

# PAMS GIFTED PROGRAM NEWSLETTER



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Princess Anne Middle School  
2509 Seaboard Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23456

## How Can We Motivate Gifted Students Who “Just Don’t Care”?

How do we reach our gifted students who expect success but are reluctant to put in the effort to attain it? “Fast and easy’ has replaced ‘work and earn’ as a motto that guides too many of our youth,” claims Allen N. Mendler, author of *Motivating Students Who Don’t Care*. Mendler puts forth that students often feel as though they

should be entertained and that students “are missing the idea that it is their responsibility to learn information, practice material, and attend school.”

So, what do we “do” with high-ability students who just won’t “do”? Mendler has some suggestions for educators which I think can also be applicable to us



parents of gifted learners.

First of all, let’s look at a definition of motivation—a

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## Perfectionism: PAMS Parent Lunch Bunch Topic for January

Please join PAMS Gifted Resource Teacher Mrs. Peterson and other parents in the PAMS Library on **January 24, 2012**, from 11:30 AM-12:30 PM for a Lunch Bunch workshop on Perfectionism.

The workshop will focus on perfectionism in children: the condition in which a person focuses on achieving high goals; it may be healthy or

unhealthy. We will examine the different “Perfectionist Personas”; perfectionistic behaviors; the myths of perfectionism; and ways to help children combat perfectionistic tendencies that inhibit their ability to grow.

If you will be attending, please RSVP your intention by email to Mrs. Peterson by January 20,



2012, so enough materials can be prepared.

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### Special points of interest:

- Applications for Kemps Landing Magnet School, ODC Dance Program, and the Middle School Gifted Art Program at Virginia Beach Middle School are due to Mrs. Peterson, PAMS GRT, by February 1, 2012. No exceptions.
- Applications for high school academy and MYP at Plaza Middle School are due to PAMS Guidance by February 1, 2012. No exceptions.

## Motivation, cont. from page 1

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*feeling of interest, commitment, or enthusiasm that influences somebody to want to do something; the act of giving somebody a reason or incentive to do something.*

Motivation is NOT about self-esteem. Rather, high self-esteem is an end-product that comes from successfully completing challenging tasks. Self-efficacy, self-confidence, is a much stronger motivator for success than self-esteem.

Motivation to learn most often occurs when students feel like they belong, are competent, and have a say in what happens to them. Learning requires risk-taking, so students need to feel safe to fail and learn from their mistakes. When the pressure is on to always succeed, rather than explore, try, ask for help, and attempt again, students learn to be unmotivated as a way to “stay safe”. *If I don't try, I can't fail.*

Lack of motivation can be a protective mechanism; Mendler suggests that many students who give up are saving face; are “covering their concerns about being perceived as stupid.” Other students find power and control in their refusals to work.

Here are Mendler's five key processes that adults can use to inspire and reinforce, plus some suggestions from Mrs.

Peterson to consider:

### Emphasize Effort—

Successful learners generally believe that their effort is the most important reason in attaining their goals. Mendler echoes Dr. Carol Dweck's research on mindset when he says, “Most students who present themselves unfavorably...through their lack of motivation..are trying to conceal their concerns about academic or performance inadequacy. In a nutshell, they simply do not see themselves as capable and usually attribute success to ability rather than effort.”



Parent strategies:

- Encourage your child to seek extra help in classes that are challenging. Teachers are very willing to assist students who need extra practice—sometimes all that is needed is one or two sessions to build confidence.

- For long-term tutoring, talk with Ms. Hollingsworth, PAMS School Improvement Specialist, about all the tutoring opportunities we have at PAMS. National Junior Honor Society students are also eager to help.
- Focus and build on small successes. Identify behaviors that you want your child to show more frequently. Praise your child's efforts to improve—it may take awhile for the grades and attitude to get better. Often the sincere recognition that you have noticed increased effort and positivity toward a challenging subject can be motivating for the child.
- Check out Carol Dweck's book *Mindset*. It is available at the local library and bookstores; or borrow a copy from the Gifted Resource Room.

### Creating Hope—

Students who do not believe they will be successful are generally the least motivated students of all. When a challenge is too easy or too difficult, students will either tune out or avoid. When challenge matches ability, the conditions are right for students to participate with enthusiasm.

Parent strategies:

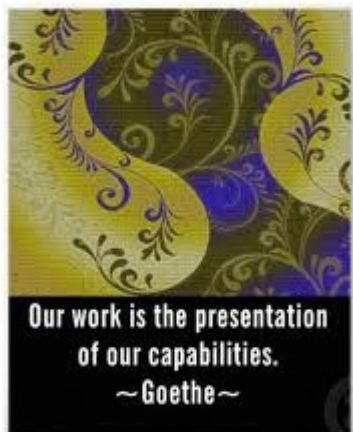
- Be realistic about your child's abilities. If he is not

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## Motivation, cont. from page 2

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yet ready for the advanced level mathematics classes or the high school level foreign language class because he does not yet have the necessary content knowledge or skills or maturity, thoughtfully consider what the appropriate placement would be. Listen to the teachers who are experts; engage them in a discussion with an open mind. Being cognitively ready and mature enough for extremely challenging and rigorous course material is vital to empowering a child to feel like he belongs in the class and will influence his motivation to put in the necessary effort to be successful.



- Help your child develop academic goals that go beyond “I want to get an A”. “*I will improve my vocabulary by learning a new word each week,*” and “*I will learn how*

*to find the area of triangles,*” are more concrete. Have your child articulate what she needs to do to reach the goal with concrete behaviors. Ideally, these goals should be measurable and observable, such as “I want to improve my reading comprehension, so *I will work with the librarian to find books on or just above my reading level. I will read an extra thirty minutes at night before bed.*”

- Help your child get and stay organized. Mendler states, “When students are prepared for learning with proper supplies and can anticipate upcoming activities, their chances for success dramatically improve.” While it is the child’s responsibility to control her belongings, a student who has not learned organization skills (because she didn’t need them in elementary school or because she knows that a parent will rescue her and bring her the homework left on the table), a parent may have to step in and help the child develop an organization system that makes sense to the child—the less complicated, the better.
- Hope is created and sustained in environments that emphasize success. How positive are you about the subject your child is struggling with? If you tell your child, “I was never good at

math. I still hate it and can’t do it,” you are not creating hope for your child that she will master solving two-step equations. Ever.

- As Mary Poppins said, “A spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down.” Sandwich a criticism or suggestion of improvement with positive comments of something that is worthy of being noticed. Faith that one can improve helps build more

i’m not telling you it is going to be easy, i’m telling you it’s going to be worth it.

hope.

### Respecting power—

In chapter six of his book, Mendler says, “The beliefs that we have about our own competence, autonomy, and power influence our motivation. People want desperately to be respected and empowered and will often resort to destructive methods when more reasonable pathways are blocked or perceived as unavailable...Whether for competence, autonomy, or influence, poor work or refus-

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als to participate are protective mechanisms that must be respected and challenged in order to help students make better choices."



#### Parent Strategies:

- While your child's behavior is frustrating, do not give up.
- Find what is positive about the child's behavior and comment on it. Does your child attend school every-day? His need for power and control may prevent him from demonstrating his knowledge in the way we expect. Hence, he may not turn in assignments, bring books to class, or engage in class discussions. Start with the positive and then work toward challenging the refusals respectfully.
- Involve your child in developing procedures, rules, and consequences for completion of work. Sometimes too much rigidity backfires. Think about the

people who have to give you directions at work. How do you want expectations or requirements conveyed to you?

- Defer to student power. Mendler suggests this simple method to gain compliance. Let the child know what you want by letting her know that she has the power to do what you ask. "Madison, we both know that you have the power to *(fill in the blank with an action)*. Thanks for using it." Thanking a child for doing the right thing before she has actually done it can be a successful method to gain cooperation.

#### Building Relationships—

Sometimes work is just not fun. Learning the conversions of fractions, decimals, and per cents may not be the highlight of one's existence because it is hard, and a child may not "see" how knowing these by rote will make his life easier or more interesting—yet. Some of the students groan (jokingly, I hope) when they know I will be working with them—"Oh no, it's the lady who makes my brain hurt." They expect to be challenged, but we usually do just fine because I try to be honest and genuine in my approach to the students. "Yes, the work will be hard, but I know you can do it. I'm here to help you, just not do it for you."

#### Parent Strategies:

- Emphasize and affirm to your child that she is more

important than what she does.

- Send notes to your child asking for what you want out of her or showing appreciation for the effort to change a behavior. As a parent I have used this with both my elementary and high school children, especially when they are too emotional to listen.
- Offer genuine compliments. Children can sniff out false praise in an instant.
- Share with your child (appropriate) challenges that you face at work—meeting deadlines, staying focused when you're stressed, understanding unclear directions, staying calm with difficult clients or bosses. Do not "dump" on your child, but let him see that learning how to meet challenges now will pay off in the future. He will also see that being an adult is



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not a piece of cake either!

- Spend time communicating with your child about anything other than school work.

### Expressing Enthusiasm—

The way in which we teachers convey our subject matter strongly influences how motivated our students are to learn the information. How enthusiastic are you about hearing what your child is learning?

- Share your love of the subject with your child. My kids rolled their eyes when it was Mom's turn to plan a vacation. "Uh-oh—we're going to visit historical places. Groan." Now that they are older, they appreciate having been dragged kicking and screaming to places like Chicago, NYC, Gettysburg, and Plymouth, MA.

- Be a lifelong learner yourself. Read the newspaper in front of your children. Take an online class and tell them about what you're learning. Talk about training that you're receiving at work. It's okay to share with your children if you feel uncertainty, insecurity, and excitement for learning something new. Realize that this is what we expect from our students everyday at school.



Mendler says, "Our ongoing challenge is to find ways of re-connecting with the natural learner that exists in each of us so that students reawaken with excitement and enthusiasm to the process of learning." We adults can assist our academically unmotivated students by having high expectations for them; offering unwavering support even when they have given up on themselves; showing enthusiasm for new learning; respecting the children for who they are; and remembering that change takes time, even for gifted students.

Sources:

Dweck, C.S. (2006). *Mindset—the new psychology of success*. New York: Random House.

Mendler, A.N. (2000). *Motivating students who don't care*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.

## Edmodo.com connects with PAMS Cluster Classes



As part of our ongoing efforts to purposefully integrate technology into instruction and learning, many teachers have begun using an online tool called Edmodo.com. Edmodo is an educational social networking site created exclusively for education. It is similar to Facebook, **but contains NO apps, games, or advertisements.**

Only those individuals whom a teacher invites may join the class group, and the teacher is the sole person responsible for the content. Edmodo is not meant for sharing personal information but

for communicating information about assignments and posting interesting information beyond what can be shared in the classroom.

Expectations:

- Edmodo is intended for educationally enriching purposes only. Any inappropriate content will be deleted. If warranted, the student will be allowed "Read-Only" permission or may be removed from the group and will be given alternate assignments until s/he can

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## Edmodo.com, continued

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prove that the content s/he posts is appropriate for the class's learning needs. Referral for appropriate disciplinary measures with building administrators may be made for students posting inappropriate content.

- Assignments can be posted by the teachers, and students have the ability to submit work to the teacher through Edmodo. Feedback can be provided by the teacher for this work, including a grade.
- Students are encouraged to post interesting findings, questions, etc. to the group, use the site to obtain feedback from the teacher on works in progress, ask questions about assignments, and respond to the teacher's and each other's postings, etc.
- Parents can be issued a Parent Code which will allow them to see what their own child posts on the website. They cannot view other students' postings, assignments, or grades. Please contact your child's teacher for your specific parent code for your child's class group(s) in Edmodo.
- There is a district-wide policy regarding use of social networking sites for educational purposes. These guidelines will be expected to be followed by the students, as well as the teachers. The student should understand that

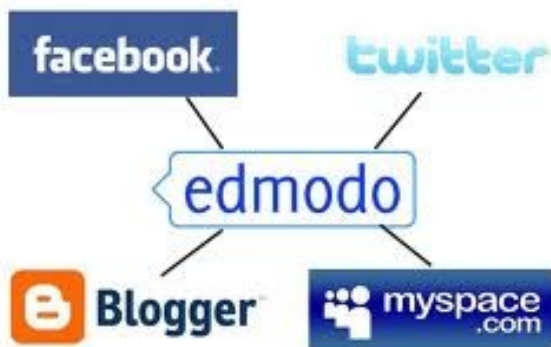
certain abuse of these guidelines will be addressed through the Code of Conduct.

Highlights of Edmodo.com:

- Edmodo is extremely safe as it is controlled by the teacher. Only individuals in the class receive the group code. A teacher may change the group code if needed and will delete any non-student from access.
- There are no "back-channel" communications. Students cannot "friend" others or IM other students; information is either sent directly to the teacher or posted on the board for the whole class to see.
- Students can earn "badges" for participation, posting interesting questions, taking part in discussions, etc.
- Students can be "green" by turning in their assignments electronically. Just think! Fewer misplaced assignments—and students (and parents) can see immediately whether they have any late assignments!
- Teachers can post quizzes for assessment purposes.
- Students can respond to polls and continue classroom content conversations to keep the learning going outside of the classroom walls.

Directions for obtaining your Parent Code for Edmodo:

1. If your child's teacher has created an Edmodo account for her/his class, your child needs have an Edmodo account (free) and become a member of the teacher's group.
2. Once your child is a member of the teacher's group, you may contact your child's teacher to obtain your code.
3. To create your account, go to: [www.vbschools.edmodo.com](http://www.vbschools.edmodo.com).



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- Click on **Parent Sign Up (requires Parent Code)**.
- In dialog box, insert **Parent Code** (it is case sensitive).
- Identify relationship to student.
- Create a Username and Password.
- Insert email, parent first name and last name.
- Review Edmodo's terms of service.
- Click Sign Up.

If you have any concerns or questions about your child's use of Edmodo, please contact our Computer Resource Specialists, Mr. Al Hardin or Mr. Jeff Noss, or your child's teachers.

## Kudos to our Gifted Students Involved in PAMS Activities

Congratulations to students in the gifted program who are involved in activities outside the classroom!

### Academic Challenge:

Gabrielle A; Andrew B; Abigail B; Ryan M; Mack M; Trevor S; Adam S; Nick V



### All-District Band:

Andrea F; Rachel H; Alberto S; Adam Y; Dillon S; Sianna H; Jack K; Kasey B



*Alternate for All-District Band:*  
Amanda G

### Junior District Orchestra:

Audrey S; Simona G; Noelle V; Quinn C; Bridgette S



### Boys' Basketball:



Ben J;  
Brian K;  
Justin G

### All-City Band 7th Grade:

Andrew B; Patrick G; Andrea F; Jack K; Rachel H; Dillon S



### All City Band 6th Grade:

Nicholas S; Sydney K

### PAMS-PAES Mentoring Program:

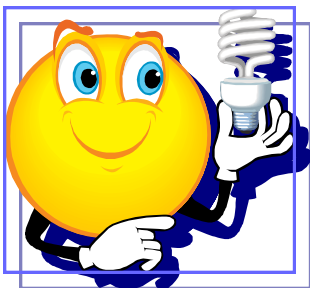
Lauren A; Amanda G; Audrey S; Haley S; Noelle V; Matt A; Amanda B; Chloe D; Meghan D; Simona G; Sianna H; Ben J; Brian K; Erin M; Delaney M; Ryan M; Brittany S; Jacob S; Jessie W; Lauren Z

### Girls' Basketball:

Savannah M; Elissa C; Casey C; Jaya W

## Prowlin' Around the Cluster Classrooms

Meet Mr. Dissonance—a good friend of Mrs. Peterson when she visits cluster classes. Mr. Dissonance provides students the opportunity to intellectually struggle through some murkiness as they problem-solve. As students work their way through rigorous challenges where “the” answer is not obvious, problem-solving and critical thinking skills—and brain cells—get a work out.



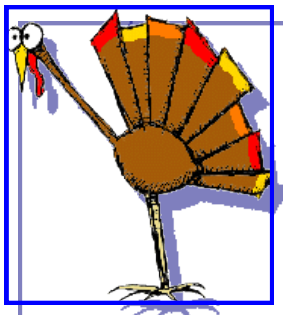
about turkey production and sales in the United States and were tasked with using their reasoning skills and equation-writing talents to solve problems. Students had to pull forward past knowledge and apply problem-solving skills in order to come up with the correct answers. It was enjoyable to not only coach the students through the dissonance of the assignment, but also to see the self-confidence grow as they figured out the answers on their own.

**Mrs. Morgan's** eighth grade Geometry Honors students (Spartans) met with Mrs. Peterson for a performance task in which they worked within the frame of the discipline of an urban planner. Given “city codes” for a neighborhood re-development, students were required to plot streets and design spaces using their knowledge of angles. As effective communication is a necessary skill for urban planners, students had



to write a reflection in which they discussed their reasoning for placing certain buildings where they did and their approach to the complex problem. Several students now think that urban planning may be a career choice to explore further!

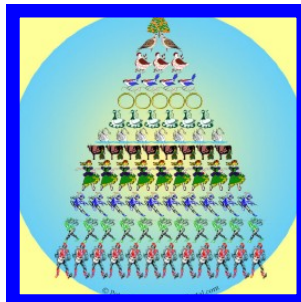
**Mrs. Cole's** Algebra Honors students (Spartans) also worked with Mrs. Peterson on a real “turkey” of a performance task. Students were given facts and figures



**Mrs. Johnson's** sixth grade Pre-Algebra students (Sunsations) had a date with Mr. Dissonance, too, and some fraction conversions as well. Students were given a square divided into thirds, fourths, fifths—and using Greatest Common Factors and Least Common Multiples—students had to calculate the area of various sections of the square. This performance task truly gave the teachers insight into which students deeply understand fractions and what they represent.

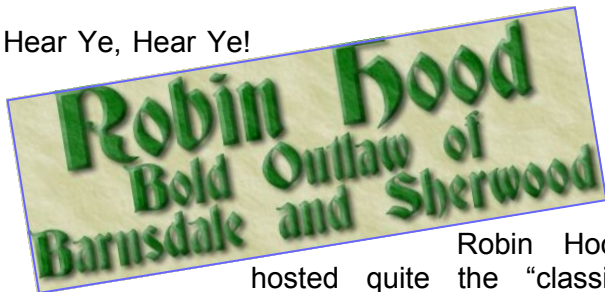


**Mrs. Zell's** seventh grade Math 7 Pre-Algebra students also have been working with performance tasks each month. Before the winter holidays, Mrs. Zell gave the students the “12 Days of Christmas” problem in which the students needed to determine how many total gifts were given as well as devise a workable equation that could be used to quickly solve the problem. Stu-



dents were also given the freedom of choice for the presentation of their solutions and reflections. Some students worked with Prezi.com—and figured out on their own how to collaborate on-line from different computers. **Mrs. Hallock** was so impressed with what she saw as she walked through the library while the students were working that she brought the Eighth Grade Math PLC teachers to observe the collaboration and level of thinking exhibited by the students!

Hear Ye, Hear Ye!



Robin Hood hosted quite the “classic” shin-dig in Sherwood Forest, and **Mrs. Solheim’s** Jaguars and **Mrs. Dean’s** Wildcats in seventh grade were tasked with creating lyrics to songs that would tell all about the high jinks and escapades of the various guests. However, the teachers and Mrs. Peterson added some complexity for their tales by having students pull forward their knowledge of the other guests who do not make Sherwood Forest and Nottinghamshire their typical hang-out: mythological gods and goddesses from first quarter’s study of Greek mythology and literary characters such as Merlin, King Arthur, and the Loathly Lady from the short stories of this unit. Set to the tunes of well-known songs (e.g. *Frosty the Snowman*, *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*), our seventh grade balladeers retold the events of the party with a “morning after” perspective. Process pieces included character analysis; directed compare-contrast exercises; and the use of Inspiration for brainstorming. Students turned in their work through Edmodo.com for feedback and assessment.



“You’re a mean one, Mr. Grinch!” Students in **Mrs. Chasse’s** Tropics and **Mrs. DeWitt’s** Sunsatons studied the transformation of Scrooge’s character in Charles Dickens’s *A Christmas Carol* by using graphic organizers based on Sandra Kaplan’s Convergence



Content Imperative. Students also have been introduced to and are practicing correctly citing passages taken from text as supports for their points. To extend students’ work in all of these areas, Mrs. Peterson met with the English classes to have students apply their skills to the holiday favorite, “How the Grinch Stole Christmas” by Dr. Seuss. Students used various strategies to develop an understanding of change/transformations and why change occurs. Throughout their collaborative work, students also practiced communication skills—active listening and clear conversations—so their partners could expand upon their information as needed. Students and Mrs. Peterson choral read (and sang) the Grinch poem, stopping periodically to locate specific details which supported the transformation of the Grinch. Students then wrote a diamante poem incorporating their knowledge of citations, character traits and actions, “big ideas” about change, and precise word choice to show the transformation of the Old Grinch into the New Grinch. Students made good use of Edmodo.com to post their poems for feedback from Mrs. Peterson and their classmates before submitting them for a final grade from their English teacher.



**Mrs. George’s** and **Mrs. Cash’s** English students (Spartans) formed acting companies to present a play version of *The Diary of Anne Frank*. As the students worked on their

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scenes, they were to pay special attention to the conflict between characters and how perspective and motivation can create tension. Mrs. George's students created a Two-Voice Poem to show their understanding of how the conflict was created by point-of-view. Students analyzed the perspectives of two (or three!) characters from the Anne Frank scene, and within their poems, the students made apparent the conflict by choosing precise words to show an awareness of denotation and connotation. Special attention was to be paid to voice, tone, and validity of the characters' viewpoints on the issue. Again, students used Edmodo.com to turn in their assignments for Mrs. Peterson to assess.

## Showing Off Student Work!

Two-Voice Poem	Lauren A.
<b>Mrs. Frank</b>	<b>Anne</b>
I just want Anne to behave!	I wish my mother would stop treating me like a child!
I know hiding is hard for her, and I want her to show her my love and affection, but she keeps pushing me away!	My mother is unbearable! I wish she had never come. Every night she tries to get closer to me and it just does not seem right.
When she has nightmares, she won't let calm her down, she only asks for her father.	I only love my father. He is always calm and understanding.
I feel as if she hates me and wishes for me to be gone. I just want her to make her feel as if she is loved. There is only so much a mother can do at a time like this. Trying to provide for everyone is difficult.	I have to be grateful that she is here and safe, but I want nothing to do with her. It is hard with eight people in a cramped attic and various personalities, but she just adds to the commotion!
Margot is quiet and understands the way I feel, if only Anne could do the same.	Everyone keeps comparing me to Margot; it makes me so angry I could just scream!
I guess Margot was right, it must be a phase.	If only this was just a phase and mother would go back to treating me like an adult!
I just want the war to be over as soon as possible.	I miss my old life with my friends and having a room all to myself at night.

Two Voice Poem	By Jacob S.
<b>Peter</b>	<b>Anne</b>
Hiding from society isn't that much of a change because I'm used to being on my own.	I miss spending time with all my friends and going to school with everybody.
Why can't you just be calm and quiet like the rest of us, Anne?	Doesn't anyone know how to have fun around here?
If you don't stop, you are going to get us caught and killed.	What is the use of living if all we can do is hide during the day?
Anne, why are you so annoying?	Peter, why are you so shy?
We're hiding; why are you acting like this is a good thing?	I'm just going to think of it as a different summer boarding house.
I can't believe that I can't even get water or use the water closet during the day.	Not making noise can get really boring and I'm sick of it.
I miss my old life.	I miss being able to do fun things with my life.
This is going to be a hard life to get used to!	

## Robin Hood and The Merry Olde Fair

by Nicolas L.

Deep inside Old Sherwood  
There lived a man  
And his merry band,  
Stole from the rich,  
Gave to the poor,  
And Robin Hood was his name.

One he held a party,  
Inside his home  
Deep in Sherwood,  
All were invited,  
From the Sheriff to the Gods,  
They all came  
And the party got going.

Things got started  
With spicy conversation,  
Aphrodite and the Loathly Lady,  
Had a talk about beauty  
Then the lady soon transformed,  
From an ugly beast to a true  
beauty  
Aphrodite got jealous,  
And left the party without a  
word.

Food was plenty at the party;  
From venison to jugs of ale,  
Food was plenty,  
Ran out of meat,  
So Merlin with his magic  
He conjured up a giant deer,  
With his mighty skill,

Robin hit the deer in the heart  
And he tumbled to the ground.  
All were having fun,  
The wine was so great,  
That Dionysus just got crazy  
Conjured up a great vine,  
So large it blocked everyone  
And the Sheriff arrested him.

Deep inside Old Sherwood  
There lived a man  
And his merry band,  
Stole from the rich,  
Gave to the poor,  
And Robin Hood was his name.

Meanwhile at the fighting area,  
Zeus and Little John were going to  
fight.

When they heard the bell,  
A battle for the ages was fought  
there.  
Little John's skill against Zeus's  
might,  
In the end Zeus was victorious,  
But luckily,  
John's skill allowed him to live.

Deep inside Old Sherwood  
There lived a man  
And his merry band,  
Stole from the rich,  
Gave to the poor,

And Robin Hood was his  
name.

Soon after the party got  
really slow,  
People just couldn't get  
down and low  
So they started to leave.  
The lady then turned  
back,  
Into a beast ugly as a big  
fat cow.  
So Little John, Zeus, the  
Sheriff,  
King Arthur, the Loathly  
Lady, Dionysus,  
Merlin and everyone else.  
Said goodbye and left.

Deep inside Old Sher-  
wood  
There lived a man  
And his merry band,  
Stole from the rich,  
Gave to the poor,  
And Robin Hood was his  
name  
And Robin Hood was his  
name.



## Robin and his Jolly Faire

By: Katie B.

(To “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer”)

You know Zeus and Hera,  
And Little John and Robin,  
Dionysus, and King Arthur,  
And the Sheriff, and Merlin.  
But do you know  
About Robin’s old fair yesterday?

Well, Hera and Zeus kept fighting,  
(Fighting)  
Until the very next day’s dawn.  
(Wooh!)  
And I forgot to mention,  
(Mention)  
Hera fell in love with Little John.  
(AWWWW)  
The Sheriff kept hiding from Robin,  
(Robin)  
Because he was really scared.  
(Like a baby!)

And during the archery contest,  
(Contest)  
Robin was very prepared.  
(He was ready!)

Then King Arthur fought with Zeus,  
For power over the land.  
(Mine! Mine! Mine!)  
Neither of them won the match,  
So they both joined Robin’s band.  
Dionysus and Merlin got drunk,  
(Drunk)  
And best friends, they became.  
(Yay!)  
We can’t wait ‘till the next faire,  
(Next faire)  
I will never be the same.  
(Never!)

## The Merry Faire of Sherwood

by Sean B

performed to the tune of “Frosty the Snowman”

The faire in the forest was a notable  
event;  
Robin, Zeus, Sir Ector, and  
Dionysus all went.  
The guest list is longer—  
Little John and Arthur were there  
For they were eager to play cudgel  
and watch the archery affair.

There must have been some sabotage  
involved in the cudgel match,  
Because when Arthur began to joust  
he fell right onto the dirt patch.

Dionysus was behind this—  
He had made Arthur drunk.  
Little John had noticed and challenged  
the god,  
And they started with a big ‘clunk.’

Snappety snap snap,  
Snappety snap snap,  
Everybody danced.  
Snappety snap snap,  
Snappety snap snap,  
Even the trees were entranced.

The match was incredible,  
But no one was ahead,  
Until Dionysus stumbled and  
Little John rapped him on the head.

Little John was the winner,  
But the night was not yet out.  
The archers were preparing to try  
to hit the little clout.

Sir Ector’s shots didn’t hit the  
mark  
That he badly desired.  
But Zeus’s arrows flew straight  
and swift  
Like lightning as they were fired.

Then Robin stepped up  
And he let his arrows loose.  
They hit the target right  
In the center,  
And he actually beat Zeus!

Snappety snap snap,  
Snappety snap snap,  
Everybody cheered.  
Snappety snap snap,  
Snappety snap snap,  
Except Zeus who disappeared.

Rutvi P

Old Grinch

“...His heart was two sizes too small.”

“There’s one thing I hate, all the noise, noise, noise!”

Fibbing, Creeping, Swiping, Hating

When he sees that the Whos are happy without presents and wonders if Christmas means more.

**I think that change can be positive or negative and can start with any conflict.**

When he sees that the Whos are happy without presents and wonders if Christmas means more.

Giving, Helping, Lending, Caring

“Maybe Christmas... doesn’t come from a store, perhaps, it means a bit more.”

“His heart grew three sizes that day.”

New Grinch

Sarah S.

**Old Grinch**

"King of sinful sots"

"Pooh-pooh to the Whos!"

Stealing, lying, slinking, disgusting

The Grinch thought and realized the true meaning of Christmas

Influenced by positive emotions

The Grinch thought and realized the true meaning of Christmas

Giving, trumpeting, feasting, smiling

"Who! Who!" "Welcome Christmas!"

"Heart grew three sizes"

Jake B.

**Old Grinch**

“Stink, Stank, Stunk”

“And they’ll sing! And they’ll sing!... ”

Hating, lying, fibbing, disheartening

When the singing sound rises over the mountain

His heart grew three sizes that day

When the singing sound rises over the mountain

Giving, loving, maturing, caring

“...it came without packages, boxes, and bags”

“...thought, that Christmas does not come from a store.”

**New Grinch**

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MIDDLE SCHOOL**

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**I'm not weird!**

**I'm gifted!**

Happy New Year! I always love January—a time to wipe the slate clean and dream big! What can I accomplish this year? How can I make my hopes a reality? What can I do to help my students reach their goals? With opportunities comes the necessity for change which can lead to growth.

In the Peterson household, we experienced change over winter break as our college-age son came home from his first semester at UVA. Mom had to deal with the scraggly beard on the once clean-cut handsome face and a long-haired young man now used to his independence. Mike had some adapting to do such as returning to a family curfew, having a reasonable “rise-and-shine” time, and sharing the bandwidth with the rest of the family.

Our older daughter heard from all of her colleges—only one told her “no,” but all the others said “yes” and offered her scholarship money! So now Rachel has to make the decisions about how cold during the winter she wants to be (DC, OH, Chicago, or Buffalo) and how poor she intends to make her parents! She also has to deal with the disappointment of not having the chance of living in NYC for college and the realization that a couple of those choices made in freshman and sophomore years may have been the deciding factors. (Oh, could Mom have been right about studying and meeting deadlines? Nah.) Change can be a result of our actions and inactions. It was painful as parents to see her struggle with disappointment, but we know that ultimately it will make her stronger and is a useful life lesson.

Which leads me to these questions—how have you allowed your child to struggle and deal with disappointment or change? Have you swooped in and tried to “rescue” him? Dismissed his feelings? Tried to control the situation when he could have done so himself? Let him figure it out on his own?

Learning from struggle is crucial for growth. Why not make your own 2012 resolution to support your child’s growth this year by allowing him to experience the consequences of his behaviors? Am I advocating total laissez-faire parental oversight? Absolutely not—but identify appropriate times when you allow your child, without parental interference, to “reap what he sowed”—*detention for poor behavioral choices in class, a zero for a forgotten homework assignment on the kitchen table, the anxiety from procrastinating on a project*—and then work with him to learn from these errors. As an educator and a parent, I can tell you that experience is a great teacher—for child and adult alike.

Best wishes for a fulfilling 2012—I am so glad to be able to share new adventures and changes with your gifted student this year.

*Cathy Peterson*

PAMS Gifted Resource Teacher