thrive in the city as we head into the launch of Resurrection Life NYC. We praise God for Geneva School!”

Dear Ms. Hinckley,

Several years before our children were born, you were working out an idea that would transform their lives. You had read about classical and Christian schools, and you dreamed of building such a school in the heart of New York City. You dreamed of a place where students could be fully disciplined in the faith before entering influential fields in the city. You dreamed of a place where students could use the classic methods of learning: not merely what to think, but how to think. You wanted them to go to the best colleges, fully prepared to test every idea presented to them. You dreamed of them becoming not just faithful followers, but leaders in their communities.

We were all brought to the city for different reasons, but none of us arrived expecting such a place for our children. It was a gift, an unexpected grace handed to us through your faith and resolve. Our kids are graduating from Geneva School this year, and we hope you are proud of them and that they are the students you dreamed of over twenty years ago. We hope that this investment will not be squandered, but that the fruit you planted and tended will produce twenty-fold, fifty-fold, and some a hundred-fold. To God be all the glory for his providence and faithfulness to many generations!

Gratefully,

The Eighth Grade parents of the Class of 2017



First all-school photo
1996



With parents and teachers
2011

CONGRATULATIONS, CLASS OF 2017!

Our graduates were accepted to the following high schools:

Avenues · Bard High School Early College Queens · The Brearley School · Bronx High School of Science
Brooklyn Latin School · Columbia Grammar and Prep School · Convent of the Sacred Heart · Dominican Academy
Eleanor Roosevelt High School · Fiorella H. LaGuardia High School · Frank Sinatra High School · Grace Church School
High School of American Studies at Lehman College · Loyola School · Marymount School · Millennium High School
Miss Porter's School · Nightingale Bamford School · Notre Dame School · Rudolph Steiner School · School of the Future
St. Vincent Ferrer High School · The Stony Brook School · Townsend Harris High School · Xavier High School · York Preparatory School



Cicero's Podium: Eighth Grade thesis presentation



The Geneva School of Manhattan

593 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10065
www.genevaschool.net

GENEVASCHOOL
Fortes Pro Veris

TO PARENTS OF ALUMNI

If this magazine is addressed to your daughter or son who no longer maintains a permanent address in your home, please email alumni@genevaschool.net with their new contact information.



SPIRIT WEEK 2017

Geneva School Red vs. Blue Day