

Teaching: Everyone Does it Differently

By Josephine Cini and Sophie Krivitzky

There are many teachers at this school, and each one is different in their habits, their lifestyles, and most importantly, the way they teach. The teachers here at Merion each have unique approach to teaching, using life lessons or personal experiences. Some have taught for more than 15 years, and some have taught preschool and kindergarten. The fourth grade teachers are different but special in their own way.

Views on Homework

Each of the 4th grade teachers has a different opinion on homework. Mrs. Popko thinks that kids should have weekly homework to help with time management for middle school and high school. Homework has 2 values, which is practicing skills and personal responsibility is what Ms. Chen thinks. Mrs. Oppenheim thought that homework is necessary to help build important work habits such as time management, planning, and responsibility. Mrs. Hershman told us that while homework is given to reinforce what is taught in school, it is still important to have time for family. Mrs. Barber said that homework has to be balanced. Not too much, not too little so that students practice what they learn in school.

Testing the Limits

There are the pros and the cons to test as we learned from these teachers. Mrs. Popko told us that she is not a big fan of the state tests, but teachers need tests to see if kids have learned. There are other ways to see if a child has learned though. Ms. Chen thought similarly. "I wasn't a great test taker, so I wouldn't want to be graded solely on my testing ability."

Mrs. Oppenheim told us that sometimes tests are necessary to find out how much a student learned, but they don't need to be long. Mrs. Hershman brought up a good point. She said that 4th grade tests are important to measure what kids have learned, but they should be more spread out throughout the year, and less of them. Mrs. Barber said something that most kids agree on: Too many test! "I understand some testing is ok, but not too much testing," she said.

Working Together

We know some kids love to work together, but what do teachers think? Mrs. Popko told us, "Absolutely, because those are life skills. We live in a big society and all kids need social skills and kids develop those skills by working in partners." Ms. Chen told us the same thing. "Absolutely! I think that a lot of what they learn is from each other--different ways of thinking, different strategies, and being able to think inter-dependently."

The Inside Scoop: How Teachers Spend Free Time

Our teachers rarely get free time, but when they do, they all like to make good use of their time. Mrs. Popko prepares STEM projects for the kids. Preparing lessons and creating centers is what

Mrs. Oppenheim does, and Mrs. Hershman spends the time catching up on emails to parents and staff members and preparing lessons.

Without these teachers, we wouldn't be where we are today. They all have influenced us in the best ways possible and they will always be a big part of our lives because of their unique ways of teaching.