

## Weekly Digest

Week 7, October 17-19, 2023



### **Cycle 1 Presentations and a Brass Concert in the Barn**

This week was all about special events, most importantly Cycle 1 Presentations. Students stood up in front of a sizable crowd and spoke about their various areas of focus, including Greek mythology and sports, ancient fishing and weapons technology, Egyptian funerary customs, monuments, and games, prehistoric humans, and more! We saw dioramas, posters, a quiz show, drawings, a lot of writing, replicas of ancient tech, a documentary film, a video game, fake beards, an extraneous dinosaur – there was plenty of delightful variety, as always. The Presentation week of our Project Cycle is always surprising and inspiring. Every time, we guides and parents are reminded again of how inventive the kids are, and how wide-ranging their interests and choices. We're also deeply moved by seeing this process in action, as the kids' confidence, abilities, and understanding grow before our eyes, and they make connections between each others' projects, their own, and everything else that happened during that cycle. We hope all of our new students and parents gained a deeper understanding of how

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the project cycle works, and are feeling more comfortable with the process, ready to start again in a couple of weeks with Cycle 2: Medieval. This was an amazing array; congratulations to everyone!

Because of all these special offerings, this week was also a challenge for students to develop their sitting-and-listening capabilities, and they demonstrated some growth in these areas between Tuesday and Thursday, after a discussion about respect and kindness. This comes just as they are composing their contract for how we agree to behave at Elderberry, which we will all finalize and sign next week. After they had been an audience for others, and also been the speaker up in front of the room, students were better able to empathize with and advocate for each other, seeing the necessity for a better standard of supportive audience behavior.

These audience skills were put into practice not only at presentations, but at a special barn concert from Loch Raven Brass! The brass quintet showed our students the trumpet, French horn, trombone, and tuba, demonstrated some techniques and characteristics of brass instruments, and played a lively selection of kid-friendly tunes, including This Old Man, Itsy-Bitsy Spider, Teddy Bears' Picnic, and You've Got A Friend In Me. Our audience was very attentive and participated with singing along, hand-clapping, and enthusiastic applause. Our visitors were charmed by the school and its students and reported that they had a wonderful time playing for us! Thanks again to these generous musicians: Messrs. Mario, Mark, Mike, Rex, and Ms. Nell for sharing their time and music with us at Elderberry!

## **Guides' Offerings/Students' Agendas**

For the seventh week we learned about, discussed, played with:

**History/Social Studies:** Watercolor pencil maps of the Roman Empire, drawing

**Science/Technology:** fish traps, physics of the swing (again!)

**Language Arts:** Continued read-aloud and discussions of Detectives in Togas (chapters 13-15) and The Sand Reckoner, note-taking, writing, and spelling necessary for cartooning, presentation posters, and talking points.

**Arts/ Music/ Crafting:** Brass quintet concert, cartooning, collage

**Math:** calculating time limits for presenters based on time allowed, figuring out how many months old we all are (Z's question on Wednesday)!

**Health/Social-emotional:** discussion of stage fright, audience behavior, and supporting each other at presentations, composing contract for principles-based behavior at Elderberry

**P.E.:** Heavy work cooperatively lifting logs and building forts, swinging, fishing, tree climbing, red light green light

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## **Announcements:**

Our next two weeks will be about reflecting on our project work for Cycle 1 – what worked, what didn't, what we'd like to do differently next time, what we appreciated about others' work and our own – and then resting and relaxing! Free play and emergent curriculum will be at the top of everyone's agenda, and guides will be asking what games or art supplies the students would like to have available. At Elderberry, we treasure these days of rest, play, and beautiful autumn weather on the farm, and we're going to take full advantage of it!

Enjoy your weekend!

Jennifer, Julia, and Stephanie