



## IMPORTANT DATES AND REMINDERS

Saturday, January 19, 9:00am - 2:00pm  
**Boston Debate League Tournament #4**

Monday, January 21  
**NO SCHOOL: MLK Day**

Friday, January 25, 9:45am - 10:15am  
**Friday Share**

January 18, 2019

Volume 22, Issue 15

## Kingdoms of the Nile River

Dear Friends, Families, Students and Staff,

This week's letter is written to our students.

This winter term you will study civilizations that existed a very long time ago, thousands of years ago along the Nile River. This study will help you understand some of things you see in our city, tools we use in our daily lives, the heritage of some people in our community, how history is recorded, and how and why we learn from the past. These are all powerful lessons.



In order to learn as much as you can, there are some things you can do as you are in charge of your own learning. You will be a researcher.

Your first step is to find the Nile River on a map or globe. Next, write down as many questions about the Nile River and the people that lived along the river more than 2,000 years ago as you can. There is no such thing as a bad or wrong question. This is a great thing for your whole family to do. Keep track of your questions. Mission Hill teachers have come up with questions too. You'll see some of these questions posted throughout the school.

Begin the mission of finding answers to your questions. Some of your questions may be answered through your daily learning at school from your teacher(s) and other resources such as books, adults, films, music, maps and museum collections. Keep track of the answers to your questions and new questions that come up for you. As you learn more you will begin to make connections from one piece of information to another. That's how learning happens. When you learn something new I hope you teach other people.

What will excite you about this study? What will you learn? What will you teach other people? What connections will you make to information and stories you already know? I look forward to learning with you about the people that lived a long time ago in this far away place.

Sincerely,  
*Ayla Gavins*

**KINDERGARTEN****Room 106****Kathy, Liana & June**

Each child in the Peregrine Falcons Class asked a question about something they wanted to learn about Kingdoms of the Nile. Elijah wanted to know, "How did they dig up sculptures in Egypt?" His question had us dive into the world of archeologists. We looked at a picture of an archeologist at work. I asked the children, "What do you see? What do you notice?" Jayden said, "They have shields (gloves) on their hands." Benjamin said, "They have a little broom in their hands."

This one picture sparked so many ideas. Manny said, "They are holding a paintbrush and I know because when I went to a dig site we used paint brushes." We then looked at pictures of archeologist tool kits. We saw paintbrushes, toothbrushes, things that looked like toothpicks, and small and large shovels.

After a long conversation we decided to be archeologists ourselves. We transformed the sand table into a dig site. Children recorded their findings on a grid. They took their time to make sure not to break any of the artifacts. Come by and explore our dig site.

*-Kathy*

**Room 107****Jada & Manny**

After the break the Dragon Kitties began talking about our new theme-Nubia. As in past years, before completely delving into an ancient culture, we have begun taking a look at who we are and where our families are from through creating individual family books. Some families took time over the break to complete and send them in. Using those books as a guide to find out important things about our students' cultures, we encouraged the Dragon Kitties to keep them in mind as they were asked to think about what they might want to know about the Nubians. Here are a few of their ponderings:

Adin: How did they read books?  
Will: Are they in the hottest place?

Rowan: Do the people live in the pyramids?

Ebi: How do they write?

Bilal: Is it close to Somalia?

Josue: Is it in the desert?

Eddy: Is it hot there?

Abubakar: What is outside like there?

Joy: How close is it to the equator?

Jonathan R: Does it rain there?  
Are there mummies there?

*-Jada*

**Room 108****Geralyn & Donna**

"The Zones of Regulation are a framework to foster

self-regulation and emotional control

(<https://zonesofregulation.com>).

"Last year Mission Hill School made a commitment to implement the Zones school wide. Our hope is that by using common language and expectations, we can support students more effectively. So far, we have introduced the blue zone (low energy/tired/sick /sad), the green zone (happy, calm, okay, ready to play and learn) and the red zone (angry, too silly, over-excited, out-of-control). Part of what we are learning is that all feelings are okay (no feelings are bad). When we are at school, the green zone is the best one for playing and learning safely. And when we are in the blue zone or the red zone, there are safe ways and helpful tools to work through those feelings. Today we are sending home some visuals about the Zones of Regulation that you can use at home. We hope you can talk with your child and connect at home with what we are learning at school.

*-Geralyn*

**Room 109****Katie & Mary**

Last week we visited the Museum of Fine Arts to research some specific questions about the Ancient Kingdoms of the Nile.

Abe asked, "Why did Egyptians wrap dead people up?" When we

explored the funerary exhibit, Max told him, "As a way to get them ready for the afterlife." After looking at a mummy, Abe said, "Maybe it's because they didn't want the dead person to show.... I think I saw a little bone!"

William asked, "Where are the mummies? How did they die? Was it a sword?" After looking at a wall painting, William said, "They fight somebody. He's got an electric sword."

Marissa asked, "Where do they get the bricks for the pyramid?" After looking at some stones that were assembled as a tomb, she said, "They look like rocks, like something they found on the ground."

Student wonder and they collect evidence. They connect evidence to other experiences. Abe knows that inside a dead person is a bone. William knows that people can die from fighting. Marissa knows about rocks found in nature.

-Katie

## GRADES 1 & 2

### Room 205

#### Ashleigh & Alana

Here are some of our wonderings as we begin learning about the Kingdoms of the Nile:

Ada: Did they have fires? Did they have wood?

Misael: Did they have dogs?

Clementine: Did they have any pets?

Rex: Can they go in the pyramids?

Ayan: Did they have books?

Joziana: Why do they have pyramids?

Shona: How do they get dry wood?

Angelina: Did they put people who died in pyramids?

Darwin: Does the Nile river go through Egypt?

Emma: Did they have cats there?

Ella: How can they make pencils?

Xander: How do they build the pyramids?

Azaiah: What did they do for fun?

Olivia: Did they swim?

-Ashleigh

### Room 216

#### Danny & Felicia

It's been four months that I have been at Mission Hill as a new co-teacher. Coming in I thought that this was going to be a sink-or-swim experience. The role that I was given has allowed me to ease into a profession I know can be tough. Teaching, like other professions, is an art; it is not something you can learn overnight. At Mission Hill you are definitely welcomed with open arms, and hopefully you're up for the challenge!

So far it has been the start to an amazing journey. Being able to inspire and make a difference to so many students has been wonderful. I know this work

takes time and practice, so conversing with co-workers is just one of the many ways I am able to grow and develop strong and positive relationships at Mission Hill. Going forward I hope to grow, learn, and continue having a positive year!

-Felicia

### Room 217

#### Kate & Stephanie

What do you know about Ancient Egypt? Parker answered: "What I know about Ancient Egypt. Is that they have mummies and pyramids. I also know that it is really hot. There's one step I know And it is a step in making mummies. It is. I know when you make a mummy you have to take all of the blood out of the body."

-Kate

## GRADES 3 & 4

### Room 203

#### Jenerra & Mayra

"Tell us one way you worked hard today and one way you were kind." This is how we end each day in Room 203. A volunteer starts and we go around the circle. In an effort to make the MHS motto, "Be kind. Work hard." come alive daily, I instituted this practice into our goodbye meeting. Having done it for a few months now, it's something we all look forward to at the end of the day. It's also a great reflective routine that

leaves us all as individuals and as a community feeling good about something we accomplished or an act of kindness that was shared. Here is an example of what is shared:

"I worked hard in math by staying focused when we were on the rug and Levi was kind to me when he gave me his finger knitting." - G'kharee

Maybe you should try this at the end of your day!

-Jenerra

### Room 207

#### Amanda & Amina

Continued from last week... Here is an ending Brenden wrote for "What happened to Sheldon?!"

Man, I guess I have to wait for him. 10 hours later. Man he is really gone. I guess I can sing a horrible song before the game starts. When Junie B. started her song everybody left. Then the news said there was a kid running around the whole earth. Then Junie B. had an idea. I know I can ride the cow but the man said it cost \$100. Then she kicked the wall and hurt her other leg. Then she had to use a wheelchair and saw a bull. Then the bull charged at her and fell down with Sheldon and he said, "How's your leg?" And she said, "Are you kidding?" Then Sheldon saw a mouse and ran. then Junie B said, "Well I tried" and left.

-Amina

### Room 212

#### Cleata & Ayan

Over the last school year I spent ten months as a Zeroing in on Math Fellow, participating in many discussions on math education and how it impacts students in urban schools. We discussed how math is perceived differently in regards to race and gender and how we as educators can change that in the classroom and beyond. As a third and fourth grade teacher I had to rethink how math is taught and collaborate with my math co-teacher to consider how we plan and implement math instruction. Within the last year we have seen a change in the attitude of 3rd and 4th graders towards math tasks; they are enthusiastic to tackle difficult tasks, they are challenging themselves and others. I have seen students and families at the Everybody Does Math area working on math together. It is a delight to see students sharing their math work and taking effort to show their thinking and problem solving strategies.

-Cleata

## GRADES 5 & 6

### Room 210

#### Nakia & Kat

No news, check back next week.

### Room 215

### Abdi & Courtney M.

Traveling back in time is full of the intrigue of discovery of a place, its people and of self discovery. How does contact with foreign, long-ago customs and beliefs clarify our own taken-for-granted customs and beliefs? What happens when differing worldviews meet? This week, Major Skillz continue their journey to Ancient Nubia, considered by scholars to be Africa's classical civilization. Vastly rich in gold and giving rise to the Kingdoms of Kush, Axum and Egypt, Nubia had more pyramids and its gods, especially Amun, inspired the creation of Greek gods. As part of their studies, students in grades 5 and 6 will visit the Museum of Fine Arts, which Kathy B., has coordinated, explore the geography of Nubia with Vanessa, and prepare a portfolio. Travel with your child back in time. Share your research with them as well.

Open Circle update: students answered the question - what are your favorite characteristics about yourself? - in their journal.

-Ms. Courtney & Abdi

## GRADES 7 & 8

### Room 213

#### Jenna & Natel

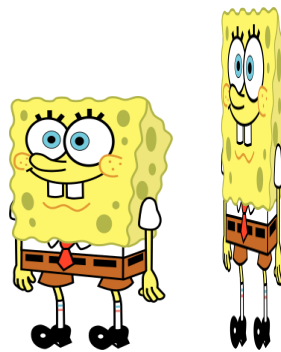
"Why is SpongeBob on your computer?" "What does

SpongeBob have to do with math class?" These were the questions that I was greeted with on Friday, as 7th graders filtered in to begin class and saw that a picture of SpongeBob was being projected. Needless to say, students were surprised (and also, quite excited) to see the cartoon character show up in a unit on geometry but were quick to engage in the lesson: an introduction to similar shapes. During class, we discussed what would happen to the image of SpongeBob if he was stretched in different ways and what types of enlarging or reducing of the image would yield a similar figure. Students figured out that in order for the SpongeBob images to be similar, the width and the height of the image both needed to be stretched the same way; if not, the figure would either be too wide or too tall and not look like the original. Students will soon use this understanding of similarity and scaling to complete a project

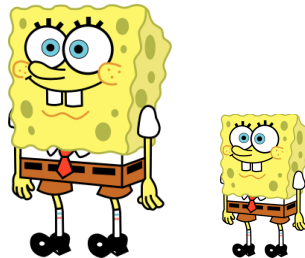
about Egypt and Nubia; they will look at images and models of different structures (i.e. pyramids, tombs), will create their own scaled replications and will justify their work using proportional reasoning.

*-Jenna*

Not similar:



Similar:



### Room 214

**Reginald & Frances**

"What page are you on?"

"Reginald, I think I know what's going to happen next"

"I read ahead"

"I finished the book!"

Were some of the comments I overheard recently as students were taking out their books and settling to read. A couple of minutes later, the room is absolutely quiet as students are immersed in their books. Every now and then, someone might whisper something to the person next to them. We are all reading. This semester, instead of reading a book together as a class, students can choose to read one of four books. They will meet once a week with other students reading the same book as they are to discuss the books.

*-Reginald*

Ayla Gavins, Principal

Deborah Meier, Founder

Laura Perille, Interim Superintendent

Mission Hill K-8 School

A Boston Public Pilot School

[WWW.MISSIONHILLSCHOOL.ORG](http://WWW.MISSIONHILLSCHOOL.ORG)

20 Child Street

Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

T 617-365-6384

F 617-635-6419