

OCTOBER 2010

The Virtues Project: Responsibility

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Important Dates:

- Nov 1-5: School Spirit Week
- Nov. 2: Don's Class Open House
- Nov. 8: Alison's Class and New Upper Elementary Open House
- Nov. 11: Old Pueblo Gymnastics Hermosa Fundraiser
- Nov. 23: Harvest Celebration (Pre K/K)

All of Hermosa's teachers and classrooms focus on modeling this important virtue, and provide students daily opportunities to practice. The Montessori model that Hermosa incorporates into its curriculum begins teaching responsibility to our youngest students, who learn at an early age that they are responsible for their actions and movements when teachers teach the "grace and courtesy" curriculum lessons and allow ample opportunities for practice. As students progress from lower elementary to upper elementary these lessons and opportunities increase. Students are taught the skills they need to become responsible citizens; including prioritization, time management, organizational skills, ownership of their daily lessons and assignments, and their relationship and responsibility to their

school, local and global community.

When students progress from upper elementary to middle school they have even more lessons and opportunities to practice responsible behavior. Students are taught to track their own school progress by using various styles of weekly planners. They compile and maintain a work portfolio and lead their parent teacher conferences. For one week each year students learn job related skills during their "internship." They have lessons on resume writing and write their first or second resume. They learn and practice effective communication techniques and then participate in job interviews. Finally, they spend one week of their 7th grade year working as teaching assistants at Hermosa. In their eighth grade year, students

spend one week working with a



professional in the local community. When they return to the classroom they receive a performance review from their employer. As graduates, Hermosa's eighth grade students are already on their way to becoming productive responsible contributors to their society.

Virtues: Responsibility

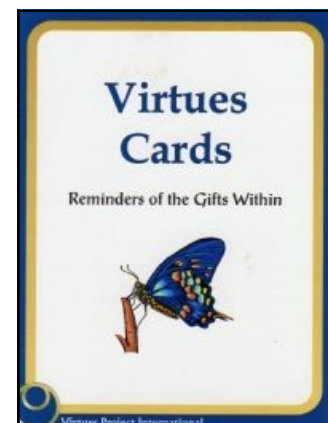
From: "The Virtues Project"

RESPONSIBILITY.

Being responsible means others can trust you to do things with excellence. You accept accountability for your actions. When you make a mistake, you offer amends instead of excuses. Responsibility is the ability to respond ably and to make smart choices.

You are practicing responsibility when you:

- ◆ Take your agreements seriously
- ◆ Respond ably by doing things to the best of your ability
- ◆ Are willing to do your part
- ◆ Admit mistakes without making excuses
- ◆ Are ready and willing to clear up misunderstandings



Middle School Finishes First Cycle of Learning

Hermosa's middle school students work ambitiously during their five week integrated curricular cycle. Each cycle has a theme to focus their studies and a series of "guiding questions" to encourage critical thinking. Cycle one's theme was connections. In science they studied the connections among living things, and pondered the questions: "How are all living things connected? How are the cell's structures connected to its function and processes?" In social studies they began their study of the [7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens](#), Habit One: Be Proactive with the question, "How can



being proactive make you better connected to your family, friends and community?" In geography, activities centered on the question, "How is the physical geography of a region connected to the culture of the people that live there?" Their electives for cycle one included digital photography, semi private guitar class, musical theatre, and business.

All students participate in musical theatre in one of the following capacities: costume, hair, make up, props, set design, acting, singing, and dancing. They will perform their first production *Seussical* for Hermosa students on November 12 in the afternoon.

Students practice **collaboration**, a vital, 21st century skill by conducting research in small groups and then presenting results to the class. They learn to evaluate their progress with these questions: "How is your group working together? What are the positive things the group does? What could it do better? What do you contribute to the group? What else

could you do?"

After taking their assessment tests at the cycle's end, they spend a week outside the classroom in a variety of enriching activities. They traveled to their "land lab" in the high desert of Vail, Arizona, and to the University of Arizona for a full day of adventure at the Chal-



lenge Ropes Course. At the Ropes Course, trained facilitators and leaders guided the students through activities that provided both mental and physical challenges and facilitated trust building, goal setting, problem solving, teamwork, communication, leadership, and fun.

Middle School Marine Discovery

Hermosa's middle school students also recently traveled to the University of Arizona's Marine Discovery where they participated in hands-on, activity-based laboratory programs. They had the opportunity to work with live marine animals and teaching specimens found in the Gulf of California, and gain a general understanding

of the scientific relationships between them. Students learned about the importance of our oceans, and participated in shark and squid dissection. They learned about fish diversity, plankton, and a living tide pool. In this experience students were encouraged to "think like scientists" using their observational, critical

thinking, and problem solving skills. They also had the opportunity to interact with university students.

Student Scavenger Hunt to Benefit Food Bank

To help the local food bank middle school students are again practicing the 21st century skills of **innovation, communication, collaboration,** and **leadership** in planning and

executing a "scavenger hunt for hunger." They are planning a scavenger hunt with upper elementary students for our younger pre-k and lower elementary students on Novem-

ber 17 after school. Admittance to this fun event is a non perishable food item or a contribution to the food bank, with prizes! Look for details to follow.

SHOW YOUR SCHOOL SPIRIT!

Middle school students are spearheading plans for Hermosa School Spirit Week November 1-5.

They encourage all students to show their spirit with this fun schedule!

Monday: Crazy Hair Day

Tuesday: Pajama Day

Wednesday: 80's Day

Thursday: Twins Day

(Be "twins" with someone for the day!)

Friday: School Colors Day

(Wear silver and black)



Montessori Dictionary: Sensitive Periods

This Montessori term refers to the transient periods of sensitivity that motivate and guide a child toward particular activities. During a sensitive period a child is more sensitive to environmental influences or stimulation than at other times. They will choose activities, deeply concentrate, and repeat these activities again and again without external reward or encouragement. We can think of sensitive periods as windows of opportunity for receptivity and sensitivity to particular environmental stimulation that helps

“Children are naturally drawn towards those specific aspects of the environment which meet their developmental needs.”

the developing brain. Developmental neurobiologists and neuroscientists now refer to these periods as “critical periods” and define them in reference to the brains’ ability to create itself in windows of opportunity that nature flings open, and then shuts after the specific period passes. Pediatric neurobiologist Harry Chugani states that, “they can completely change the way a person turns out.” For example, young children in a sensitive period for order will be drawn to activities that involve

ordering objects in their environment. They will also prefer order in their daily life activities and may become stressed when their “order” is interrupted. Children are naturally drawn towards those specific aspects of the environment which meet their developmental needs. All of Hermosa’s classrooms and its curriculum correspond to these developmental periods by designing a “prepared environment” with activities that children need for optimal brain development.

The “prepared environment” will be discussed more in detail next month.

Tucson Symphony Orchestra Visits Hermosa

Hermosa’s lower elementary students enjoyed a concert presented by the Tucson Symphony Orchestra’s Wind Ensemble on Thursday, October 7. Musicians presented an exciting concert on “How Music Can Express Feelings.” They played a variety of pieces to show how music

can set the stage for a story or convey an emotion like excitement or sadness. The students especially enjoyed a selection from “The Sorcerer’s Apprentice.” This concert was funded by your extracurricular fees and donations.



Spotlight: 21st Century Skills

The term “21st century skills” has made its way into education terminology, but what does it really mean? Business leaders first identified the skills, knowledge and expertise students must master to succeed in work and life in the 21st century. Throughout this year, I will highlight these important skills, and provide examples of how Hermosa’s curriculum facilitates learning and practice.

Ken Kay, President and Co-Founder of The Partnership for 21st Century Skills has identified the essential skills and abilities for today’s students. Students must: think critically, problem solve, collaborate, communicate, innovate, be self directed, globally aware, and technologically literate. Mr. Kay

- 21st Century Skills**
- ◆ Think Critically
 - ◆ Problem Solve
 - ◆ Collaborate
 - ◆ Communicate
 - ◆ Innovate
 - ◆ Self Directed
 - ◆ Globally Aware
 - ◆ Technology Literate

refers to creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration, or the 4 C’s, as important as the mastery of core academic subjects.



Hermosa's Cross Country Team Report

Hermosa's cross country team is off and running! At the October 18th meet, four runners won ribbons for being in the top 10 for their grade and gender out of 400 participating students! At the October 11th meet our boys' team placed 6th out of 19 schools and our girls' team placed 9th out of 17 schools, with even better stats for this week. So far, this has been a really positive experience.



Student Report

by Kai

Hermosa has a cross country team for fourth and fifth graders! We had our first meet on October 11, 2010. It went great and was very fun. We have practice every Friday. The races are two miles long. It sounds really long to some people, but it is actually pretty short. Our meets are on Monday after school. We even have our own cross country t-shirts. There are about 20 people on the team which is good because they are so supportive to each other. There is a girl's race and a boy's race, and it is also very fun to cheer on the girls and/or boys who are racing when you aren't.

5th Level Gray Hawk Nature Center Camping Trip

Fifth year students and teachers attending the camping trip to the Gray Hawk Nature Preserve experienced days and nights filled with learning and wonder. Students reported seeing the night sky with so many stars that it was "amazing." They cooked, hiked, waded, and even got to taste rattlesnake "meat."

Look for their comments soon on Hermosa's newly launched YouTube channel! More details to follow.





The Lizard Experience

by Rachel and Kendra

On October 1st, a group of 4th years went to the playground to observe nature. We went with Anne, one of our teachers. The main character of our story today is a brave and beautiful baby lizard. The brave lizard climbed on a couple of kids, and they said:

"It felt very weird and the nails were sharp on my skin, I felt his body and tail drag across my legs. It was exciting!" Cameron

"It climbed on my clipboard, up my chest and up and over my head. It tickled a lot. It was a fun experience." Rachel

"It was so cool, it climbed on my shoe!" Joseph V.

"It felt unusual. I was excited but I tried to stay calm because I didn't want to scare it away. It went on my hand and stayed there for five minutes. It was very special because it's not often an animal will let you observe it for that long." Anne, teacher

"It climbed on my shoulders, my back and the back of my legs. It tickled a lot and felt light. It was awesome. It was the best thing an animal has ever done to me." Kendra

After much visiting with our lizard friend, it left us. Some of us wished him peace on his journey and gave him thanks. All of us had a great time.

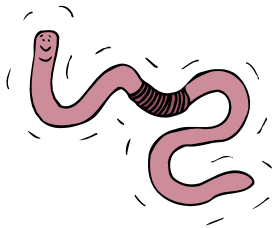


Lower Elementary Classroom Updates

DON & DIANES' ROOM REPORT

by Skylar and Gloria

For science a couple weeks ago we got a worm and saw what type of soil the worm liked best. Today we are going to have art, and yesterday we had P.E.! Once for art we did Halloween pop-ups. Last week we had our first lower el meeting and we voted for a party. The party that had won was a Halloween, fall party. We just started ordering café lunches and everyone we talk to likes them. They really like the Caesar salad. Just a couple days ago, second, and third graders started doing projects. So far it has been a really fun year!



AMY & REBECCAS' ROOM REPORT

by Elara

We have been learning about continents and oceans. There are seven continents.

We do our jobs every day. We do them because we like our school clean. We take out our trash and sweep the porches, sweep the classroom, and wash the tables. We have spelling tests every week on Friday before choir. We have 1st grade words, 2nd grade words, and 3rd grade words. We also have bonus words. We have the peace rose to straighten out our fights and problems. It helps a lot. So with the peace rose, we do not need punishments. We have two teachers, Amy and Rebecca.



MICHAEL & SUES' ROOM REPORT

by Esha

Carol is our art teacher. She uses four student helpers. Her helpers' names are Emma, Grace, Catherine, and Kari. We made desert landscapes, fall trees, and Matisse art work.



We go to art after story time. Every day there is something new.

by Sonia

Michael's class has been studying geography. We learned about states and continents. Then we studied the 50 states.

by Nikhil

In Michael's class we have lots of fun. We do science experiments like water tension and air pressure, and how to float a paper clip. We write a hypothesis and the result.

Sons of the American Revolution to visit Hermosa

Sons of the American Revolution will enhance Hermosa's history program through a special presentation on Thursday, October 28, 2010. As true descendants of the American Revolution they bring a special connection to the period they will portray. They will be dressed in full costumes and regalia of the period. They are lifelong students and teachers of this important period in American history with extensive insight into the facts, culture, lifestyles, historical biographies, leadership, government, and international relations relative to this historical period. Students will be preparing questions they are curious about related to The American Revolution for the presenters.



Old Pueblo Gymnastics to Host Hermosa Fundraiser

Alacia and Randy Sooter, owners of Old Pueblo Gymnastics, are generously sponsoring a Hermosa fundraiser on Thursday November 11, a school holiday. There will be two "Open Gym" time slots of 45 minutes each during which each child may engage in fun gymnastics activities. For every child that attends, Old Pueblo Gymnastics will donate to Hermosa. More information will be coming soon by email, including required parent permission form.



Planning to travel during Thanksgiving, Winter, or Rodeo Break?

If you are considering travel during Hermosa's upcoming school breaks, make your travel arrangements at www.21travel.rovia.com. Have you looked at the amazing membership-based "wholesale vacations" called DreamTrips? These are wonderfully inexpensive, high quality family vacations in top destinations. Consider the Kauai Hawaiian DreamTrip, or the Crested Butte, Colorado 5 day 4 night vacation for only \$399.00. Go to www.21travel.worldventures.biz. Click top left DreamTrips icons for more information.

Dates to Remember

Oct. 28	Sons of the American Revolution
Oct. 29	1-6th grade Halloween Parties
Oct. 29	International Day for Pre-K
Nov. 1-5	School Spirit Week
Nov. 2	Don & Diane's Open House
Nov. 5	Math & Science Funfest
Nov. 8	Alison & Annes' class; New U.E. Open House
Nov. 11	Veteran's Day NO SCHOOL
Nov. 11	Old Pueblo Gymnastics Hermosa Fundraiser
Nov. 12	Musical Theater Performance
Nov. 12	Middle School Carnival
Nov. 17	Student Scavenger Hunt
Nov. 18-19	Land lab and sleep over for Middle School
Nov. 23	Harvest Celebration (PreK/K)



6th years complete their hike along the Butterfly Trail in the Catalina Mountains. The students hiked the trail to enhance their studies on photosynthesis and experience the changing colors of the fall leaves.