



THE FACULTY CORNER

A WORD FROM THE ANACAPA SCHOOL ENGLISH DEPARTMENT. . .

Lower School Literature

The Lower School Literature class has had a very busy semester reading a lot, learning new vocabulary, studying grammar, and writing often. One of their favorite activities was keeping a journal in the voice of one of the characters in *Lord of the Flies*. Seeing the events of the novel through the eyes of one of the characters was fun for the student and offered many insights into the story. After they wrote character analyses, the students designed new book covers for the novel to end the unit in a creative way. The results were discerning and artistic.

To conclude their study of Ancient Greek Mythology, the students each crafted myths of their own, another favorite assignment that allowed them to exercise their inventiveness and originality.

Upper School World Literature

World literature requires a broader view, and yet common themes regarding human nature and questions of what it is to be human connect all that we are reading. We have explored what it is to be a hero and how different cultures at different times have described a hero in their own terms. It was wonderful to talk with the students about what they believe makes a hero in our contemporary times. Our study led us to an exploration of Greek myths with their heroes and heroines, as well as their portrayals of human flaws and weaknesses.

Currently the students are finishing a unit on comedy which explores different approaches to describing those very same human flaws and weaknesses, using laughter to make the point. We'll be doing an in-class read of Jean Giradoux's "The Enchanted" next. This play was written in 1933 as "Intermezzo" and translated and produced in this country in 1950. It is a wonderful send-up of government officials, pedants, romanticists, and more, all told with nuanced and satirical humor in the form of a sort-of fairy tale.

Throughout our reading the students have found time and again that proverbs are expressed in narrative and in dialogue. There are more to come in the books that we have yet to read, so we have started a project exploring proverbs. The students are making graphic cards for some of their favorites, gleaned so far from Gilgamesh, the Greek myths, a couple of short stories, and contemporary wisdom. It will be interesting at the end of the year to look over proverbs that have been passed down in ancient and modern times and in cultures from all over the world.

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World Literature for International Students

Anacapa's six international students from Asia are enjoying a specially tailored class in world literature, writing, and grammar. The goals of this class are to increase their vocabulary significantly, to help them to experience literature in English, and to hone their writing skills. This past semester these students met with Peggy for literature, with Alison for writing, and with an ESL teacher for grammar studies. Highly motivated, intelligent, and adventurous, these classmates have a lot of fun in class and relish learning new skills and knowledge. The class read *Gilgamesh*, *Lord of the Flies*, and perhaps their favorite, *Maus*. They were very interested in talking about World War II, especially the Holocaust, the subject of *Maus*. Next semester, the class has chosen to begin their readings with *The Woman Warrior* by Maxine Hong Kingston.

Advanced Placement (AP) Literature and Composition

Once again the students in the AP Literature class had the wonderful experience of attending a gathering of the Santa Barbara Literary Society. It is the eleventh time Anacapa students have been hosted by the Literary Society for one of their meet-the-author luncheons.

Along with their teacher, Peggy Lauer, the students had the invaluable experience and honor of meeting privately with Hector Tobar, the author of *Deep Down Dark*, the true story of thirty-three Chilean miners who were trapped in a collapsed mine for sixty-nine days. In an hour-long private session, Mr. Tobar spoke to the students about how he became an author, described his writing process, and elaborated on the three years he spent working on *Deep Down Dark*, interviewing the miners many times to get their stories. Mr. Tobar's gregarious personality put the students instantly at ease. Because they had read the book beforehand, the students had many questions to ask.

After the session with Mr. Tobar, Peggy and her students joined the members of the Literary Society for an elegant meal and Mr. Tobar's address to the full group. The Anacapans spread out, joining the Literary Society members at their tables and discussing the book with them over lunch. As always, Peggy enjoyed receiving many compliments on the intelligence and maturity of the Anacapa students.

In evaluating the experience the next day in class, senior Clayton Parker wrote, "Lunch and literature, what's not to love!"

~ ~ Alison Strelch and Peggy Lauer