

THAWING GROWING Blooming

As another winter turns slowly, in frustrating fits and turns, to the bird-speckled joyfulness of spring we are reminded also that as people we too must find the courage of the crocuses to break through the last crust of ice. Over and over again in life we face the cold dark solitude of winter both real and metaphorical and in order to be truly happy we must be able to flourish through all the seasons of life. It is in change and growth that we are truly alive. Between who we were and who we will become lies choices we all must make for ourselves.

Rarely is this more important than in the high school years when students begin to blossom from the tender shoots of the elementary years into the hardy plants of adulthood. It is our job as a school to fertilize and cultivate the soil in which they grow, to train the vines, and prune when needed. But, just as in managing a garden, there is much we cannot do, there is waiting, and hoping. The growing must be done by the students, and the flower and fruit produced is their creation alone. As spring approaches, this issue shares some of our stories of thawing, growing, and blooming. As a school it is our mission to do as much as we can to ensure that each and everyone of our students grows into a healthy plant with roots that reach deep into the soil and branches that reach high toward the sun.



TRANSPLANTING SEEDLINGS

BY JACOB HUNDT

When I look back now from the perspective of my early thirties, easily the most transformative event in my life has been my involvement with the creation of the Youth Initiative High School. For a serious-minded 16 year old, filled with a barely expressible yet intense desire to carve some fresh mark upon the world, the experience of helping to shape an entirely new organization, flavored with more than a few drops of revolutionary elixir, was exhilarating beyond description. Even if the physical props consisted of second hand furniture, discarded public school math textbooks, and an ancient former public school building, there was, for me at least, a dramatic feeling that something – or even someone—palpably

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Jacob and Cadan pose with the inaugural class of the Aurora Waldorf School, Buffalo, NY

and undeniably new was being born into the world, a living, breathing, individual being with a personality and destiny all its own.

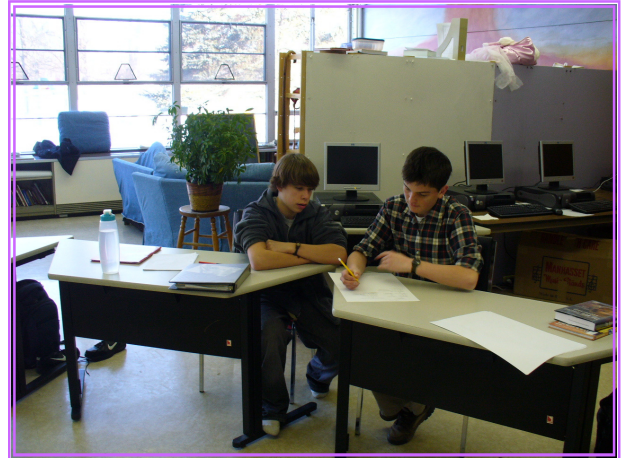
It was with great excitement, therefore, that I set out this winter to participate in the birth of yet another new school. During January and February, YIHS sophomore Cadan Cummings and I traveled to the area of Buffalo, New York, to the Aurora Waldorf School in the town of East Aurora. I had been invited there by Katie Andrews, a friend and fellow student in the Waldorf high school teacher-training program I have participated in over the past three summers. She is both a parent and a math teacher at the Aurora Waldorf School and this year she and a s m a l l

group of colleagues have taken the plunge and started a new 9th grade. The pioneer class this year is made up of seven bright-eyed students and much of the teaching and administration has been done by a number of parents, including Katie.

When I arrived in the single room that is the home of AWHs, there were no students to be seen. I was informed that they were all outside, playing in the wide, snow covered fields and woods surrounding the school, where a gentle shower of huge fluffy snowflakes was falling, a weather condition that will forever be associated with my memories of East Aurora. It turned out that the students were out with a guest teacher building a couple of large and complex igloos, and so my first impressions of this pioneer class were formed as they came inside one by one, red-cheeked, beaming, and soaked from head to toe with melting snow.

As in many Waldorf schools, the Aurora Waldorf School had spent many years with an active “high school study group,” in which parents and teachers would gather to read and to discuss the hows and the whys of taking the plunge into adolescence. Frequently, however, the fruits that these groups labor to bring forth fall stillborn, as the children of the parents in the group grow up and graduate from 8th grade and head off to other schools, or the families move away, or the school experiences the all too familiar phenomenon of a tight budget. Many castles are built in the air, but what it takes to bring a new school into the light is for a specific handful of parents, teachers, and students to lay their time, their commitment, and their lives on the line. No matter how much talking has happened beforehand, such an endeavor will always feel half-baked and the courageous founders must always suppress the feeling that they may be subjecting the student’s lives to a potentially disastrous experiment. This feeling was clearly there in East Aurora, as it was in the founding of YIHS. For something new to come into the world, something real needs to be risked in what feels like a leap of faith.

But there are also incomparable rewards for those with the courage and energy to be one of the first through the breach, experiences and opportunities that will never be available for those who come later into a more settled, formed school. My job as a visiting teacher at the Aurora Waldorf High School was to lead a main lesson block on government, both government of the United States and government of their new school. It is only in the very rarest of circumstances that one is able to read and discuss the founding documents of American democracy with a group of people who are actually in the process of creating a new polity themselves, for whom the



Cadan passes wisdom to his far-flung peers.



questions of rights and responsibilities and appropriate decision making processes are not history in any sense, but entirely living and urgent questions.

We began with a very brief excerpt from Aristotle's *Politics*, in which he describes six distinct different forms of government, three of them "true" or legitimate and three of them parallel in form, but "perverted." I asked the students to discuss which of Aristotle's types best described their school governance structure then, and, touchingly, they concluded that it was an aristocracy, one of Aristotle's "true" types, in which the wise few govern in the interests of the whole community. There was little or no sycophancy in the answer, just an honest evaluation of the few rules and structures that had been put in place by the Faculty in the few months of the school's existence and a conclusion that they were wise and not at all onerous.

From this very interesting beginning, what emerged over the next three weeks as we read the documents of the American founding and worked on a vision for the growth and future of the school, was a building interest in the workings of the school and an almost philanthropic desire to participate in its governance. (Something, I should note, that was entirely supported by the teachers who had brought me to teach there.) During the last two days of the class, Cadan, my student assistant, lead the AWHHS students in two initial Student Body meetings. He taught them the rudiments of facilitation and minute-keeping, transplanted the tradition of the Moment of Silence, and selected students to serve as Keeper of the Heart and Student Jobs Commissioner. By the end, the Student Body had passed two proposals for formalization of decision making processes and sent them on to the Faculty.

My experience as a witness to these beginnings, both of student self-governance and of the school as a whole, was of course very different from my experience of the founding of YIHS. For one thing, it felt much less turbulent, urgent, and revolutionary. Certainly the fact that I am an adult now and not a teenager has something to do with this, but it also seems to have a lot to do with the spirit of the place and of the backgrounds of the students. On the other hand, there was still that thrilling, tingling sense of being present at the moment of creation, the moments at which something is passing over from non-being into being. And to watch the students begin to pick this newborn up into their own hands, and handle it with tenderness and trepidation was a privileged experience for which I am deeply grateful.



Cadan takes in a little down time at one of the great natural attractions in the New World.



Jacob darts about through the first civics class in the history of the Aurora Waldorf School.

FRUITS OF ANOTHER LAND

The ex-guerrilla fighters called this the *bosque*, or woods, but to me it was the *jungla*, the jungle. The path we were walking was dense: giant ferns arched between parasitic vines, majestic *ceiba* trees entangled with prickly palms, busy highways of leaf-clipper ants, and the far-off lion's roar of the howler monkeys. Our group of 11 Youth Initiative students and two teachers, my wife AnnaJo and myself, were being led on a tour by a former guerrilla fighter and founding member of the Nuevo Horizonte Cooperative, a collectively-owned and operated village and productive business located in the northern flatlands of Guatemala. Wilson, our guide, spent a good part of

WHY THE WORLD NEEDS US TO CARE: REFLECTIONS ON GUATEMALA, BY SHAWN LAVOIE



Alyson poses before the ruins of Tikal



Max takes a break with one of his new friends.

his adolescence in the woods, as a radio operator in the guerrilla forces that waged a drawn-out battle with the military for 36 years. He pointed out fresh water in the crevices of giant roots, medicinal plants, and wild nuts and fruits that staved off hunger. He showed us how soldiers made a jungle soccer ball from palm leaves, how they played practical jokes on each other, and how they communicated danger without talking. Through his vivid descriptions and his familiar, easy manner of being in these woods, we caught a glimpse of what it was like to live and to fight here. We understood how these woods were part of his life.

Having compassion for fellow human beings around the world has never been so challenging. We know more about more tragedies in more places than ever before. Yet, we continue to feel far removed from foreigners who speak a different language, who believe and behave differently, who live without so much that we take for granted. Our goal in organizing the bi-annual trip to Guatemala is to become familiar with real people in Guatemala. We

want students to meet Guatemalans on their own turf and try to understand them on their own terms.

To make this personal connection with another culture requires recognizing both the radical differences and the uncanny similarities. The first week we arrived, we worked side by side with Guatemalans through service projects of the San Lucas Mission. Some groups helped to dig out a septic tank, others went to the women's center to make gravel by hand, and all of us, at some point, hoisted big rocks in a chain down a hillside to a road that they were building through the coffee plantation. Manual labor means your hands hurt, your whole body hurts. Students had a visceral appreciation for the work Guatemalans do every day, while also wanting to raise money to rent a front-end loader for a few hours!



The group pauses for reflection in the crater of the Chikabal Volcano

One of the biggest hurdles in meeting a new culture is language. A translated message always loses some of the power of the original voice, and so during our second week in Xela students studied Spanish for 5 hours a day in one-on-one language classes. Being in a city also provided students with the opportunity to meet their Guatemalan peers. In the plaza central, in the salsa club or with their host families, students were using their language skills, struggling earnestly to be understood and to understand. It always amazes me how much can be communicated with a few words, as demonstrated by the students who were all able to share their life

story and to understand the stories of others so quickly.

The last week of our journey took us up to Nuevo Horizonte, a small town in far north Peten region of the country. Here, the rural setting and agricultural lifestyle resonated with our way of life in the Driftless. Here, we experienced people passionate about their community, loyal to honoring their past as guerrilla fighters and committed to working together. On our walk back from the “woods” it was dusk and we saw clouds to the west lit up fiery rose and orange long after the sun had set. When we reached town, men were jumping into trucks and on motorcycles with water pump packs strapped to their backs. Our guide, charged with connecting us with families for dinner, was clearly preoccupied by the call to put out the fire at the edge of the community.



Brenna in the Nuevo Horizonte primary school.

How did it start? It could have been someone driving by with a lit cigarette or hunters illegally starting fires to run the deer. No matter, they were going to stop it from jumping the road and setting fire to the reforestation project.

Being in the community that night made so many disparate pieces of Guatemalan life and history connect. I saw that the skills these women and men had learned living and fighting in the woods were transferred to build this community, which at 13 years old is still quite new. I saw of so many

Guatemalans, victims of a long struggle, that their past was cut off, their indigenous languages and customs undermined by hundreds of years of conquest, their strong families and communities ravaged by civil war and immigration, and their hopes for the future curtailed by a corrupt political system and cruel international trade and labor policies. Much of this knowledge I already had—it had come from books, movies, TV—but it became real that night because I could empathize directly with the universal desire, which the people of the community were so clearly expressing, to protect things you care about, sacred things like land and history.

Since coming back, many of the 11 students and their parents have told me that the trip was life changing. This heartens me so much and gives me so much hope. For life on planet Earth right now can be pretty rotten and unjust for billions of people. Life does need to change, and if it can be changed through genuine exchange, through appreciation for the differences and similarities of other people, then chances are all of our lives will grow stronger.

Being in Guatemala during this time of international disasters and uprisings highlighted for me the global stage on which we all play. At our language school graduation we sang Spanish leftist songs and also chanted some “hey-hey, ho-ho’s” for our friends protesting in Madison. The lesson: wherever you are is where you can make a stand, initiate your plan, and have compassion. The world needs us to care about it.



Students off to work for the day!



Students take a tour of El Bosque de la Vida (The Jungle of Life)



“The Earth is not Ours, We are of the Earth”- graffiti in Guatemala City

Nuestro Primer día en Guatemala

A las siete y media de la mañana los domingos nuestro grupo asistieron a la misa en la iglesia católica en el ciudad de San Lucas. El servicio fue muy simple, centrándose mucho en la estimación propia vida. Los niños de la comunidad participaron en el servicio de la iglesia más de lo que primero yo esperaba. Se reunieron donaciones a la iglesia, tocaba música en la banda, y encendieron velas para la ceremonia. Todos los Guatemaltecos fueron muy bien vestidos en colores extravagantes y géneros de punto. Que viajaba en un barco por el lago en San Lucas a dos comunidades diferentes. Vimos los cinco volcanes que rodean el lago. En los pueblos que visitamos hay muchos vendedores posean elementos hermosa ropa, accesorios y comida. Era difícil para mí hablar mucho español a los Guatemaltecos el día de hoy porque no podía entender lo suficiente como para conversar con ellos. Me gustó mucho conocer a la gente de Guatemala y estar rodeado de ellos. Guatemaltecos aprecian la vida, la fuerza, su historia y la creatividad mucha.

Cuando regresamos a San Lucas, Maxamilliano y yo caminamos por la ciudad y visitó con la gente. A veces me sentía incómoda porque los hombres silbaban y me gritó. Esto es muy común aquí, así que las mujeres suelen sentirse cómodas y lo ignoran. Los gringos siempre reciben más llamadas de gato que Guatemaltecos, incluso los gringos masculina. San Lucas tiene un montón de pequeñas tiendas y un mercado público, donde muchos productos se venden casi toda la semana. Me encantan todos los colores extravagantes y todos los me estoy reuniendo gente nueva. Mañana será un día traen más hermoso en el sol de un país increíblemente único. Este país tiene gente fuerte para muchos que tienen tanta fuerza, ya que han experimentados muchos momentos difíciles.

WHY I WANT TO GO TO GUATEMALA.

I want to go to Guatemala because I am really looking forward to being in a place where I have to completely accept a new way of life that I have never been acquainted with. I have been wanting to go to another country that holds citizens really working hard for survival, buying food and water is a struggle because their income is barely enough. I want to learn from these people who have such different necessities and responsibilities. I dislike how spoiled we are in America and going to Guatemala will be an amazingly shocking, rich human experience for me and the rest of the group. I really have become interested in Spanish language this year. I can't wait to speak to Guatemalans and have a conversation with them. This will almost feel like Drama class because I have to process and think about what I am going to say much more. The third world is a subject I want a lot more education on and I believe being in the center of it for three weeks in Guatemala will be one of the best ways to educate myself. I want to become more acquainted with the third world, mostly the people of the third world. Meeting people and connecting with them when you are from very different (economically + physically) areas of the world is a great culturally educational experience. Meeting Guatemalans will be outstanding!

Work from Guatemala Main Lesson Books (clockwise from top, Alyson Hornby, Brenna Troy, Sydney Westerhoff)

Bella Ciao

Ésta mañana me levanté

O bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao ciao ciao

Ésta mañana me levanté

y descubrí al invasor.

¡Oh! Guerrillero, me voy contigo

O bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao ciao ciao

¡Oh! Guerrillero, me voy contigo

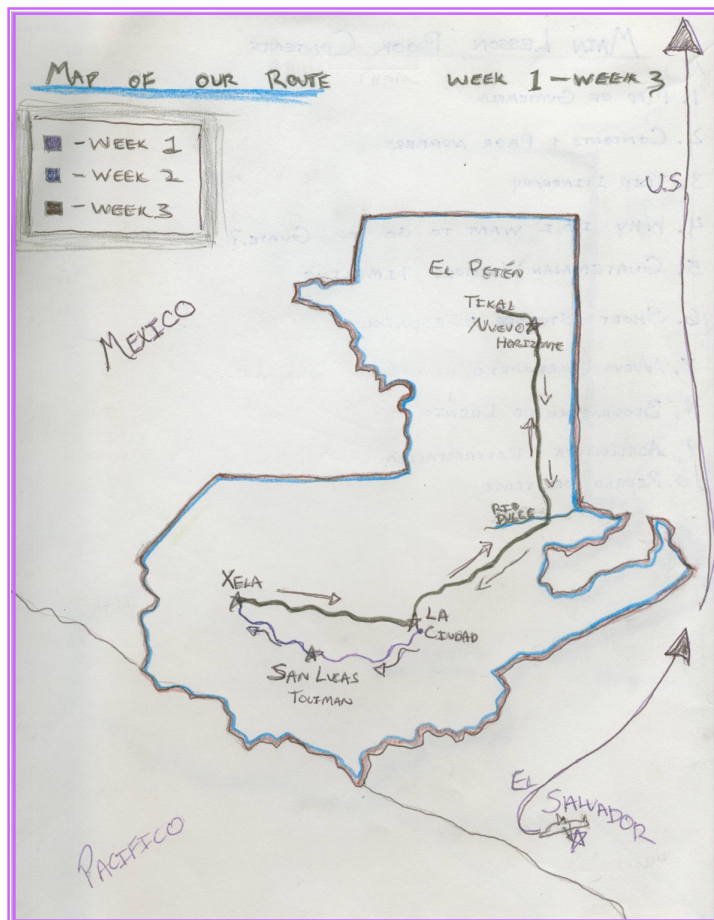
porque me siento aquí morir.

Y si me muera en el combate

O bella ciao, bella ciao, bella ciao ciao ciao

Y si me muera en el combate

toma en tus manos mi fucil.



BLOOMING BY EXAMPLE:

THE POWER OF GREAT LITERATURE, BY MATT VOZ

The most widely produced industrial hydrocarbon in the world is ethylene. Ethylene is a gaseous compound and a refined petroleum product. It is used for general anesthesia, and it is used in the production of products as varied as tires, footwear, detergents, antifreeze, and even those little packing peanuts they use to protect fragile items during shipping. But even though 107 million tons of ethylene is produced every year in what is a pretty nasty industrial process, it also happens to be a naturally occurring hormone produced by nearly every higher plant.

As a plant hormone ethylene acts as a communication medium, either between one part of the plant and another, or between plants. The presence of ethylene causes the fruit of plants to ripen, seeds to germinate, and the flowers of plants to bloom. That is why you can ripen your tomatoes by putting them in a paper bag with an ethylene producing banana peel.

I have taught English at the Youth Initiative High School for six years. In the course of those six years I have been inspired by the creativity and acuteness of the minds of my students and, at times, I have bemoaned the fall of Western Civilization as I looked into their glazed-over eyes. It is certainly a roller coaster, and for a performance that only comes on three times a week for an hour, an English class seems to require a lot of work behind the scenes. And no, not every show ends with a standing ovation, or even applause.

One of the bedrocks of my, and probably of any, high school English class is the study of “great” literature—You know, all those books you read in high school that you vaguely remember: *Lord of the Flies*, *Grapes of Wrath*, some esoteric tragedy by Shakespeare. Almost everything—vocabulary work, compositions, grammar— is based in the book that we are reading together.

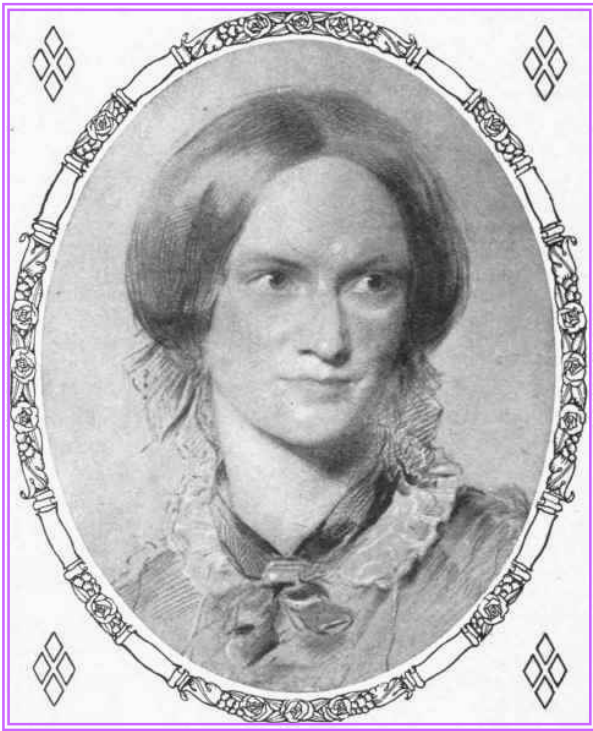
This year I swept aside the reading catalog which for years had characterized my classes. Gone were the horrific dystopian visions of *A Brave New World* and *1984*, books that were meant to warn of the death of the individual, cautionary tales inspiring students righteously to rage against the machine. I will admit to you now that I had no plan for what to place in favor of these books. I followed my own whim, and what happened to be on the school’s book shelf informed my decision as much as my own fancy. I chose books that I, perhaps scandalously, had never read; *The Adventures of*



Holden Caulfield stands on the precipice between childhood and adulthood, grappling with the challenge of moral sincerity.



Huckleberry Finn sets off into an ethical and literal wilderness and attempts to create an independent ethical foundation from found materials such as civilized hypocrisy and disingenuous outlawry.



Jane Eyre, whose emotional existence swells in the presence of Mr. Rochester, slowly becomes aware of her own understated feminine power.

Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain and *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte. To these I added two of my favorites, *The Odyssey* and *The Catcher in the Rye*. There was no foreordained thread stringing these books together, I was simply blindfolded throwing at a dart board.

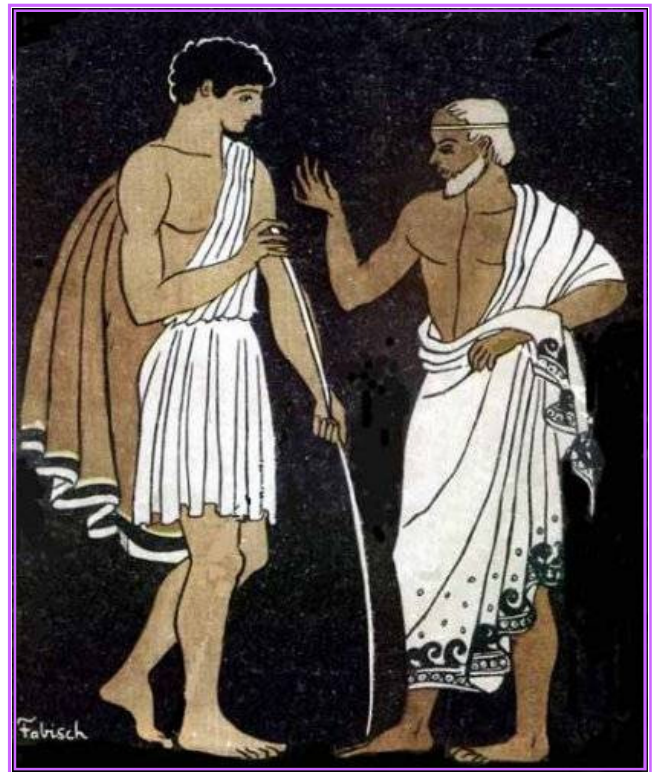
What I found emboldened my confidence in the relevance and power of literature in a high school classroom. As my class read these books; first *The Odyssey*, then *Huckleberry Finn*, *Catcher in the Rye*, and finally *Jane Eyre* the thematic links became obvious, the conversation naturally drifted from Huck to Telemachus, to Jane and to Holden. The stories, the times, the action, and the scenes of these books could not be more different, but deep in the nucleus of each and every one of these books was the same struggle, the same quest for a truth to live by. As we read it was at times unclear whose struggle this really was until, at last, it became clear that it was a struggle to which we all belong.

So why did we read these books? It wasn't to generate lists of vocabulary words, or find interesting sentences to diagram. We read these books because they are a window into the souls of other human beings at other times than the present. And the things that we find in the rooms on the other side of the window look remarkably like the furniture that inhabits our own souls. Reading great literature can be not only cathartic, but also inspiring and enlightening, bringing into stark relief thematic conundrums in our

own lives. In short, great literature is the ethylene of the adolescent spirit.

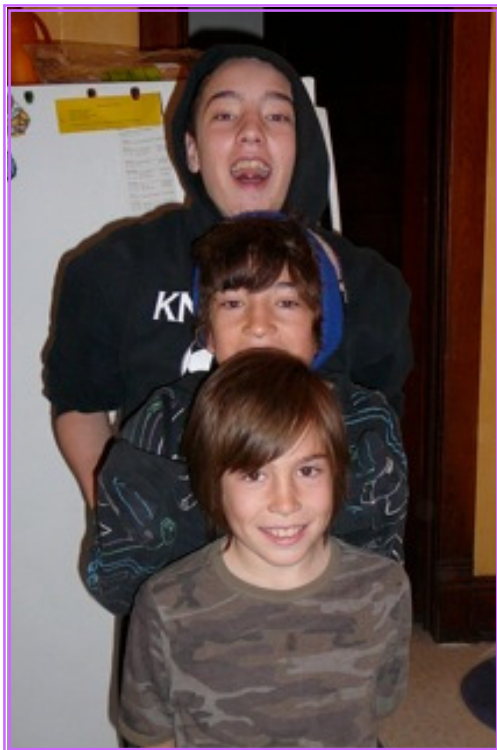
In the presence of great literature the mind and heart of a young person can germinate, ripen, and flower as they are drawn in empathetically to the conflicts and struggles of our protagonists. It is more than just well-read snobbery; it is a real process which often goes unseen but manifests itself very clearly in flashes. But in order to see these flashes, in order to effect this process we must have faith in our purpose and in our methods. Literature is not a science. There are no right or wrong answers and there are few, if any, linear connections. In a world that puts a premium on short-term utility, quantifiable measurements, and the bottom line, the study of literature can be seen as subversive, inefficient, and superfluous. There is no way to know whether or not reading *The Odyssey* or *Jane Eyre* or *Catcher in the Rye* will increase a student's earning power or ensure that they get into a top-flight college. But we must persevere in the belief that to acquaint a student with the archetypal restlessness of the human soul, to challenge a student to see the fluctuations of power that dance, silent and unseen, behind every gendered relationship, to awaken their consciousness to their own fear of the awesomeness of the true self is a valuable, indeed integral, aspect of education.

In the age of Facebook and a seemingly endless string of text messages young people can mistake distraction for companionship. Ironically, now more than ever we must be taught that we are not alone, that the core of human existence is no different today than it was in the time of Homer or Charlotte Bronte, that the human condition is not an atomized prison cell but a shared community from which all beauty issues.



Telemachus, reared in the shadow of his absent father, Odysseus, steps hesitantly into the complex world of manhood.

WORDS FROM OUR FAMILIES



Top to bottom: YIHS senior, Max; YIHS freshman, Kili; and future YIHS enrollee, Finley

In our house, we love the Springtime. After being cooped up all Winter, those first warm days are especially enjoyable, with the touch of a breeze kissing your cheek, the sounds of birds in the air, and the stirrings of plants evident as their fragile, yet resilient selves first emerge from the newly fertile soil.

The outward signs of renewal and growth that are so noticed in the Spring (partly because of their long absence!) also remind us of the subtler and symbolic manifestations of transformation that surround us all the time.

Thus, our school, a garden in Spring. It is full of growth that sometimes comes fitfully and painfully, while at other times it bursts forth in amazing leaps and bounds. Our teachers are the gardeners who lovingly and carefully tend the children-becoming-adults, watering them with wisdom or fertilizing their minds with new and exciting ideas.

Of course, all the hard work of Spring inevitably gives way to the glory of Summer, and we have a boy on the verge of full bloom. Our son Max will graduate in a few short weeks, and Youth Initiative High School has been the fertile ground in which he has grown so beautifully.

Max came to YIHS at the beginning of his junior year. We agreed to let him come to the school somewhat reluctantly because he was an indifferent student at best. Would he apply himself to the challenging curriculum?

Would we be wasting our hard earned dollars? And, perhaps most importantly, would he grow and thrive, would he be inspired by what he encountered in his new school? These were some of the many questions that went through our minds as he enrolled in YIHS.

Any fears or misgivings we had quickly gave way to awe and appreciation. Awe for the richness of the curriculum he was presented with and appreciation for the compassion and dedication displayed daily by his teachers. A change became evident in Max quite quickly. He was engaged by his coursework, enjoyed (for the most part!) the challenges that his teachers presented him with, and reveled in the fact that he and his peers were given permission to question what they encountered along the way.

We really grew to admire the holistic approach YIHS takes to educating its students. The school is committed to giving each student a broad based learning experience that includes exposure to the Arts and to a dynamic and innovative nutrition and cooking curriculum. It is to some of these aspects of the school experience that Max gravitated to, and ultimately found some of his real chances to shine. Jane Siemon's cooking and nutrition classes really awoke a love for food and an appreciation for preparing delicious meals in Max. He was also drawn to



Max on his first day at Youth Initiative High School

photography and found that it was something he was good at. There was a noticeable pride evident in him when he showed us his work from this class.

More than anything however, Max responded well to the Theater curriculum offered by the school. He dipped his toes in during his junior year and found that he really like to perform. Improv and acting in the school play were highlights for him. By his senior year he was ready to take on a large part in the school play, and he delivered a stellar performance. He found a real Voice within himself, and an outlet for his creative talents. Along the way he developed more confidence in himself and his abilities and realized he had found something he was good at. Whether he pursues this further remains to be seen, but YIHS opened doors of self-discovery for him by exposing him to acting and by expecting him to put his best effort forward.

Perhaps the most important experience Max has had while at YIHS was his trip to Guatemala this past February with Shawn Lavoie, Anna Jo Doerr and several of his classmates. What a truly amazing experience for him to immerse himself in a new and different culture with one of his teachers and many of his peers. He came back from this trip excited by what he experienced, grateful for the bounty in his life, and with a deep conviction that travel to faraway lands is in his future. It was truly an experience he will carry with him for the rest of his life.

And so, Max's time to shine draws near. Soon he will be stepping into the world as an adult. The past 2 years at YIHS have been vitally important to preparing for the next step in his development- independence . The school has taught him to question the status quo, to enjoy the exchange of ideas, to honor and respect the views and feelings of others, and to trust enough to look inside himself to find some of the answers. In short, YIHS has shown him how to grow; for that we will be forever grateful.

-Jerry McGeorge, father of YIHS Senior, Max and YIHS freshman, Kili

As a parent of a freshman student at Youth Initiative High School, it is quite easy for me to understand and make the analogy that freshman are very much like saplings in the springtime. They are in many ways still very much living in the heart of adolescence yet are ready and poised to begin their final stretch towards young adulthood. This "homestretch" is a time of a great awakening filled with optimism and excitement. But it is also a time filled with trials and tribulations and all the emotions that arise when experiencing new social dynamics and, for many, a new school. Just like a particular plant species requires the right amount of sun and water in order to flower, our daughter is in need of her own unique "growing conditions" in order to truly blossom. With the freshman year all but behind us now, I am able to clearly see and appreciate the growing conditions that Youth Initiative provides and I can't adequately express how grateful I am that my daughter is thriving in this environment!



Makenzie Burke, YIHS Freshman

man year all but behind us now, I am able to clearly see and appreciate the growing conditions that Youth Initiative provides and I can't adequately express how grateful I am that my daughter is thriving in this environment!

I can certainly go on and on about all of the talented and dedicated faculty that grace the halls of Youth Initiative, or about the school's creative and powerful curriculum, including Service Week and the expanded emphasis on nutrition and the arts that help make Youth Initiative such a unique and innovative school. But if you asked my daughter why she has found a home at Youth Initiative she would tell you that she's thriving because she is able to be her true self and that the school community honors, trusts and respects her individuality. Pretty cool considering that we are living in a time where conformity and standardization of our schools, economy and culture seem to be the overriding rule.

A year ago, we were up in the air and really struggling to determine what high school experience would be the best fit for our daughter and our family. Well, that uncertainty is gone. We've found a home at Youth Initiative because like springtime, it's a place that is fresh, full of energy and endless possibilities.

-Dan Burke, father of YIHS freshman Makenzie



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