



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?

***Kindergarteners** are building their Chinese vocabulary daily, which is obvious since their teachers speak nothing but Chinese and the children are thriving! They cannot only count but write numbers up to 20, they know colors, fruits, the five senses, weather words, and parts of the human body.

***First graders** at Yinghua are studying snow and temperature. How timely as I gaze out the window at some of our first precipitation of the winter season! 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 and creating Venn diagrams.

***Third graders** are learning about the Vikings (not the football team!) as explorers. Ask them about Eric the Red and Leif the Lucky. They are also knowledgeable about solar and lunar eclipses.

***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 can describe the functions. In math, they are consumed with comparing fractions and decimals. Also, after reading The Family Under the Bridge, a story about a family in Paris which they read in English class, they ate crepes!

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Luyi's Curriculum Corner

Dear Yinghua Families,
On Tuesday evening, we had our first open house for prospective kindergarten families. As anticipated, the most frequently asked question "*How can I help my child with homework if I don't speak or read Chinese?*" came up. Every time I respond to this question, I am reminded of how much immersion parents care about their children's learning. To assist parents with assignment time at home, I would like to reiterate Yinghua's homework guidelines and how we support students in this area.

First of all, homework is never new learning. The purpose of homework is for students to practice and reinforce concepts already learned in class. In order for students to understand what they need to work on at home, we specifically scheduled a "Homework" period from 3:06 PM to 3:30 PM daily for students to get started on their assignments and to ask questions. For Middle School students, all subject teachers are available to help during this period. In addition, from 8:00 AM to 8:30 AM every day, a teacher is available in the computer lab to help students with homework questions in Chinese and math.

We believe daily practice fosters good study habits and prepares students for advanced learning. As an immersion school, we strongly encourage students to read **every day** in both Chinese and English for a total of 30 minutes. Reading offers a productive approach to improve one's vocabulary and word power. Other homework activities will be assigned, based on students' grade levels, and not to exceed:

Kindergarten – weekend homework only

Grades 1 & 2 – 30 minutes daily

Grades 3 & 4 – 60 minutes daily

Grade 5 – 90 minutes daily

Grades 6 through 8 – up to two hours daily

Please keep in mind that occasionally, there will be projects which may require more time than the daily guideline to complete, but subject teachers will make every effort to consider this when assigning other homework.

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***Fifth graders** are learning about the Renaissance in Social Studies. No doubt, upon their recent "Art Adventures" field trip to the MIA, they were delighted to view famous paintings from this era. They read Hold the Flag High and look forward to their Readers' Workshop next week to focus on the Emancipation Proclamation.

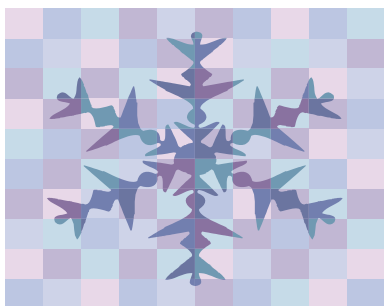
***Sixth graders** now know about the United States constitution and the rights, as well as jobs of citizens. Minnesota history is also studied. Students combined their music and computer skills by researching a classical composer and creating a web page including audio with famous compositions. They will present their projects in Chinese!

***Seventh graders** are busy translating holiday songs from English to Chinese. They read excerpts from Uncle Tom's Cabin to better understand the Civil War. Microscopes have been used to study cell structure and differences between animal and plant cells.

***Eighth graders** have studied opera, specifically *La Traviata* and *Madame Butterfly*. In science, DNA and RNA are terms familiar to the students as they investigate genetics. These young authors have written short stories and science fiction and are immersed in Shakespeare as they read Julius Caesar. In math, they are analyzing and solving pairs of simultaneous linear equations and equations algebraically and graphically.

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

Warm regards,
Sue



Luyi cont.....

Some parents have expressed the desire for us to provide English translation for homework. Although we understand the convenience and the value of translation, we would like students to be able to apply their own language tools/strategies for learning. Besides, translation may not always work since languages don't function on the basis of word-for-word correspondence. That being said, every teacher has a Classroom Page which is updated weekly with information (in English) on classroom activities, news, and assignments. These Pages can be found on the school website, under the Current Families tab.

The process of learning through a second language is challenging and can sometimes be frustrating. But the benefits and rewards are very real. We all want our students to be confident in their abilities and feel good about their learning. We also want our students to explore other interests and activities. Classroom teachers and administration will be glad to work with you on any homework questions you may have.

Stay warm and have a happy weekend!

Luyi Lien, Ph.D
Academy Director
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Greetings Parents,

IMPORTANT REMINDER!

Spirit Week – The December 10-14 Spirit Week has been **RESCHEDULED** due to the MIA field trips. The new Spirit Days will be January 11, 18, 25, and February 1st – culminating with a PepFest the afternoon of February 1st. We will send out more details about each day's theme before Winter Break.

Thanks!

Jeremy Brewer

Lost and Found

The deadline for picking up lost and found items is Wednesday,
December 19th!!

Middle School Page

For MS Students and Parents from MS Teachers

Art News!

First off, our biggest news is the YACA sponsored Minneapolis Institute of Arts field trips! This week was our first week of field trips; we began on Tuesday with 3rd grade and just Thursday I was able to take the 5th, 7th, and 8th graders. Now, I have taken many groups to the museum, but having the opportunity to take students at a middle school level was something else! The discussion and questions were amazing, and we even ran into some pieces we were not planning on seeing that the students readily recognized. For example, the 8th graders have spent many hours learning about the Italian Renaissance and the themes, inspiration, and style of the time. Just this week we looked at a painting by Sandro Botticelli that was an allegory of spring (Primavera), amongst other things the painting included *The Three Graces*. On our way to see a piece in our Art Adventure collection, we passed a sculpture of *The Three Graces*. The students were able to recognize the characters and make the connection to the piece we studied in class. Thanks, YACA!

Other BIG Art News: Coming in January (hopefully!) Yinghua Middle School Art Club!

I have received feedback from many students that there just isn't enough art! If this sounds like your student, he/she may be interested in joining an after-school Middle School Art Club through our wonderful enrichment program. Having an after school club will allow students to work in a different setting, in a small class size, and to use materials that we are unable to use in class. You will find the class listed in the enrichment catalog, which is already posted online. It will be Mondays from 4:35pm-5:20pm. Students enrolled in enrichment classes can stay in aftercare for no additional cost; during that time they can do homework, use the computer lab, or maybe your student have their sights on another class! We will need 8 students minimum to make our club happen.

It's A Dirty Job, But Someone Has To Do It! YA's First Bi-Annual Waste Sort!

Today two groups of middle school students participated in our first ever Waste Sort. The Waste Sort is done in conjunction with Hennepin County as part of our recycling grant. Two representatives from Hennepin County came to observe the students as they dumped and sorted all of our garbage after lunch, including our trash, recycling, and liquid & organic waste material. The goal was to evaluate, measure, and document how well we are doing in separating organic waste and recycling from the rest of our trash.

The groups found that of our 6 pounds of trash, 43% of it was actually organic material, and 20% was recyclable, so we could do a little bit better in making sure our organics make it into the compost instead of the trash. Much of that improvement will simply come with time as the students gain more experience with the program. Interestingly, the students found that most of our actual trash was packaging from home packed lunches.

Next, the students sorted through our organic waste. Over-all, the students learned that we had generated 80 pounds of organic waste today! That's not too bad when you consider it's from about 400 students, plus all of the staff that come through the cafeteria during the lunch hour. The students also found that 99.5% of our organics was organic material by weight, so we are doing an amazing job of not contaminating our organics!

A special thanks to Karen Calcaterra for helping to coordinate the Waste Sort. She reported that the two reps from Hennepin County were "impressed with our recycling program and our students"! In general, the waste sort was messy, a lot of fun, and a huge success! I think Mike Rowe from "Dirty Jobs" better watch out or one of our kids will take his job!

Jeremy Brewer



Yo-Yo Fun!

On December 10 and December 11 we will have a National Yo-Yo Master coming to our school! He will provide an assembly on Monday for Middle School students at 8:30 and on Tuesday for Grades 1-4 at the same time.

Dazzling Dave will present many fun tricks and elaborate on the safety of Yo-Yo's. He will also incorporate the science behind the Yo-Yo. This will be a great way for our students to engage in a PE activity while also incorporating other academic disciplines into our program.

Please see attached flyer for more information.

We look forward to having him and look forward to your added enthusiasm!



Morning Homework Help

New this term, students may come to the computer room between 8:00 and 8:30AM for homework help!
No registration needed.

Dear Parents in Grades 6 - 8,

We are forming a student group to visit China this summer. Email Dr. Luyi Lien at luyi.lien@yinghuaacademy.org for information about this exciting opportunity for culture, friendship and fun!

Spelling Bee Date Change

Unfortunately, we need to change the date of our All-School Spelling Bee. We have decided to change the Bee to **January 16th, 2012** starting at 1:30pm.

We will have classroom bees the week before on the 10th and 11th. This will actually be good timing since kids can practice the words over winter break!

Thanks everyone for your flexibility!

Sincerely,
Ms. Rademacher

UPCOMING DATES

Dec 10 6:00PM	School Board Meeting
Dec 13 6:30PM	Winter Orchestra Concert
Dec 14	Term I Report Cards Mailed Term II New Year's Enrichment Registration Deadline
Dec 20 6:30PM	YACA Board Meeting
Dec 21	Winter Sampler Enrichment Ends
Dec 24—Jan 4	Winter Break