



Sue's News

Dear parents,

I feel so lucky to spend five days a week and at least eight hours a day with our students. That is a significant chunk of your children's waking hours and as you know, this time is jam-packed with learning, activities, and fun. Realizing that I cannot possibly capture all of the highlights, I wanted to provide you with snippets of learning that I find amazing not only because of the topics but because they are learning in Chinese!

Did You Know?

***Kindergartners** are building their Chinese vocabulary daily, which is obvious since their teachers speak nothing but Chinese and the children are thriving! Already they know numbers, colors, animals, weather words, and parts of the human body. What amazes the teachers most is the children's ability to build their own sentences and express original ideas! Just last week, one child proclaimed, "My father is bald!" in Chinese. In addition, one astute student pointed out that the teacher had mistakenly referred to one stroke as another that is very similar. Both anecdotes prove that authentic learning is happening!

***First graders** at Yinghua are studying snow and temperature. How timely as we bundled up for below-freezing weather and marveled at the biggest snowflakes I've ever seen this week! They studied Christopher Columbus and the story of Thanksgiving. Believe it or not, they can also discuss solids, liquids, and gases with you.

***Second graders** have learned about the life cycle of plants and animals. Specifically, they are experts regarding the butterfly and the frog. In math, they are already learning multiplication and division facts, have studied measurement in both standard and metric systems, and know place value of numbers in the thousands. Their English reading and writing skills are exploding, as you can imagine. Recently, they've loved reading dramas, where they get to become a character from the story. While in social studies they've focused on the geography of mountains and rivers, in English they read "A Walk in the Desert" and learned about this landform.

***Third graders** are learning about the Vikings (not the football team!) as explorers. Ask them about Eric the Great and Leif the Lucky. In Chinese Language Arts, they studied the Big Dipper and the North Star; as a follow-up, they are writing constellation stories to accompany original constellation creations. Not that children this age need guidance in persuasion, but after reading "I Wanna Iguana" in English they honed their persuasive writing skills, so beware! In "Prudy's Problem", they giggled when the main character's room explodes, a problem caused by messiness and clutter!

***Fourth graders** have been introduced to the circulatory and respiratory systems of the human body. Not only can they label the chambers of the heart, but they know the components of blood, including red cells, white cells, plasma, and platelets. In math they are consumed with comparing fractions and decimals. Two stories, "Because of Wynn Dixie" and "The Little House on the Prairie" provided great opportunity to compare and contrast lifestyles in different times and places. Ask your kids to explain the great Chinese virtue of filial piety.

***Fifth graders** read "Hold the Flag High" which opened their eyes to the Civil War, which was a timely awareness just prior to Veteran's Day. Theme and symbolism in writing are concepts that have been discussed and practiced. These budding scientists dissected seeds and flowers, and can identify parts of an eco-system. In Chinese language, the students must present two sides of a dilemma and provide a convincing argument for each.

***Sixth graders** designed and constructed marble roller coasters to show motion and energy transformation. Elections this fall provided a lively platform for discussion of the United States Constitution and the rights, as well of jobs of citizens. They have begun to read "Roll of Thunder, Hear my Cry". Students are preparing presentations regarding famous people such as Albert Einstein for the Chinese Speech Contest, which will take place the week of December 16.

***Seventh graders** are busy translating holiday songs from English to Chinese. As authors, they are working on essays comparing the turning point in a novel to a turning point in history. Original greeting cards are being designed in Media Studies. Students researched the formation of the solar system and what conditions make the earth a living planet.

***Eighth graders** are analyzing and solving pairs of simultaneous linear equations algebraically and graphically. In science, they are engaged in weather forecasting by studying conditions of the atmosphere. Through the classical version of "Mulan", the students are analyzing the similarities and differences between Chinese and American cultures. They are immersed in "To Kill a Mockingbird", a novel that is sure to inspire lively conversation.

WHEW! That's a lot and only the "tip of the iceberg", as they say! Our kids are smart!

Warm regards,
Sue Berg
Executive Director

Luyi's Curriculum Corner

Dear Yinghua parents,

A week before Thanksgiving, I attended the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ATCFL) Annual Convention and World Language Expo in Orlando, Florida. Language educators, administrators and researchers from all over the world gather every year to share expertise, ideas, experiences, and innovations. This year, the Convention featured over 600 educational sessions. I love going to such conferences: learning from the experts in the field, meeting new colleagues, catching up with old friends, and most importantly, sharing our stories and spreading Yinghua's fame.

This year, on behalf of the Yinghua team, I co-presented two conference sessions at the ATCFL Convention. The first session "Goal-Setting and Language Proficiency: Data-Driven Instruction in Immersion Programs" was co-developed with Mr. Kevin Chang at Chinese American International School (CAIS). We shared with the audience the concept of the three inseparable, interconnected language teaching components, "assessment, curriculum, and instruction"; we told stories of academic performances which support our students in language and content learning. We also discussed how immersion schools should pay close attention to curriculum design and correct the writing errors made by students. Many colleagues in the Chinese immersion field attended our session and gave us their feedback. Based on our conversations, I got the sense that the Chinese immersion community is willing to collaborate and support each other. It is indeed encouraging!

The second session I participated in was entitled "Understanding YCT and Its Applicability in Assessing Mandarin Immersion Students". This session was organized by the Confucius Institute at the University of Minnesota, chaired by Dr. Yongling Zhang-Gorke and presented by Director Joan Brzezinski, Dr. Qijie Li (all Confucius Institute staff), and me. We compared different assessment tools and approaches for the Chinese Language, and discussed how we view these assessments tools and use them to measure our students' language progress and performance.

For me, every conference presentation serves as an opportunity to reflect upon how Yinghua is doing and to hear how others perceive our program. Most of the time, I am reassured that we are on the right track and that we provide a great educational experience for our students; but more often than not, I realized we still have room for improvement. My serious work attitude puts a heavy burden on me, but I know it's for the good of our students. As I was recently encouraged by a colleague: "every step we take will be useful." Stay warm and have a nice weekend!

Luyi Lien, Ph.D.
Academic Director

Brewer's Blog

Hello Parents!

As many of you know, we took the 7th & 8th graders to *We Day* earlier this fall. The tickets were free, but in order to qualify, we had to commit to doing at least one "local" and one "global" community service project. Of course, community service and involvement is a big part of what makes Yinghua such an awesome place. Committing to doing the projects was right up our alley, fitting into our fifth core principle of developing Global Citizenship.

We checked off our "local" project with the completion of the *We Scare Hunger* drive which was a huge success. There will be more local projects I'm sure, but the last few weeks we have been considering a number of global projects that would be appropriate for The School. The middle school students had been kicking around a number of ideas when out of the blue Isabel Metzdorff (3C) approached Mrs. Berg and I about an idea she had. Interestingly, she had no idea at the time about the need we had for a global project. How awesome our kids are!!

Isabel and her mother met with Mrs. Berg, Emily Glewwe (Student Life Deputy Head of Community Service), and I to talk about her idea and where it came from. Let me say that we were blown away! Mrs. Berg and Emily took Isabel's idea and brought it to the 8th graders and they jumped on it.

Currently, they are in the middle of putting together the final plans for the event. I don't want to spoil all of the details until they are finalized, but we wanted to let you all know that it's in the works. We'll be coming out over the next week or so with the final details so please stay tuned! In the meantime, we wanted to wet your appetite with the incredible article that 8th grader Catherine Vorwald wrote after deciding that she wanted to interview Isabel herself. I hope it inspires you as much as it did me!

Enjoy the long weekend and stay warm!

Jeremy Brewer

Director of Students, Families, & Community



Passions

By: Catherine Vorwald (8th Grade)

Yinghua is about to start a bake sale and a book sale. Why are we doing this? Because we were inspired by wanting to donate money to the Philippines after it had been hit by a huge tropical storm, Typhoon Haiyan. This just happened in November, a few weeks ago. The devastation was brought to our attention by a third grader named Isabel Metzdorff, from 3C Lai Laoshi's class at Yinghua. I had an interview with her, and this is what she said:

How did you find out about this disaster?

I saw it on the news, and my mom also told me about it.

How did you feel after you learned about it?

I felt sad for them, then my friend came over and we talked about it. That's how we came up with the idea to help.

What inspired you to help change the world?

Hearing about the hardships of other kids around the world.

What is your passion?

I feel passionate about health, because I want people to be strong.

This shows that you can be any age to find out what's happening around the world. It doesn't matter if you're in kindergarten or eighth grade, find out what's going on out there. Look online, in magazines, newspapers, TV. Help us keep up with what's going on out there. If you find something you care strongly about, tell us about it, and we'll come up with a plan to help. If you want inspiration, I ask you this question: What is your passion? Your passion is what you care most about, what you love to do most. Something you don't want others to miss out on, something you want to share with the world. It could be reading, dancing, art. Whatever it is, help us share it with the rest of the world, because there are probably millions missing out on it.

Winter Enrichment Classes

Winter term Enrichment classes are open for registration! We have some super new classes including Media Madness for middle school, where students can make their own music videos and more; Ms. Totall is teaching Winter Adventure at three different grade levels, and what an adventure it will be; Hanban teacher Ying Li is offering calligraphy and Chinese painting classes to student and parents! There is much more. Check out the class catalog on the Yinghua website under Current Families/Enrichment Program. Registrations are due December 12.

Students interested in music as part of Yinghua Academy's Conservatory of Music can find the registration form on the Yinghua website. Spaces are limited, so get your forms into the office as soon as possible.

Construction Update

We will be having some big deliveries next week for the expansion project. Sections of the new exterior walls will be delivered early in the morning and construction will begin as the new wall panels arrive. By the end of winter break most of the exterior walls should be complete.

PE Play Day

Kids Play, Adults relax & PE earns money for equipment. Come join us at school for a PE Fundraiser. Saturday December 14 from 9:00am-2:00pm for Yinghua students in Grades KG-5. Fun games, crafts, movie, campfire and more. Check out registration form for more details.

UPCOMING DATES

December 12	School Tour
	Term II Registration Deadline
December 13	Term I Report Cards Mailed
December 16	Chinese Poetry Recital Game (K-2) Chinese Speech Contest (MS 5-8)
6:00PM	School Board Meeting
December 17 6:30PM	Winter Orchestra Concert (Main Campus)
December 19	School Tour
December 23— January 3	NO SCHOOL <i>Winter Break</i>



Free Art Opportunity!

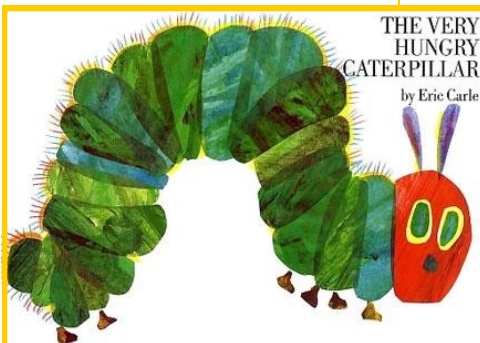
If you're looking for something arty this weekend... The Minneapolis Institute of Arts (MIA) is holding their monthly Family Day event this Sunday (December 8) from 11:00am-5:00pm throughout the museum. This month's theme is Dinner Party. Here's a little teaser from the MIA.

"Yum! Play with your food at Family Day. Design a delectable dessert, construct a silly, stackable sandwich, and feast your eyes on food-inspired works in the MIA's galleries."

Special guests around the museum will include the Children's Theater Company hosting story time with The Very Hungry Caterpillar, and Ballet Royale Minnesota and the Twin Cities Ballet giving workshops and performances.

I will be in the studios making some food architecture, and as always, I'd love to see some familiar faces!

Happy Weekend,
Meghan Byram (your local art teacher)



MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

Math Competitions - AMC 8 - Update

We have received the result of AMC 8 from MAA. The winners will be announced and awards will be given before the winter break.

English

Classroom spelling bees will be on Friday the 13th. Two winners from each class will go on to the school-wide spelling bee, which is coming after the winter break.

We notice many students got haircuts over the long weekend. Handsome! Lovely!



Finals Term I

Many students are asking when they can see their results from final tests. Because teachers use final tests to evaluate what students know, plan how to teach more effectively, and individualize instruction to meet every student's needs, these tests take longer to score. Teachers mark the tests first. Then, our testing specialist colleagues enter data from each answer into a spreadsheet. Finally, teachers consult with Dr. Lien to analyze results and make action plans. This process takes time, and we apologize to students for the delay. Please reassure students that they will see test results and discuss answers as soon as possible.

Chinese Language Arts

Next Thursday, December 12, the video conference with our sister school in China will take place at classroom 202 and 209. The conference will start from 5:00- 5:00 PM. All 6th, 7th, and 8th graders who submitted the signed permission form are eligible to participate. We will talk about the plans for winter break, Christmas in the US and China, and the famous Chinese heroine, Mulan.



Social Studies

Grade 6 is starting a unit about the U.S. Dakota War.
Grade 7 is starting a unit about Reconstruction after the Civil War.



China Trip

There will be a meeting next Thursday (December 12) at 6:00pm for anyone interested in participating in the China trip next summer.