

Headin' for **SUCCESS!**

SUCCESS! Learning Center

presents

THE SPOT

May 5, 2008

No. 24

Summer Elementary Program

Ms. West Prepares for SLC Students

We are delighted to report that Ms. Sheena West, credentialed elementary teacher extraordinaire, returns as our Lead Elementary Teacher for the 2008 Summer Session at Success! Learning Center.

Ms. West teaches at San Jose Unified during the school year. She is an exceptionally talented and energetic teacher with wide experience in language arts, math, and computer topics. Students enjoy her creative and rigorous teaching style.

Ms. West will teach grades 3-6 for both the 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. classes. As needed, students will explore a wide-ranging enrichment program, review previous classroom material, and prepare for next year. Most elementary students work on both math and language arts, but a single emphasis is possible.

Learners focusing on language arts will write a composition each day, practice vocabulary and grammar, give regular oral reports, and develop better reading comprehension in both fiction and research. The math module includes work on individual weaknesses in concepts and computation, developing logic and analysis, and plenty of practice with those troublesome word problems.

As usual, middle school and high school students will be taught by Mrs. Haas.

Now Enrolling

Seven-Week Summer Session

June 23-August 7, 2008

Classes Meet Monday through Thursday

Applications for our seven-week Summer Session are now being accepted. Although our overhead expenses continue to rise steadily, we have worked very hard to keep our class fees as low as possible!

Of course, at these low rates it is not possible for us to offer any discount for days missed. If you know your family vacation plans in advance, we will try to schedule your student(s) for make-up days in another class.

Please note that classes meet four days per week, Monday through Thursday (no Friday classes), for a total of 63 hours of instruction over the seven-week session. Our class times are 8:00-10:15 a.m., 10:30 a.m.- 12:45 p.m., and 1:30-3:30 p.m. We offer a discount for students taking multiple classes or for brothers and sisters enrolled in the same session.

Each year several Learning Center classes fill completely before mid-June. Our individualized curriculum and extremely low student-teacher ratio (one teacher or teacher aide for every four students) limit the number of spaces available in our learning groups.

Registration information is on page 2. Please call the Director for more information or to schedule an appointment for enrollment.

Summer Session Pre-Registration

Information and registration forms for the 2008 Summer Session are enclosed. Applications are being accepted now. If you would like to register your student, please fill out a 2008-09 Student Application for each student. Do remember to indicate next year's grade level! Return the Application along with the Schedule and Fees sheet showing which classes you'd like and a \$100 minimum deposit (per student) to: Success! Learning Center, P.O. Box 361195, Milpitas CA 95036-1195

Please remember that After-School tutoring ends June 5th. Our office will be open from 2:00-6:00 p.m. on June 9, 10, and 11 while Mrs. Haas and Ms. Bui complete the student progress reports and prepare for the summer session. Bring completed application forms to the Learning Center or mail to the address above.

See you this summer!

Information About Dyslexia

Reading Difficulties Affect 1 Out of 5 Children in the U.S.

The National Institutes of Health reports that dyslexia is the most common of all known learning disabilities. It is the leading cause of reading failure and school dropouts in the U.S. However, the reading difficulties caused by dyslexia can be prevented through direct, explicit instruction in phonemic awareness. Students who thoroughly learn word attack skills and "phonics" can substantially overcome reading problems caused by dyslexia.

NIH research has repeatedly demonstrated that lack of phonemic awareness is the root cause of reading failure. Phonemes are the smallest unit of SPOKEN language, not written language. Children who lack phonemic awareness are unable to distinguish or manipulate SOUNDS within SPOKEN words or syllables. They would be unable to do the following tasks:

Phoneme Segmentation: what sounds do you hear in the word *hot*? What's the last sound in the word *map*?

Phoneme Deletion: what word would be left if the /k/ sound were taken away from *cat*?

Phoneme Matching: do *pen* and *pipe* start with the same sound?

Phoneme Counting: how many sounds do you hear in the word *cake*?

Phoneme Substitution: what word would you have if you changed the /h/ in *hot* to /p/?

Blending: what word would you have if you put these sounds together? /s/ /a/ /t/

Rhyming: tell me as many words as you can that rhyme with the word *eat*.

If a child lacks phonemic awareness, they will have difficulty learning the relationship between letters and the sounds they represent in words, as well as applying those letter/sound correspondences to help them "sound out" unknown words.

For more information, check out Bright Solutions for Dyslexia, Inc.: <http://www.dys-add.com>

(This information adapted from <http://www.dys-add.com/nowknow.html>)

Free Shakespeare Performances

Stimulate your child’s mind, increase vocabulary and reading comprehension, and have a great time at some of the free Shakespeare performances offered in area parks this summer. Students need to experience directly, not just read about, history, culture, and science in order to move beyond rote learning. We all know the many, many excellent museums in our area. (Surely you’ve taken your students to the Rosicrucian Museum to walk through an Egyptian tomb and enjoy grimacing over that very authentic mummy!)

The best students and the most successful in school are those who can link what they read in books with what they’ve actually seen, touched, heard, and felt at parks, events, historical sites, performances, etc. Thus, middle school students reading *Dragonwings* who have also visited historic sites in Chinatown and San Francisco’s famous Octagon House (both featured in the book) have a clear advantage over those simply reading without real understanding of the setting.

Every high school student studies Shakespeare. Most college preparatory classes will read a Shakespeare play each year. Many students struggle with the vocabulary and language and miss all the humor when simply reading a play. They just don’t “get it” when staring at the words.

Seeing a play in live performance, however, is completely different—exciting, humorous, and fascinating. Language and image flow easily into the mind and everyone enjoys laughing at the many jokes enlivening even the darkest tragedies. You can pay as much as \$75 or \$100 to see a top-level dramatic company put on Shakespeare in a professional theater. Head out for a park and it’s free! So, pack up a picnic, beach chairs and a blanket, and all the kids, and enjoy a Shakespeare play as it was originally performed—in the open air!

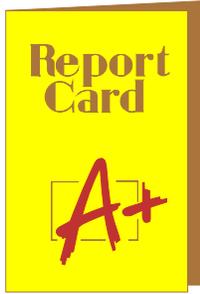
San Francisco Shakespeare Festival performs “Pericles” (disguised prince on the run! storms and shipwreck! a lost baby and roguish pirates! plenty of sword play and a bit of romance!) in four Bay Area cities this summer including Pleasanton and Cupertino. Visit their website for details on free shows: <http://www.sfshakes.org/park/index.html>



Reasonably priced tickets in outdoor settings (especially previews, seniors, students) are available for many professional performances. Summer is the time to enjoy Shakespeare (and other plays) outside in amphitheatres under the stars. Check out the California Shakespeare Theatre in Orinda (www.calshakes.org), the Shady Shakespeare Theatre Company in Sanborn-Skyline Park (www.shadyshakes.org), and Shakespeare Santa Cruz under the redwoods on the UC Santa Cruz campus (www.shakespeareasantacruz.org)

Look for local productions, too. Go and enjoy a play! Have fun and get a bit smarter!





What is an . . .

INDIVIDUALIZED CURRICULUM?

An Individualized Curriculum is a course of study designed specifically for each individual student. In a typical large-class setting with 20–35 pupils, students are forced to work at the pace and intensity of the majority of the group. One student may find the class too slow and rather superficial, another might find the same course too rapid and struggle to master material not fully understood.

Students at Success! Learning Center work in very small groups (usually 2–4 students) with a teacher or teacher aide. Because the instructor has only a few students to monitor, there is plenty of time for personal attention and encouragement. Students receive one-on-one tutoring as needed and progress at their own pace, moving from one level to the next as they are ready.

Students in each group work individually on their own curriculum, which is adjusted as necessary during the course. Thus one student may be working on language arts, another on advanced math

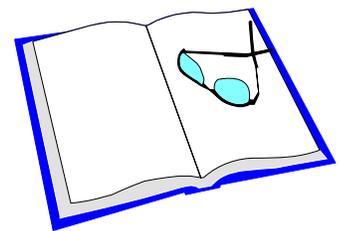
concepts, and a third on improving language arts skills.

During the registration process, parents and students discuss their goals for the class. Once the study subjects and any particular needs have been identified, students may complete a series of placement tests to identify their specific strengths and weaknesses.

The Director then prepares an individual plan of study for each student, based on his or her particular needs, learning styles, and interests. She works closely with teachers and aides to ensure that the course of study is successful and to make any necessary adjustments during the session.

Parents and students are an important component of any successful study plan, and their input is welcomed throughout the class.

At the end of the session, we prepare a detailed Final Report summarizing the progress achieved by each student and discussing any other pertinent material.



LEARNING CENTER STAFF

Cliveden Chew Haas, M.A., the Learning Center Director, is credentialed to teach academic high school subjects. Originally studying science as a pre-med major, she completed degrees in English Literature, with additional training in English as a Second Language and learning disabilities. Cliveden brings extensive experience in various areas of education and a contagious enthusiasm for learning.

Our teaching aides are extremely successful college and high school students who are also skilled instructors. They enjoy sharing their talents and their knowledge.