

THE THINKER

GATE/SAS Student Newsletter

Summer 2013

I've missed over 9,000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I've been trusted to take the game-winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.

- Michael Jordan



Friendship: It's Complicated!

Do you ever find yourself wishing you had more friends or a more genuine connection with your friends? Friendships are complicated, and friendship troubles can sometimes lead to anxiety, stress, and depression. Here are a few tips for navigating the tricky world of friendships:

- It's about quality not quantity. Realize that it is okay to have just one really great friend. If you find a friend who really understands you and makes you feel good about yourself, that may be enough! Stop counting your friends — just ask yourself, do I feel supported?
- It's okay to have multiple peer groups and a variety of friends. You may have different circles of friends or "best friends" for different aspects of your life — for example, you may have a "best friend" on your softball team and a different "best friend" in math class.
- It's okay to have friends of different ages or in different grades. It's all about establishing a connection or finding commonality, and you may have younger or older peers that meet your needs better than the kids in your class.
- Consider a pen-pal! Writing to a pen-pal provides an outlet when you need a break from your everyday peers or need a new perspective. You may also find that getting your thoughts and feelings on paper is therapeutic. Consider real "snail mail" letters, rather than just emails or texts.

Scholarly Traits: Have You Thought About Your Learning Today?

Considering the amount of time we spend in school, most of us rarely stop to ponder what we know about the learning process or about ourselves as learners. How did you learn how to be a good learner? When do you feel "smart" or successful? What motivates you to do better or learn more?

Dr. Sandra Kaplan of the University of Southern California has identified a list of "scholarly traits" — characteristics that can help us to be more reflective, motivated, independent, and successful as learners.

Scholarly Traits:

- ACADEMIC HUMILITY:** Scholars come with a half "cup" of knowledge ready to learn more; they practice academic humility
- PONDER IDEAS:** Scholars ponder ideas and problems; they elaborate on the connection of facts to big ideas
- INTELLECTUAL RISK-TAKING:** Scholars take intellectual risks; they think "outside of the box"
- PRIDE:** Scholars take pride in the quality of their work
- MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES:** Scholars look at the world using many different points of view

- CURIOSITY:** Scholars have questions and want to seek the answers
- SAVE IDEAS:** Scholars save ideas; they have a system to collect and organize new ideas and information
- PERSEVERANCE:** Scholars exercise their intellect; they learn to persevere
- GOALS:** Scholars have goals they want to reach (long and short term)
- REFERENCES:** Scholars use a variety of resources and references

Scholarly traits comprise a frame of mind that can help us navigate the world of learning. Many times, we as learners assume that learning should be easy or quick. In reality, learning can and should be challenging, time-consuming, or even frustrating at times! Facing intellectual challenges and learning from our mistakes is actually good for us!

If your school work is too easy or you finish (correctly) very quickly, you are probably ready for more challenging work. Work with your parent and teacher to find work you can really learn from.

Home Grown Fun

Here is an idea for simple summer gardening in a small space:

Grow your own avocado tree! All you need is an avocado pit, four toothpicks, a cup of water, and a lot of patience. Remove the pit from an avocado and rinse well. With the pointy side up, poke the toothpicks on each side. Place the pit in a cup of water (the toothpicks prevent the pit from falling in), and place in a sunny spot. Replenish the water often. After a couple of weeks, your pit will begin to crack. Your avocado sapling will begin to appear after 3-6 weeks. When your sapling is 7-8 inches tall, you can replant it in soil.



Photo from www.thehungrymouse.com.

The best summer getaway?

READING!

Lose yourself in a few great books this summer.

Visit www.lapl.org and click on Kids or Teens for ideas.



Working Toward a Zero Waste Lifestyle

Consider viewing this newsletter digitally, rather than printing it out. If you do print it, be sure to share or recycle!

Have you ever considered the amount of trash you generate each day? In modern society, we often toss out our unwanted items, never to think of them again. But, where does all that trash go? In many cases, the answer is landfills. Landfills are areas designated for the disposal of waste material, in which the waste is buried and covered with layers of soil. While we may not think of our trash once it hits the garbage can, this trash does not magically disappear — it quickly fills up landfills, like the Puente Hills landfill servicing Los Angeles, which is about 50 feet high and covers 700 acres. That's a garbage mountain the size of more than seven Disneylands!

We all know the phrase "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle," but a fourth "R" needs to be added — **REFUSE**. We can thought-

fully say no to the items we don't need, or choose to purchase items with less or no packaging. With the items we do need, we can make the effort to:

- Reduce** — Use less or purchase items with less packaging. This could mean using fewer paper napkins or purchasing food in larger containers, not individually wrapped items.
- Reuse** — Use things again! Why are you taking a new plastic fork every day? Wash it and use it again (or even better, bring your own real silverware to school).
- Recycle** — Many items can be recycled including plastic, paper, glass, and metal. Instead of throwing recyclables in the trash,

rinse and recycle. If you don't see a recycling bin, carry the item with you until you do. Or better yet, find out how you can get a recycling bin added where it's needed.

Take inspiration from Bea Johnson, gaining attention for her "zero waste lifestyle." Her family's **yearly trash** can fit in to one mason jar — that's the size of a peanut butter jar! (Most of us make much more trash than that in one day!)

To find out more about reducing your waste and helping the environment, read *Garbology: Our Dirty Love Affair with Trash* by Edward Humes (selected as 2013-2014 Freshman Common Reading at CSU Northridge) or ask your parents if you can check out <http://zerowastehome.blogspot.com> for amazing tips to work toward a zero waste home.

