



Thomas Jefferson Middle School

IB MYP November Newsletter

Learning together to understand and improve ourselves, our futures, and our world.



Learner Profile Attribute of the Month: INQUIRER

All learning should begin with inquiry. As **inquirers** we aim to “nurture our curiosity” and develop research skills. We learn-how-to-learn on our own and with others. We work to become life-long learners.



Our top student inquirers are for the **Dolphins - Omayma Paredes, Dragons - Mila Djarimbetova, Eagles - Kimberly Jimenez, Gators - Abe Sawez, Monarch - Uriel Guasti Ortiz, Owl - Rhys Harbour, Penguins - Abigail Putnam, Phoenix - Brandon Tamir, and Stingrays - Abeer Zafar.**

Source: <https://pixabay.com/photos/animals-dog-cat-puppy-young-2198994/>

Self-Study and School Improvement

The time has come for our Jefferson self-study. Starting this month, a series of surveys will be sent to the entire Jefferson community to gather feedback on how well we are implementing the IB Middle Years Programme. These surveys are a critical part of reflecting and evaluating on teaching and learning in the lead up to our evaluation phase.

The self-study involves asking a combination of selected response rating and more open-ended questions. The topics cover the school’s philosophy, organization and curriculum (including teaching and learning and assessment). We want to gather honest feedback to celebrate our successes and focus on areas of growth.

The Big Picture on Assessment



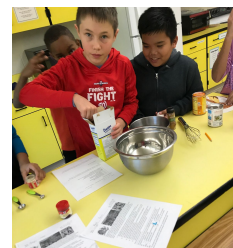
Backward design is the idea that teachers should plan their assessments first and then plan lessons that lead students to success on those tasks. The implementation of backward design,

however, has been sporadic. We want to ensure that we use backward design not only at the unit level, but also considering the whole year. Teachers are asked to examine the IB subject criteria and consider in which unit they will assess each criterion (at least twice throughout the year). The aim is to be transparent about how grades will be determined. Each unit should begin by introducing a criterion-based rubric that shows what students need to be able to do to achieve at the highest level.

Source: [pixabay.com](https://pixabay.com/photos/animals-dog-cat-puppy-young-2198994/)

MYP Classrooms & Authentic Assessments

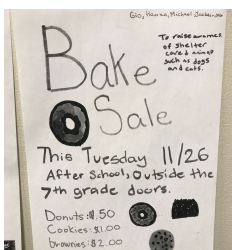
One doesn’t usually think of Thanksgiving pumpkin pies and math lessons going together, but that’s exactly what our MYP Year 1 or 6th grade students just experienced. In Ms. DeMao’s classes, students had to complete a Pumpkin Pie Challenge in groups. Students are assessed on IB Math Criterion D:



Applying Mathematical Reasoning in Real-Life Contexts. Students were given a pie recipe that needed to be scaled up to serve more guests than the recipe called for. Students had to make the mathematical conversions and then bake a larger pie. The pies weren’t ready to eat at printing time, but they smelled delicious.

Community Project

The Community Project is now kicking into high gear. We have 176 students grouped by the community need that they chose to investigate and act on. We have 9 groups beginning projects on the following topics: helping animals, helping the homeless, addressing global warming, promoting physical fitness, painting murals among others. As usual, the most popular topic is helping animals, but this is not just putting on a bake sale to help lost dogs and cats, but also raising awareness about endangered species. Our 8th graders are putting ideas into action to give back.



Service Learning

The Jefferson Environmental Club, started by 7th graders Lincoln Eberly and Jason Spitzak, hosted its first bake sale to raise money to plant trees on Friday, November 22. Students in the environmental club have meetings every Thursday. They have hosted head of EcoArlington, Ms. Hodges, and Ms. Boggan. They are reading about the climate crisis and ready to take action. These actions consist not only of planting trees, but also writing letters to the General Assembly to ask Virginia to follow Arlington’s lead in setting a goal of 100 percent renewable energy by 2050.



Jefferson in the community

Every Jefferson student has had the opportunity to attend a grade-level field trip to experience real-world learning. On October 24, our 7th graders went to the Smithsonian American and Natural history museums. On November 1, our 6th graders went to a farm to learn about life science. And On November 4, our 8th graders visited 9 different colleges in order for them to consider their long-term education.



Upcoming dates/Service needs

- Every Tuesday at 5pm volunteering at Phoenix Bikes to repair bikes, 909 S. Dinwiddie St ([full details here](#))
- Every Wednesday at 6:30pm volunteering at AFAC to bag chicken, 2708 S. Nelson St, ([full details here](#))
- Every Thursday join Mr. Malinosky for the Jefferson Environmental Club in room 264 right after school
- 8th graders finalize Community Project Goal.