



Students “dive” into the Singapore strait to explore and research rare and endangered species while at GVS

Learning about Indonesia, K-1 students show how ideas are communicated through shadow puppets during GVS this summer

Second and third grade students hone their math skills playing Congkak during GVS

Consider This....

Talking with Students about Tragic Events

In a world of 24/7 news and social media access, parents and teachers are no longer the gatekeepers of information. So when tragic events that make international news, like the Paris attacks, occur what are our roles as teachers? How do we talk with our students about difficult or sensitive issues?

Schools can and should be the place where students grapple with difficult issues. While controversial issues are complex, teachers can provide a supportive environment to address challenging and sensitive issues constructively, making such tragic current events powerful teachable moments. Here are some suggestions on addressing difficult issues in constructive and sensitive ways. These ideas come from [Morningside Center](#), a national leader in the field of social and emotional learning (SEL), an organization that helps teachers facilitate difficult topics in the classroom.

Create a safe environment

Counselors and staff can work together to ensure students feel safe at the school level. In the classroom teachers can cultivate a safe, respectful tone by starting the year with group agreements or behavior expectations, which might include, “no interrupting,” “listening without judgment,” “share to your level of comfort” and the like. Remind students that when they refer to groups of people to be mindful to say “some,” rather than “all.” Model how to discuss sensitive topics by being honest, respectful, and even-handed with varying points of view.

Prepare yourself

Do the research to build your own background knowledge before taking on a difficult topic. Here are resources to consider when doing your research: [Time Topics page](#), a collection of the New York Times news topics or the New York Times [Room for Debate](#) blog. [ProCon.org](#) is an independent non-profit founded “to provide resources for critical thinking and to educate without bias” or [Teaching With the News](#) created by the CHOICES program at Brown University. Depending on the topic you may consider notifying students, or parents, in advance of the upcoming topic you will have in class.

Consider this...cont.

Assess students' prior knowledge

You can assess prior knowledge in a variety of ways: whole class brainstorm, turn and talk with a partner, or an individual writing prompt. Depending on the sensitivity of the topic, you might try having students begin by writing anonymously then use that writing to decide how to proceed. Ask students to articulate the source of their knowledge. When discussing sensitive information, students should ask, "What do I know and how do I know it?"



In the wake of the Paris attacks, World Geography students at Kenmore participate in a Socratic Seminar about immigration policies.

Provide accurate information from varied perspectives

Questions gleaned from the pre-assessment can help you design an overview of the topic. Provide facts and accurate information based on your background research that helps dispel myths and misconceptions. This can be shared through readings, stations, and/or lecture. Time permitting have students research and investigate topics. Then it is important to provide a way for students to process the information and ask further questions in a structured format: like pair shares, talking circles or socratic seminars. Here's a list of [various groups discussions](#).

Elicit questions and make connections

Students will naturally generate more questions. If students are focusing on content questions, like why did ISIS form? expand their inquiry so they think beyond the basic facts and delve into deeper questions like "Why do people take violent action?" Push students to think beyond the single news story to make connections between past historical events.

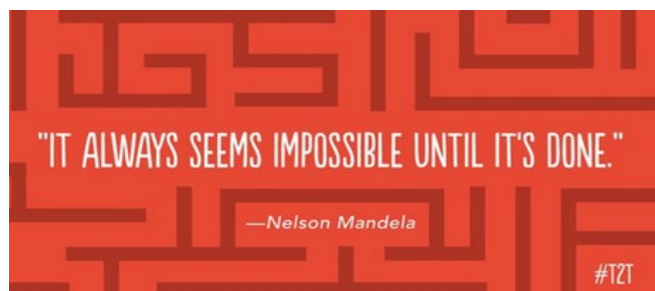
Consider helping students make connections between the topic at hand and their own lives. All the while, remember to be responsive to students' feelings and values. Continue to watch for classroom tone and remind students of the ground rules, especially if they are violated. If you anticipate that a certain topic may elicit too many strong feelings for a certain student, have a conversation with them in advance.



Engage in your network

Teaching students takes a village or a network. That network includes school counselors and administration, students' family, and the larger community. Communicate with your counseling staff about your class discussion. You may be able to easily develop a lesson with a counselor on character education. Also work with your counseling staff to keep a watchful eye on students who may be in need of additional support. We live in a diverse district of various families and organizations that you may contact, consider having a guest speaker on the topic of study.

Some of the most teachable moments come when we help our students make sense of what they see and hear in the news. It is critical that we make time and space for informed and measured conversations about these difficult issues. In this way we help prepare our students to be critical and compassionate participants in their increasingly global future.



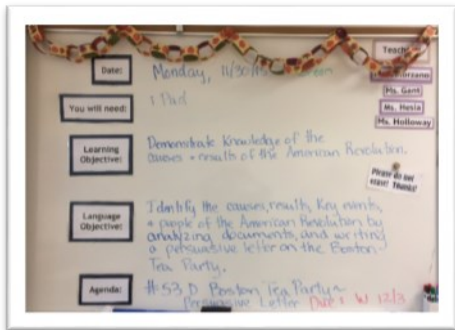
Strategy Spotlight

As part of our Secondary lead teacher meeting this Fall, our lead teachers participated in classroom walk-throughs at **Kenmore Middle School** to see first-hand examples of best instructional practices. Our lead teachers sang high praises for the grouping strategies and routines of **Sharon Solozarno's** sixth grade classroom. We've asked Sharon to share some her practices with us in this issue's Strategy Spotlight.



Classroom Routines and Procedures to Increase Your Teaching Time

Teaching students procedures and routines leads to more time on task and fewer interruptions. In an ASCD publication, **Better Classroom Management from Day One**, educator Kerry Griswold Fitch encourages teachers to, "spend time on properly rehearsing expected routines and procedures with our students." Simply announcing a new procedure will not guarantee a successful outcome. Students need to see the procedure posted, hear it verbalized, and practice it multiple times. Even high school students, accustomed to classroom routines for years, need practice implementing procedures.



This proactive, rather than reactive, approach maximizes precious classroom minutes. *Wonder how to create student groups smoothly with minimal disruption? Need ideas to build in daily structures your classroom?* This [article link](#) provides a list of successful routines and procedures.



History Comes Alive ...Across the district students honor veterans



Patrick Henry's Veterans Day assembly



Discovery 4th graders write Veterans Day poetry



Special guest Sr. Col. Wilson, Base Cmd, Kunsan AF Korea visits 4th grade students at **Carlin Springs**



Hoffman Boston students holding the Veterans Day cards that the school wrote this year – over 200 were made school-wide and were given to a rep from the American Legion

Differentiation Corner

Personal devices can help teachers meet the specific learning needs of their individual students and become a tool for differentiation. Yet some teachers are concerned on how to manage a classroom of students each with their own device. In this Differentiation Corner, **Gunston ITC** and **Apple Distinguished Educator, Katharine Hale** shares both tips and a mindshift on how we can view these personal devices.



iMindset Changes iManagement

Remember when individual whiteboards and dry erase markers were introduced to classrooms? Remember how much commotion that created in the teacher world? We worried about dealing with kids drawing all the time on the boards, about the cost of replacing broken markers, about markers being a distraction for students. And now we don't even think twice about white boards in the classroom! When we use whiteboards, we simply set expectations before every use, walk around to view student boards, and provide students pen and pencil if they misuse these tools. Our mindset toward whiteboards and markers are that they are learning tools. Therefore, we manage students' use with them just like we do with all learning tools. We establish expectations, monitor actively, and provide alternative choices as needed.

iPads and Macbooks are our newest learning tool. Approach personal device behaviors the way we approach familiar learning tools like whiteboards or calculators and trust that the management strategies you already have in place will work just the same with these devices. Start building a list with your CLT of strategies you use when a student mistreats a notebook or draws on a whiteboard. That list...is your iPad and Macbook management system.



Teach students that in class, the iPad or Macbook is used as a learning tool. Outside of class or school, these devices could in fact be other tools. It could be a gaming tool, a social-networking tool, a camera, and so much more. But in class, the expectation is that they will be a learning tool and will be treated as a learning tool. If we discipline personal device use and misuse the way we do when they misuse a toy, students will continue to see them as a toy and not a learning tool. It all comes down to our mindset. Shifting our mindset changes our management and that itself will shift our students' mindsets.

5 More Tech Management Tips:

- **Change Teaching Location:** Teach from the back of the room or walk around the room as you talk. Work is now done on screens so doing this will help you view screens better.
- **Look at Hands and Face:** If fingers are tapping fast, they're probably playing a game. If face is smiling and their assignment is serious, they're probably reading something else.
- **Don't Loan Personal Devices:** Letting students who forget theirs borrow a device during class time will not motivate them to bring theirs the next day. If work must be done on a personal device, decrease privileges. (i.e. complete work by borrowing iPad during recess time)
- **Set Routine & Language:** Create common language and routines in your classroom. "Screens down" is good when you want their attention. "Lay flat" is good when you want to see all iPad work at once.
- **Over-Emphasize Good Use:** Compliment loudly. Say things like "wow, thanks for teaching each other" or "You're taking photos of my chart. That's brilliant." or "You're airdropping an example to help her. Super smart way of using airdrop." It is the most powerful way to create a ripple effect. Watch how it will impact the rest of your class.

Global Village Summit 2015

This past summer, the Social Studies Office was able to offer Global Village Summit, for 172 students completing grades K-3. Arlington teachers **Jennifer Burgin, Jill Congelio, Casey Dolan, Vicky Flynt, Lauren Elkins, Natani Vaugh, Michelle Jaeckel, Allison Nowak, Kimberlee Pooler, Nita Wade, and Elizabeth Kuleski** worked to create a thematic approach to learning about the geography and culture of countries around the world. This was the 19th summer that GVS has been offered and the countries of Kenya, Columbia, Indonesia, Costa Rico, Iceland and Singapore, were featured. During the program, students participated in hands-on activities, utilized technology integration, and heard from guest speakers who were native to and/or had lived in the countries being studied.



Awards and Recognitions

Yorktown's Social Studies teacher **Kenny Mandel** and English teacher Terry Eiserman co-authored the article, "[Team Teaching in High School](#)," in the December/January issue of *Educational Leadership* on their collaborative efforts in team teaching and the benefits of English-Social Studies blocks at Yorktown. Bravo teachers!



Kudos to **Lilo Stephens**, seventh grade social studies teacher at **Kenmore**, for being the second place winner for 2015 Economic Educator Awards through Virginia Council on Economic Education. Winners will be recognized at an awards luncheon in December at the Federal Reserve Bank



of Richmond. Lilo's winning unit is titled, *Time Travel with Economics and Augmented Reality*, and takes

a traditional sequencing format—the timeline—and combines it with a technological innovation—augmented reality.

Hats off to **Jennifer Kelly** who was recently interviewed for the Geography Issue of the Teaching with Primary Sources (TPS) Journal. The Virginia TPS program nominated Jennifer, who teaches 8th grade World Geography at **Gunston**, for her effective use of primary sources in her lesson design and classroom instruction. In this [interview](#), she discusses teacher strategies and some of her favorite Library of Congress resources.



Congratulations to Jen for receiving National Board Certification. Way to go!

In October, Leadership Arlington named **Steven Brown** to their 2015 list of "40 Under 40" honorees. This Leadership Arlington program recognizes 40 emerging leaders under the age of 40 who demonstrate impact personally and/or professionally through their exceptional leadership in the DC metropolitan region.

Beyond the classroom, Mr. Brown established a mentoring program for Latino male immigrants at W-L to encourage graduation and prevent dropouts.



Recently chosen as the keynote for graduation by W-L students, Mr. Brown shared his journey from Bolivia. He's risen as a leader in promoting virtual opportunities for students to meet graduation requirements and has established an environment of respect and caring in his classroom that his students have come to appreciate and reciprocate. Congratulations, Steven!

Each year, at the Virginia State Social Studies Conference, a teacher is selected by a panel of state educators and honored as the Virginia Council for Social Studies Teacher of the Year. This year APS teacher **Patricia Carlson** was chosen for that honor. During her career in APS, she has served as a resource teacher for the gifted, a seventh grade social studies teacher, and is currently a sixth grade social studies teacher at **Williamsburg**.

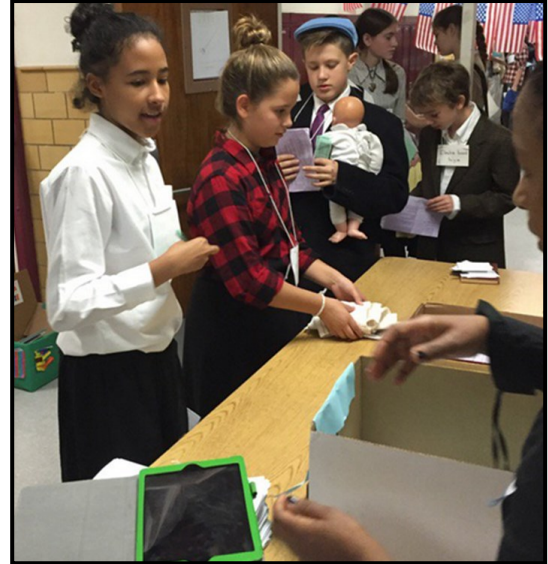


Patricia is a master teacher who uses primary sources and inquiry based education to develop critical thinking skills. In addition to her work in the classroom, she serves as the social studies lead teacher for her school and has taken a lead in curriculum and performance assessment task development. Patricia is truly deserving of the title of Virginia Council for Social Studies State teacher of the year!

History Comes Alive



Tuckahoe students become statues in this Thanksgiving Visual Discover



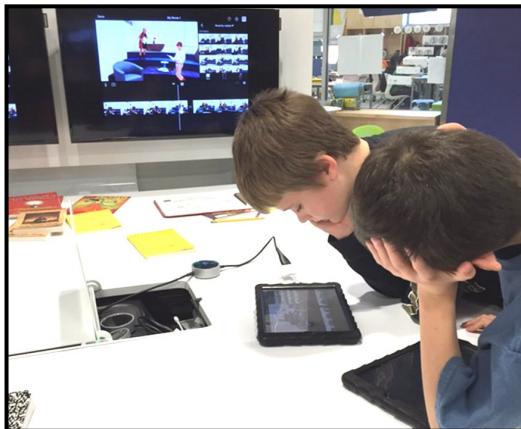
Swanson 7th graders participate in the Ellis Island simulation



With map and passport in hand, parents and students discover Turkey at the 5th stop at **Long Branch's** International Night



Sociology students grapple with difficult topic of racism in the United States during this seminar



Discovery 4th graders write and edit their movies about the Jamestown Settlement for their class-wide Jamestown Film Festival



History Alive! Level I

Twenty five teachers spent a week of their summer vacation bringing History Alive! as they participated in a Level I training by Wakefield teacher, **Greg Cabana**. This instructional approach includes strategies that incorporate Howard Gardner's work on multiple intelligences, Elizabeth Cohen's research on cooperative interaction, Jerome Bruner's theories related to spiraling curriculum, Marzano's work with nonlinguistic representation, and the importance of big ideas, supported by Wiggins & McTighe. History Alive! is usually offered each summer to new teachers as well as other interested teachers. If you haven't taken it yet, consider signing up for a week of learning



Social Studies teachers engage in an experiential exercise as they re-enact Harambi's trial during the History Alive! Level I Institute this summer

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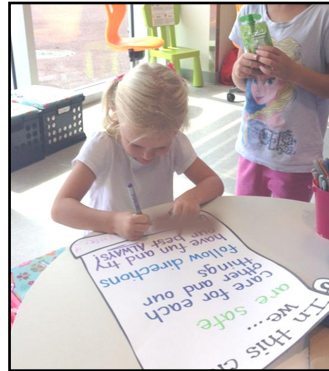


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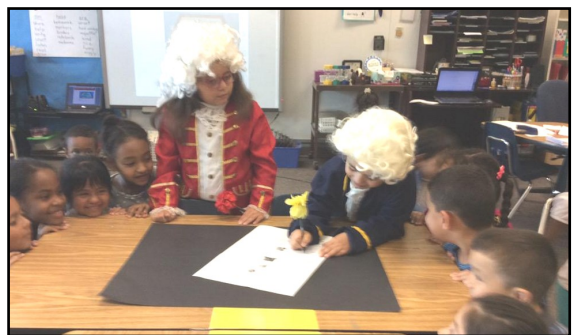
"How come Lewis and Clark didn't just use MapQuest?"

History Comes Alive

...Selected Examples of the Celebration of Constitution Day in APS



Carlin Springs 1st grade students signing their technology agreement on Constitution Day!



Discovery students create and sign class expectations together in honor of Constitution Day



Constitution Day activities were underway at **Ashlawn**



We the Kids...Masterminds write and sign their own constitution at **Nottingham** Elementary

Getting to know SOCIAL STUDIES LEAD TEACHERS

This is **Kristen Wolla's** third year teaching at **Oakridge** Elementary. She is currently teaching fourth grade and enjoying the Virginia Studies curriculum. A native Arlingtonian, she came back home to teach after graduating from James Madison University with her Masters in Arts of Teaching. While at James Madison, she was a member of the Swimming and Diving team and attended the University on a swim scholarship. Kristen is not the only "Wolla" teaching in Arlington, her mother, **Karen Wolla**, is a Pre-Kindergarten teacher at **Patrick Henry** and has been there for 31 years.



Maggie Pierce has been teaching 5th grade at **Drew Model** for 2 years. She is originally from Caldwell, New Jersey. Maggie attended Mount St. Mary's University for her undergraduate degree. She loves teaching pre-history and ancient civilization! She enjoys coaching track and field and was a discus thrower in college. Maggie can't wait for the Geography Bee this year and is excited to be the Social Studies co-lead at Drew!



Caitlin McGuire has been an ESOL teacher at **Drew** for 3 years. She is originally from Youngstown, Ohio. Caitlin attended Saint Mary's College for her undergraduate degree. She loves teaching Virginia Studies! Caitlin enjoys reading and traveling during the summer. Caitlin can't wait for the 4th grade Jamestown trip this year and is excited to be the Social Studies co-lead at Drew!

Phil Hayden is a returning social studies lead teacher from **Kenmore**. After graduating from Fordham University with a BA in History, Phil worked at the Supreme Court of the United States for several years. He then earned a Masters in Special Education at the University of Vermont. Currently, Phil is in his 18th year of teaching and 13th at Kenmore MS. In that time he has had the privilege of always teaching World Geography.



Outside of school Phil enjoys cooking ...is said to make a mean Guacamole.





Welcome to the following new lead teachers:

Christina Ray—Ashlawn
Twanna Betts—Barcroft
Jennifer Manley—Barrett
Anna Maria Lechleitner—Carlin Springs
Marijoy Cordero—Carlin Springs
Elizabeth Kuleski—Discovery
Caitlin McGuire—Drew
Maggie Pierce—Drew
Mercedes Dean—Henry
Nicole Schofield—Jamestown
Maryellen Meden—Nottingham
Kristen Wolla—Oakridge
Mac McDermott—Randolph
Gus Gravot—Gunston
Phil Hayden—Kenmore

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