

Wider Horizons School

Annual Geography Bee



DATES TO REMEMBER:

2/09-13 SPIRIT WEEK

Monday 2/9: Sports/Jersey Shirts

Tuesday 2/10: Pajama Day

Wednesday 2/11: Career Day

Thursday 2/12: Mix Match/Make your own WHS shirt

Friday 2/13: Dress-up-Day -we take class pictures for the yearbook this day (we would like all students to participate)

2/16 President's Day- no school

2/27 Class Photos

Wider Horizons School has a special emphasis on geography starting with 3 year olds and continuing through high school. We feel it is important to know where cities, continents and countries are located to be able to understand history.

The Annual Geography Bee gives students a chance to show their understanding of geography. The winners this year are: Braden Ghingher 1st place, Hadley Rey second place and Aryeh Khaidov third place. Good job to you all!

CHILDREN ARE NOT BEING TAUGHT TO THINK OR HAVE A NEED TO THINK

By Domenick J. Maglio PhD.

Giving children too little responsibility and too much help to solve simple problems is disabling their ability to think. The electronic world is encouraging children to think they are smarter than they are. Depending on an electronic answer to every question eliminates the need to think for oneself.

Several generations ago children were an integral part of the family. In cities they helped the family by shopping in local stores, doing chores around the house and caring for their siblings. In agrarian areas the children had even more opportunity to learn responsibilities not only related to the home but to the family business. They had to do it correctly or answer to the owner: their parents.

These parents expected their children to contribute to the family. Children were told to do tasks and listen well to everything their parents said. They knew the parents meant business. The children understood if they got confused it was up to them to figure out how to complete the objective on their own. There was no option of going back to the parents with made up stories. The child was not considered a baby and it was up to him to get the job done. He had to think and find his own way of doing things right.

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On Saturday, January 24, 2026, the annual Brooksville Book Festival, titled "Booksville", hosted a Spelling Bee. Anyone from K-12th grade could compete. Each grade level would have their own list of words, scaling in difficulty. James Layton, an eighth grade student from Wider Horizons School attended and won for his grade level. Some of the difficult words on the eighth grade list include "Pasteurize", "Lieutenant", "Iridescent", "Annexation", "Penicillin", "Schism", and "Pneumonia".

SPIRIT WEEK

FEBRUARY 9-13

MONDAY- SPORTS JERSEY

TUESDAY- PAJAMA DAY

WEDNESDAY-CAREER DAY

**THURSDAY-MIX/MATCH OR
MAKE YOUR OWN WHS SHIRT
DAY**

**FRIDAY- DRESS UP DAY-
PHOTOS USED FOR THE
YEARBOOK- PLEASE ATTEND**

PRIMARY 1

Mrs. Wallace and Mrs. Tejada

Last week we celebrated our 100th day of school. Students made 100 chocolate chip cookies to eat and share. They also did an art project to celebrate.

In math, students were given new lessons on counting and adding. All students counted up to 100 and down from 100 and will help change the number of a 100 day countdown on the white board.

In language, students wrote a poem about Groundhog Day, and we discussed what happens if the groundhog sees its shadow. Students continue to read their Bob Books. Congratulations to Avalon, Henley, Henry, Claire, and Landon for moving up in their Bob Books.

We also had two birthdays this week. We celebrated Everhett's fourth birthday and Ciel's sixth birthday with our traditional birthday walk.

In science and culture, students learned about animals with different types of skin, such as scales, feathers, and fur. Students were also introduced to different types of pets and practiced for this week's Science Expo.

In art, students started making Valentine's Day crafts and made groundhog puppets.



Everhett and Ciel celebrate their birthdays

PRIMARY 2

Miss Finnerty and Mrs. Nieves

What a fun few weeks in Primary 2! We kicked off last week with a 100th Day celebration full of numbers and a special craft. We all counted to 100 together. Some students challenged themselves to write or trace numbers 1-100, while others completed 100 math problems. Each student also made 100 Day glasses to commemorate this special day. We also want to thank Primary 1 for sharing their 100 day cookies with us.

In math, students are now combining U.S. coins to form large amounts.

In language, students copied and illustrated a poem about hot chocolate. To make the poem more fun, we decided to make homemade hot chocolate; it was the perfect way to stay warm in the cold. Students also received lessons on more beginning blends and vowel teams. Older students are working on reading journal sheets. They get to pick a book from the library and summarize it, as well as draw a picture to go along with it.

In art, we made a groundhog craft and have begun working on Valentine's Day art and songs. In music, we practiced rhythm and word patterns. Students enjoyed using different body percussion movements to explore this concept.

We want to thank our wonderful volunteer judges for coming in for the Science Expo. The children did an excellent job presenting, and we are so proud of them.



STUDENT EDITOR

Gia Betz

LOWER ELEMENTARY

Mrs. Urbanek and Mr. Garrand

This week was the Science expo. The students had a great time presenting their projects and learning how science works. It is amazing how hard they worked no matter how many times it took for them to get it right.

Congratulations to Gabriel and Wendy for moving up to the next time tables. Congratulations to Ashley for mastering her addition facts 11-20. Congratulations to Nathan for having a perfect reading sheet this week.

The students are working in different areas of math, and it is important that they continue to memorize their facts. We continue to see that once they have memorized a fact, they tend to forget it soon after. Often times, this can be frustrating for the child. Ask your child what they are working on and have them practice at home; repetition helps with memorization.

Next week, we are starting Who Am I... riddles about states. We have also started something new within the classroom to help the students to become more engaged in the work they are doing. Some students like to just go with the flow, and it is not helping them learn the importance of cultural studies. The work they are doing will continue to increase over time; this is what we call "Stepping Stones."

It is very important that parents are not helping the students with their homework. It is also crucial that all students are reading at home, as it makes a big difference when reading in the classroom with many different materials.

UPPER ELEMENTARY

Mrs. Gutierrez, Miss Bandini, and Mrs. Russell

This week's afternoons were largely devoted to preparing for our school's annual Science Expo. We were thrilled to see so many impressive projects this year. Today, parents and friends visited our classrooms, and many expressed how impressed they were with the students' work. We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the judges for their time and involvement.

As mentioned last week, Upper Elementary students competed to earn the highest scores in the Geography Bee. The top five students who advanced to compete against the Junior High and High School students were Aryeh, Ethan, Hadley, Logan, and an alternate. We are proud to share that Hadley placed second overall in the final competition. Congratulations to all students who participated!

Additionally, Upper Elementary students randomly chose a classmate to write a friendly letter to; these letters will be distributed on February 13th during our Friendship Lunch.

We would like to welcome Elliott to the Upper Elementary Classroom.

Fourth graders learned about tessellations and applied them to their math lessons this week. They also had commonly misspelled fourth grade words for spelling this week. They were tasked with finding synonyms for each word.

This week, fifth graders learned how to identify nouns and pronouns used as objects of prepositions in sentences. Students continued their regular lessons in language, math, reading, science, and history.

Sixth graders were introduced to their next vocabulary book and reviewed Greek and Latin roots and their meanings. In Physical Science, they completed their unit on radiation with a test and began exploring new topics, including

speed, acceleration, motion, and friction. Students are also working on mastering the formulas needed for these concepts and will continue practicing until they are prepared for the Chapter 12 test. In language arts, sixth graders began reading *The Arabian Nights* in class. Their next book report will be due on February 17th.

HIGHSCHOOL

Mrs. Parks, Mrs. Youse, and Miss Wheeler

Welcome to another exciting week in our Junior and Senior High School class!

We have had a fantastic time recently, and we are looking forward to all the engaging activities still to come. Our classroom has been buzzing with energy, creativity, and hard work, and it has been wonderful to see our students so invested in their learning.

Over the past week, students dedicated significant time to practicing for the Science Expo and putting the finishing touches on their final reports. Their focus, teamwork, and perseverance truly paid off. On Friday, February 6, we proudly hosted the Science Expo, and it was a tremendous success! The students did an excellent job presenting their projects and demonstrating their understanding and curiosity about science.

We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who came out to support our students. A special thank you goes to the family members who graciously volunteered their time to serve as judges. Your encouragement and involvement helped make this event meaningful and memorable for our students.

Looking ahead, we are excited to kick off Spirit Week! A schedule of daily themes has already been sent home, and we encourage all students to participate and show their school spirit. Spirit Week is always a fun way to build community and celebrate together.

IN CASE OF A STORM OR STATE OF EMERGENCY WHERE THERE IS NO POWER - SCHOOL WILL BE CLOSED UNTIL POWER IS RESTORED

Please remember that Friday is Dress-Up Day, which is especially important as yearbook photos will be taken. We encourage everyone to join in so that all students are included in these special memories.

We cannot wait for another great week filled with learning, laughter, and school spirit!

AFTER SCHOOL

Mrs. Brewer and Mrs. Russell

During circle time, we discussed Earth. The earth has many layers, and we all live on the thin crust of the earth. The children asked if Earth is round like a ball, and we explained to them that the earth is more like a ball that has been slightly squished at the ends.

We also talked about the ocean. One student asked if the ocean gets dark at night. The areas near the surface of the water still receive sunlight and do not get dark at night, but the areas farther down do. Another student asked if any fish live down there in the dark. We explained that some very strange fish live deep down the ocean. We also discussed the desert. Some deserts can be very hot during the day but be freezing cold at night.

During playground time, the children enjoyed making sand castles and birthday cakes in the sand box. Some children used the playground equipment, while the rest of the children were playing Hide-and-Seek. Once inside, the older students worked on their homework, while the rest of the children had the chance to do any activity or puzzle of their choice.

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In school the same process happened. Students were given assignments and were expected to do them. Excuses were not acceptable. Parents backed the teacher's authority and demanded the child do what the teacher said. Youngsters were required to get it done on their own or receive a failing grade. The student had to figure a positive way to complete the assignment. It forced them to think.

Today you only have to ask Siri or Google it. There is no need to think.

Modern children are not interacting with other people as they have traditionally done. There are few opportunities for them to join neighborhood peers in play outside the house. Usually children's activities are scheduled by their parents who chauffeur them from one expert led extracurricular activity to another. Supervising adults handle any incidents between children that occur in a scheduled activity. Youngsters no longer have the opportunity to solve social disagreements and altercations with their peers.

In the modern family everyone seems to be in his own world. Parents are involved with their business responsibilities often throughout the day and even at night. Family dinners are difficult to schedule every evening and when they do occur involved discussions with the family is rare. It is almost impossible to have intense conversations about the day when everybody has been doing his own thing. Every family member's fallback position is to take out his cell phone and entertain himself. Self-absorption is no longer considered rude in many social situations.

Families working, speaking, playing together or doing simple chores to contribute to the family are becoming passé'. These were times parents could influence the child's skills, beliefs and thinking through casual or spontaneous teaching moments. Those moments are becoming extremely rare as children spend less quantity time with their parents. Loved ones and other authority figures are not teaching their children how to think right and reason through the problems they face.

In school students are constantly tempted to search the web for all answers to academic questions rather than research and think until they solve the problem. Any history, literature or science questions can easily be Googled. Even math textbook problems can be handled by finding the answer key online.

Thinking to solve one's own problems is a waste of time to modern pampered children. They do not have the skills, inclination or confidence to even attempt to do it on their own. Learning to deal with problems they will inevitably confront is essential to become competent, self reliant and motivated people.

The overprotected, untrained adults should have been allowed to face the pain of learning from their mistakes. Learning to accept failure helps propel children to improve. Not giving grades, not keeping score and giving unearned positive reinforcement results in high esteem, non-thinking, mentally disabled younger generation.

A society that does not encourage an independent thinking citizenry is destined to become a totalitarian welfare country. This handicaps today's children who are deprived of the experiences children in the past learned from to cope with life. Modern children have no need to figure out problems because parents will rush in to do it for the child. This is happening even after they reach adulthood. Instead of young adults feeling an obligation to care for their parents in their old age, their modern parents feel a responsibility to care for these children by setting up trust funds. These self-absorbed young adults are recognized as "trust fund babies."

Coddled children are not prepared to face the harshness of society. They wind up angry and disillusioned not being able to reach their unrealistic objectives. These non-thinking people become a burden that will negatively impact every aspect of society. These missed opportunities to face reality should frighten us all.

It is the duty of parents to provide reality tests and opportunities to stimulate the thinking processes of their children. It is rarely being done now.

Domenick Maglio, PhD. is a columnist carried by various newspapers, an author of several books and owner/director of Wider Horizons School, a college prep program. Dr. Maglio is an author of weekly newspaper articles, INVASION WITHIN and a new book, entitled, IN CHARGE PARENTING In a PC World. You can visit Dr. Maglio at www.drmaglio.blogspot.com.