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University Elementary

TB Monthly



PYP in Action

PYP in Action: International Mindedness

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International mindedness, the understanding that we are all connected to the global community, is central to the IB education mission. University has always been a “Naturally Global” school. We learn about cultures, traditions and perspectives of our students and our neighbors around the world.

When designing units of inquiry, teachers enhance the subject matter by inquiring into a broad global focus. Students can compare, contrast, and understand the central idea in a new light.

Here are a few examples from around our school:

- K Where We Are in Place and Time: *Humans rely on others for food production.* Mapping global foods helps students to understand what happens before food arrives at the grocery store.
- 1st How We Organize Ourselves: *Groups share resources.* Students learn about homes from around the world and how humans use the materials available to create shelter.
- 2nd How the World Works: *Weather affects the way we live.* We compare worldwide weather and how weather affects travel.

- 4th Who We Are: *Humans are all unique, bringing different talents and gifts to the world.* Students read biographies of people from around the world (past and present) and identify reasons that they inspire us.

Our students' ability to change focus between local and global will help them to be active citizens in a community in order to create a better world.





Preschool

Our first inquiry unit this year is about **Who We Are**. It includes a line of inquiry about how our bodies work. The concepts of inside and outside and same and different are embedded into guiding questions presented by teachers. We have made portraits of the outside of our bodies. We are learning about how our brains and hearts work inside of our bodies. This section of our inquiry is also connected to *The Incredible Me Social Thinking* curriculum and the *Second Steps* curriculum. Everyone learns at their “just right” level. One student adds “out” to the list of ten words he knows. Another student shares facts about his brain. After creating a watercolor painting he says, “Brains help us move. This is what my brain looks like inside my head. It’s up here right behind my forehead.” We have already made several class books during the inquiry.

Kindergarten

How can we use our senses to explore the natural world? How is life affected when our senses are differently abled? These are some of the big questions kindergarteners are asking themselves during our first unit of inquiry, **Explore the World**.

We kicked off this unit by popping popcorn in the classroom. Student's senses went into overload, as they were able to see, smell, hear, touch, and finally taste the popcorn! This activity enabled kindergarteners to grasp what the five senses are. We have a planned visit with fire fighters and have been discussing the importance to trust your senses. Students understand that their senses can be used to help keep them safe and warn them if there is a problem.

We are currently using our senses to explore the natural world. Kindergarteners are learning about our schoolyard trees and how to record observations in science journals. We have many nature walks planned as signs of fall begin to happen!



First Grade

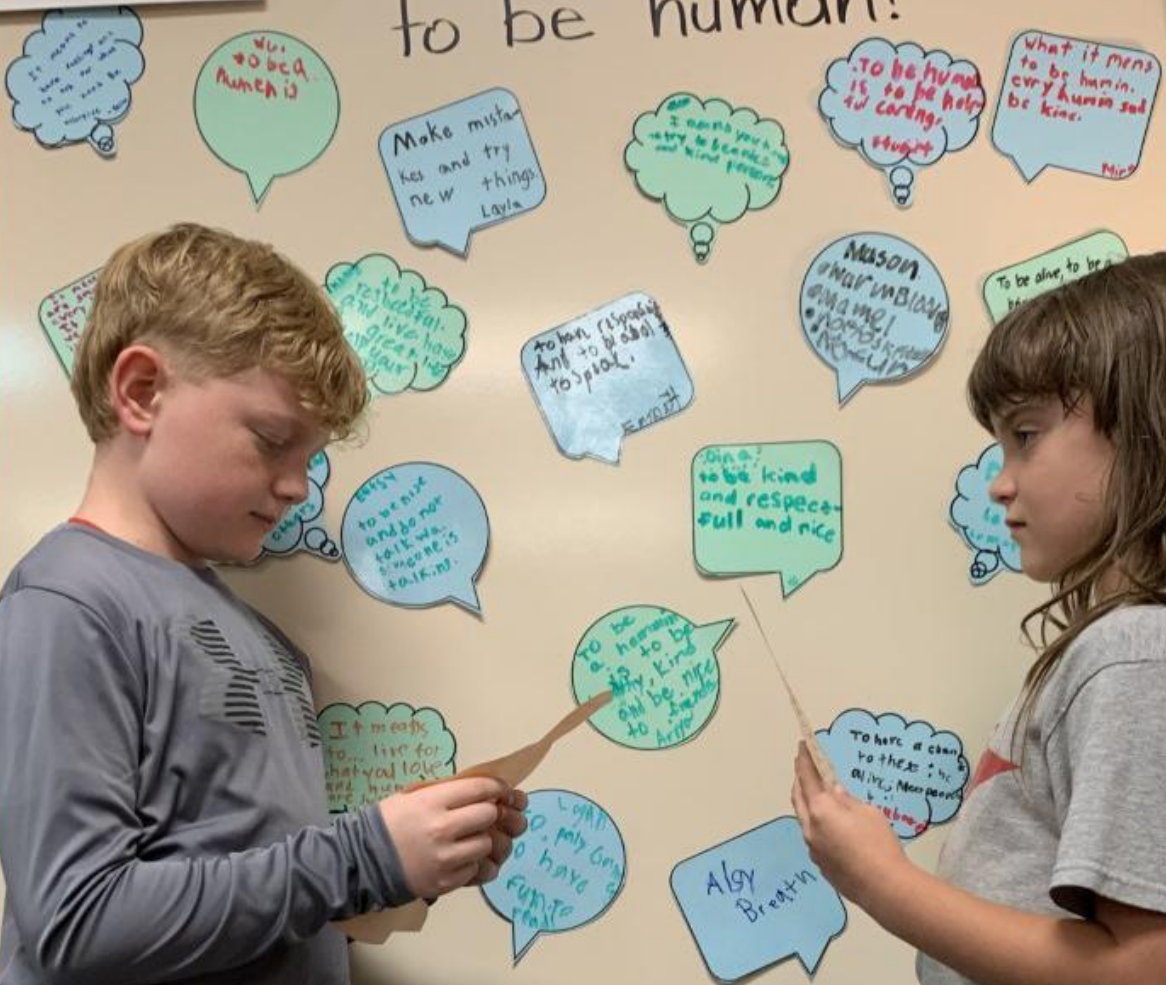
People make choices every day. Each choice has a consequence. First grade has been learning how to choose to **Do the Right Thing** and to **Treat People Right** inside and outside of the classroom. First grade discovered that good choices keep everyone safe, happy, and learning. First graders have also discussed how people make choices out in the community as well. These choices should work to make the community a better place to live. First grade will end the **Who We Are** unit with talking about healthy choices and choices to make while on the internet. This unit will end with first graders setting personal goals for their behavior at school, home, and in the community.



Second Grade

Things are going round and round in second grade! Our **Sharing the Planet** unit takes us into inquiries about all cycles found in nature and their interdependence. We begin with one of our favorites, the life cycle of a butterfly. We have enjoyed observing this, and more recently the Darkling Beetle up close and personal within our classrooms. Watching a caterpillar go through metamorphosis and emerging as a butterfly is beyond amazing! Discussions of plant life cycles conclude with cutting into pumpkins so we can dig out the seeds and—start all over again! We also dive further into other cycles such as: the seasons, the moon phases, day and night, etc. One way students can take action at home is by planting milkweed in their yard or garden to help aid the Monarch Butterfly population!

What does it mean to be human?



Third Grade

What does it mean it mean to be human? This is the question third graders will explore in our first IB transdisciplinary theme, **Who We Are**. Students will discover how we, as humans, can make a difference locally and globally by just one small act of kindness, that will ripple onward in the lives of many not seen. Students will continue to learn about individuals from around the world who took risks to insure freedoms and opportunities for humanity. At the conclusion of our unit, students will be inspired to be the change they wish to make in the world simply by making one ripple.



Fourth Grade

Fourth graders are wrapping our **Who We Are** Unit of study. We have looked at various aspects of how we are alike and different. Specific lessons on the brain, growth vs. fixed mindset, the 8 intelligences, and genetics have been covered. Students loved tracing genetic traits back through family lines as well as making their own DNA strands.

In addition, we are laying the foundation for Genius Hour in which students will be selecting topics that they are passionate about to study, create something, and present to the class. Digital citizenship and research skills are being taught before we delve into Genius Hour.

Finally, we are putting our problem solving skills to work in the murder mystery of Felix Navidad. After investigating the crime scene, studying the suspects, and performing scientific testing on the evidence, each class will determine who they think committed the crime. Overall, this unit has been loads of fun and full of learning for our 4th graders!

Fifth Grade

Fifth grade is exploring the IB Unit **Sharing the Planet** during which we are asking questions about what are our rights and responsibilities in the struggle to share finite resources with other people and other living things in our community and the world. We began with the question who is a hero, and what motivates people to do things for others. Fifth graders met some guest speakers such as **Bring Your Bag Bloomington**, to learn how we can create small actions into a big change to reduce plastic. We have explored through books, people in the past, and present who were, and are risk-takers in order to pursue dreams for creating a better world. We have looked at children our age and younger who have taken action whether it is by collecting backpacks, or food, or funds for rebuilding in disaster areas. Finally, we have created actions. We are taking action individually or collectively to improve our world. Students are collecting for various community agencies including New Hope, Shalom, the Animal Shelter, Boys and Girls Club, and Community Kitchen. Other students are presenting research they have discovered to raise awareness about climate change, girls and women's rights, water pollution, and endangered animals. Our goal is to have students become aware that they have a voice and that they are powerful to create positive change in our world.

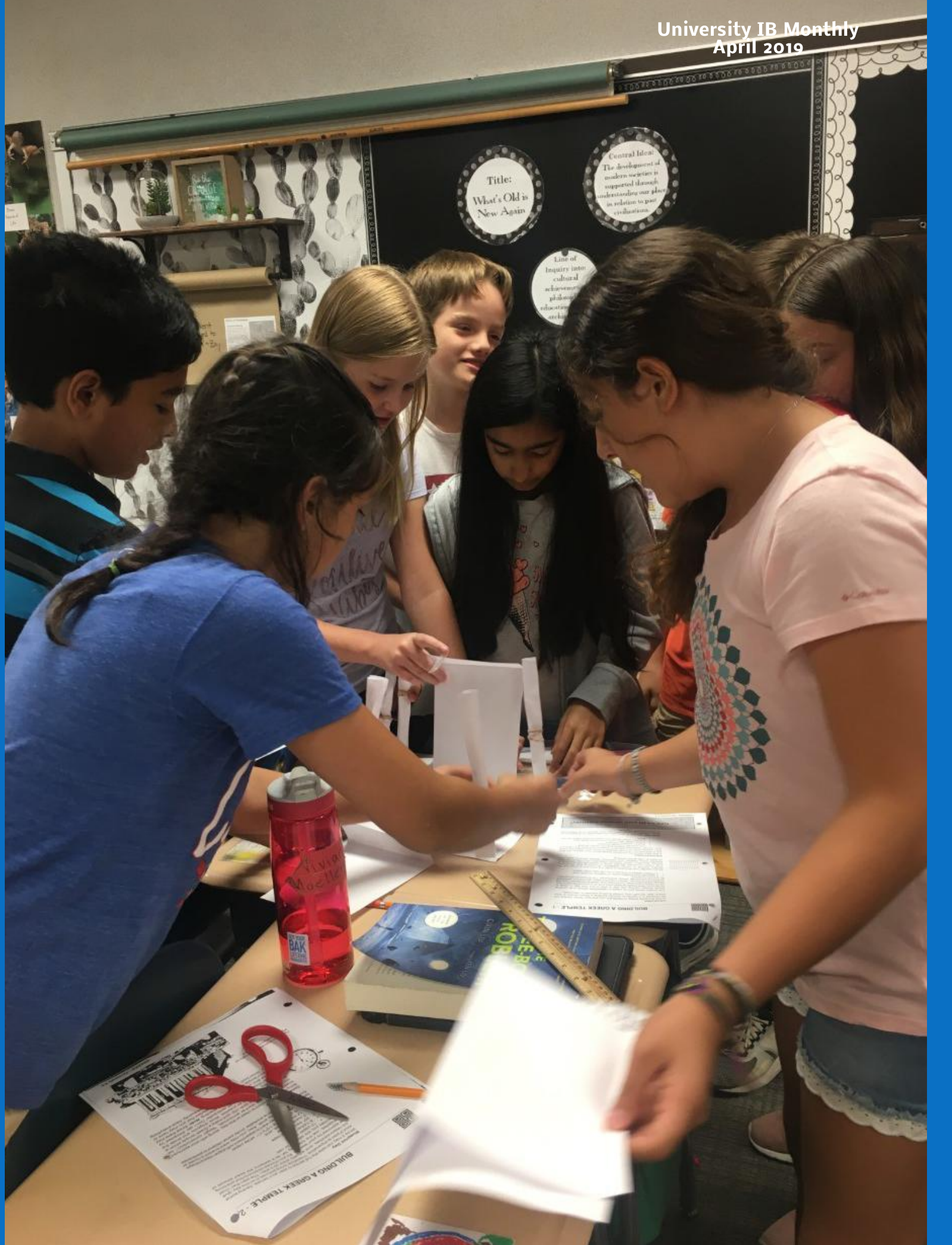




Sixth Grade

Sixth grade students have embarked on a study within the IB transdisciplinary theme, **Where We Are in Place and Time**, and they are searching to better understand how the development of modern societies is supported through understanding our place in relation to past civilizations. In order to recognize and appreciate the influence other cultures have had on modern America, students are learning specifically about ancient Greek history and ancient Greek cultural universals such as family traditions, education, foods and resources, governmental agencies, forms of entertainment and more. As we continue to study the culture of the ancient Greeks, students will develop an understanding of the educational, governmental, and economic systems developed and used both then and now through debates in a Greek Assembly, role playing in a Greek Academy, and enactment of colonization and trade. In addition to studying aspects of ancient Greece through class lessons and simulated activities, students will collaboratively complete a small scale research project for an ancient civilization of their choice. Students will take what we have learned about various cultural universals of the ancient Greeks, and they will compare them to those of another ancient culture. Students will also look at how past civilizations have given rise to modern day systems and cultures. The purpose of this project is not only to expose students to cultural universals and connections between ancient civilizations and today, but it also serves as an introduction to larger research projects that we will conduct this year, such as our sixth grade capstone, the Exhibition Project.





Title:
What's Old is
New Again

Central Idea:
The development of
modern societies is
supported through
understanding our place
in relation to past
civilizations

Line of
Inquiry into
cultural
achievement
planning
education
architect

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10 Reasons

why the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP) is ideal for students to become active, lifelong learners

1



It encourages students to inquire

The PYP fosters natural curiosity and learning in creative, supportive and collaborative environments.

2



Understanding a complex and interdependent world

PYP students create meaning for themselves and build understanding through exploring real-world issues.

3



PYP students are confident communicators

PYP students learn to communicate in a variety of ways and in more than one language.

4



Learning how to learn

PYP students work collaboratively with teachers and other students to plan, present and assess their own learning.

5



It encourages international-mindedness

Collaboration and understanding of their own and other cultures are an important focus of the PYP — students learn how to be respectful and open-minded.

6



Seeing things from different perspectives

PYP students use critical and creative thinking to develop knowledge, understanding and skills within and across subject areas.

7



Students take action

PYP students believe they are able to grow and succeed. They make appropriate choices and take responsibility for their actions.

8



Thinking about issues

Creative learning gives students the agility and imagination to respond to new and unexpected challenges and opportunities in an increasingly globalized and uncertain world.

10



Caring and responsible citizens

Students can express ideas and opinions, and they can propose solutions that make a difference in their lives and the lives of others.

9



It involves the whole school learning community

Together we celebrate our common humanity and the belief that education can help to build a better and more peaceful world.