

THE MAGAZINE OF PRESBYTERIAN DAY SCHOOL • WINTER 2012

PDS SPIRIT



CUSTOMIZED LEARNING ADDS UP

IN THIS ISSUE OF *PDS SPIRIT*



While PDS honors all that has come before, cherishing traditions and actions that have made us a successful school for decades, a smart school doesn't rest atop past laurels. In a fast paced environment, standing still is actually falling behind. PDS has chosen a different approach. PDS aims to be a world class institution and a thought leader in education.

PDS is a school that understands that the future requires us to adapt. The future doesn't wait for anyone to catch up; it rolls along. Leaders and teachers at PDS are always scanning and questioning so that PDS can offer the best for boys. Teachers are rigorous learners and consistent critics of their own teaching practice, always improving and stretching in order to teach PDS boys well.

The institutional mindset and strategic objective at PDS is to build boys and make men of the future, prepared in every way they need for maximum success. This issue of *PDS Spirit* features the work that PDS is doing to develop a customized approach to learning for our boys. We are developing learning approaches that better enable each boy to maximize his learning potential at his pace. PDS teachers are designing ways to leverage technology tools to help students practice concepts and to gather formative data regarding each boy's learning. We hope you will enjoy reading about the new programs we are developing as well as other happenings on campus and about school.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Lee Burns". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light gray background.

Lee Burns, *Headmaster*

PDS Spirit is a publication of Presbyterian Day School. PDS maintains a nondiscriminatory policy with regard to race, color, and national or ethnic origin.

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PDS SPIRIT

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MINI-FEATURES

Have some news for a future issue of PDS Spirit? Send it to info@pdsmemphis.org.

BOYSPEAK

What is your favorite thing about math at PDS?

The math program at PDS is fun, challenging and inovative. Boys at PDS have a fun and rewarding experience during math class, so we asked some of the 5th grade boys, "What is your favorite thing about math at PDS?"

"The help sessions are my favorite part of math because if you are struggling, you get one-on-one help with the teacher." —Jack Billups, 5th Grade

"I like that we can go at the pace that we are comfortable with and we don't have to wait on other people to finish their work." — Henry Bridgforth, 5th Grade

"My favorite part of math is getting to learn new things, going to the learning lab, and watching the videos. I love learning new things and making up tricks to make them stick in my brain. The learning lab is a fun and comfy place to learn. I like the videos better than having lessons in class because we have more class time for our homework. MATH IS AWESOME! YAY!" —Benjamin Klemis, 5th Grade

Look for more answers from PDS boys on subsequent pages.

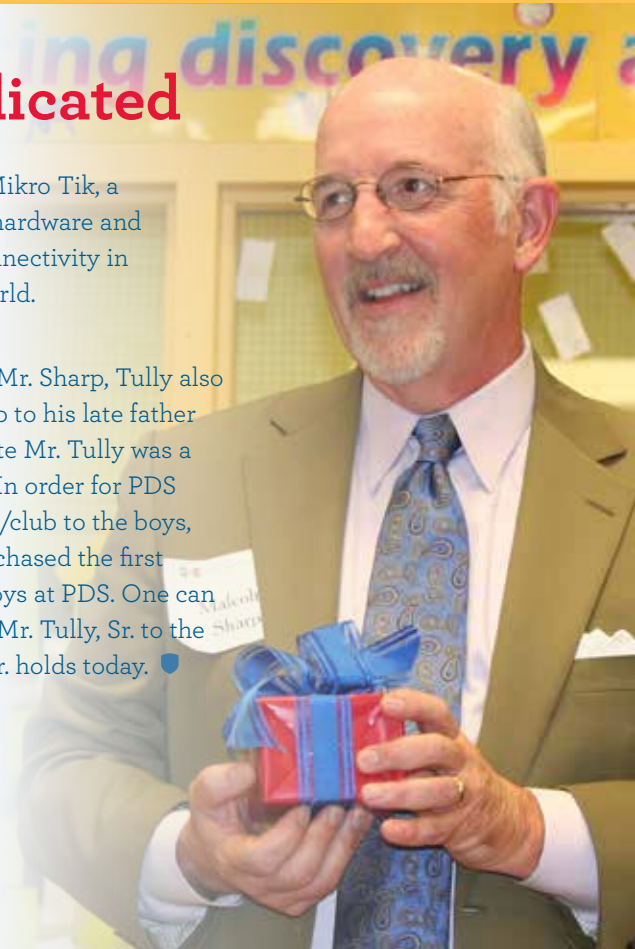
Tully-Sharp Science Lab Dedicated

In late August, made possible by a gift from John M. Tully, Jr. '80, PDS dedicated a science lab in honor of two men and families significant to the PDS community.

Malcolm S. Sharp served PDS as a teacher from 1977 to 1983. He influenced PDS boys as the science teacher, as well as the Director of Special Activities. Sharp received the Distinguished Teacher Award in 1983. He encouraged students to push harder and to try new cutting edge ideas, including offering a computer club. This was the first experience many boys had with a computer. John Tully, Jr. '80 was one of those boys he influenced and encouraged.

Today, Tully is CEO of Mikro Tik, a company that provides hardware and software for Internet connectivity in countries all over the world.

In addition to honoring Mr. Sharp, Tully also dedicated the science lab to his late father John M. Tully, Sr. The late Mr. Tully was a great supporter of PDS. In order for PDS to offer a computer class/club to the boys, Mr. Tully, Sr. quietly purchased the first computer used by the boys at PDS. One can easily tie Mr. Sharp and Mr. Tully, Sr. to the career that John Tully, Jr. holds today. ●



PDS Teachers Serve and Learn Around the Globe

Even during the summer, learning and service don't stop for PDS teachers. "We live in an interconnected global community, and we think it is valuable to travel to learn about and from schools and colleagues all over," says Headmaster Lee Burns. This past summer, PDS faculty traveled to Argentina, Costa Rica, Honduras, China and Australia.

- Teachers Russ Norment, Cindy Brock and Mark Fruitt took five PDS boys to Costa Rica for a service, leadership and outdoor adventure. They lived in eco-lodges and helped build and teach at a school.
- Chaplain Braxton Brady led a team of fathers and sons on a mission trip to Honduras, where they spent time at an orphanage and even served meals at a city dump.
- JK teacher Kristen Griffith traveled to China with educators from all over the United States. She visited a number of schools and cities during her trip.
- Teachers Alice Parker, Beth Diaz, Darilyn Christenbury, Terri Jarratt, and Debbie Isom, Head of Early Childhood, journeyed to Buenos Aires, Argentina, to participate in a teacher exchange with St. Andrew's Scots School, an independent school with whom PDS has developed a strategic partnership.
- Technology coordinator Cindy Brock flew "down under," all the way to Australia, where she joined colleagues from boys' schools around the world to work on an action research team for which she had been selected.

The Crain Center for Global Studies, established at PDS through the generosity of Brenda and Lester Crain, has enabled PDS teachers to undertake learning opportunities that expand their worldview. "We are so appreciative for the many ways that this center has strengthened PDS by giving us remarkable global connections and relationships," says Crain Center Director Darilyn Christenbury. ♥

Pictured right: 1 (front row) Bradford Roberts, Will Cooper, Jaylen Spears, Stillman McFadden, (back row) Javier Cano (our guide), Mark Fruitt, Cindy Brock, David Byrd and Russ Norment. **2** During art, Argentine students share their project on native birds of the area with Alice Parker. **3** Kristen Griffith with students from the Shanghai World Foreign Language School.



SOURCES OF PRIDE

We have been hard at work. Here are a few of our latest accomplishments.



Geoff Calkins Teaches Sports Writing Class

The Commercial Appeal's Geoff Calkins, who has twice been named the nation's best sports columnist, is teaching an elective writing class at PDS for the 2012-2013 school year. The class has a significant sports writing theme to it.

“What an incredible opportunity for our boys to learn from an outstanding writer,” says Headmaster Lee Burns. “By working with Mr. Calkins, the boys will not only enhance

and refine the craft of writing, but they will increase their passion for and enjoyment of it.”

Calkins earned his undergraduate and graduate degrees from Harvard. In addition to his writing for *The Commercial Appeal*, Calkins is a fixture on sports radio and television shows.

Nancy Gentry's Fourth Book

Learning specialist Nancy Gentry has recently published her fourth book, *Little Blue, Little Grey*. Written for children and set in the Civil War, it tells the story of two young drummers, one for the Union and one for the Confederacy. Find out more about Gentry's books online at rebelinpetticoats.com.

'Crew-saders' Place Second



During an incredible day of racing, the PDS Crew-saders, competing against 44 teams, made a big splash in the 2nd Annual Duncan Williams

Dragon Boat Races at Mud Island on Saturday, September 22nd. The PDS rowers came in 1st place in the non-profit division and silver in the overall standings, missing gold by only 1 second. Many PDS faculty members and parents came down to cheer on the 18 rowers. It was a fun day for all the participants and spectators.

Online Blended Learning

During the summer, Melissa Smith, PDS Technology Coordinator for Virtual and Adaptive Learning, collaborated with 5th and 6th grade teacher Jean Nabers to share their talents with teachers and administrators all over the country. But, they didn't have to leave Memphis to do so. They designed and led an online class which taught teachers how to conceptualize, design, and implement classes that utilize technological resources and platforms, including blending virtual learning

and face-to-face learning. "We are delighted to share our intellectual capital in ways that help teachers and administrators at other schools," says Headmaster Lee Burns.

Recycled Crayon Project



This fall, boys in Ms. Glenn's first-grade class have been studying all things gross. It all began while reading Tedd Arnold's *Fly Guy* books, a favorite among boys. The question was asked,

"Why do flies like to fly around trash?" That question launched a unit of study on trash and recycling. The class interviewed PDS custodial staff, took a field trip to the PDS dumpsters, and conducted individual experiments to see how much trash each student collected in a day, along with other elements. As a result of the study, the first-graders realized that caring for the environment is a global concern in which they can take part.

The boys decided to contribute to that effort by selling recycled crayons to donate a tree to Shelby Farms. They collected old, broken crayons, melted them into Lego man shaped molds, and sold them to 1st-3rd-graders for 25 cents each. In the end, the boys doubled their original goal of earning \$50, selling over \$100 worth of crayons.

While the boys learned much about the importance of recycling, the greatest lesson learned was you are never too young to take action. The tree will be planted at Shelby Farms in the spring. ●

What is your favorite thing about math at PDS?

BOYSPEAK

"The thing that I like about math is that everything is independent, and we can do what we think and not do what the teacher always says. I like going to the learning lab. It gives us freedom." —Parth Dahima, 5th Grade

500 Educators Gather for Martin Institute Conference



In early June, the PDS campus filled with about 500 teachers and administrators from 90 different public and private schools for the 2012 Martin Institute Conference.

The Martin Institute Conference is produced each year by the Martin Institute for Teaching Excellence, an institute housed at PDS to provide world-class professional development to teachers from all types of schools. The Martin Institute was established in 2010 by PDS and The University of Memphis with generous support from PDS Trustee Brad Martin and his family.

Speakers and conference presenters came from 10 different states. “We aim to bring in thought leaders and outstanding educational leaders from around the country,” says conference planner Laura Dearman. “We were thrilled to have John Hunter as our keynote speaker.” Hunter was named in January 2012 as the institute’s first Teaching Excellence Fellow. Hunter has also been recognized by Time magazine as one of 12 educators to watch in 2012.

“It’s wonderful to bring together teachers from so many different types of schools in the Mid-South,” says PDS Headmaster Lee Burns. “The institute is a way that PDS, though a private school, can serve a public purpose.”

Martin Institute programs are heavily subsidized or free so that any teacher, regardless of the resources of their school, can attend. Only in its third year of operation, the institute is reaching, inspiring, and empowering teachers in Memphis and across the country through innovative ideas and programming. ●

- 1 Dr. Shirley Raines, President of the University of Memphis, welcomes the attendees.
- 2 Aubrey Van Kirk Villalobos discusses St. Jude’s Cure4Kids for Teachers.
- 3 Dr. Joe Thomas of watchknowlearn.org
- 4 John Hunter inspires teachers with the keynote address.
- 5 Lee Burns, Bo Adams, and Steve Hearn
- 6 Geoff Calkins, sports columnist for the *Commercial Appeal*, discusses using sports to engage kids.
- 7 Public and private school teachers collaborating during a break-out session.
- 8 Alissa Moore enjoying John Hunter’s keynote address.
- 9 Teachers learning from and with each other
- 10 Teachers collaborating during a session on technology in the classroom.
- 11 Dr. Bob Dillon discusses the visual image as a tool for change.
- 12 Sande Dawes uses props in her session, “Making Thinking Visible”
- 13 Brad Martin, John Hunter, Dr. Clif Mims, and Laura Dearman

BOYSPEAK

“My favorite thing about math is that we get our homework on the computer and when we take check-ins, you get a piece of candy.” —Churchill Akhigbe, 5th Grade

What is your favorite thing about math at PDS?







World Peace ACHIEVED

In the course of five days in the sweltering heat of July, 30 boys and girls from six Memphis area schools and 15 teachers from around the world (Vietnam, Norway, New Zealand, San Francisco, Miami, Houston, Nashville, and Memphis) came together to solve world peace. It's a difficult task, but one that John Hunter has led countless times in his thirty-year teaching career.

Hunter is a teacher from Charlottesville, Virginia, and also the inventor of the *World Peace Game*. Through the *World Peace Game*, students have the opportunity to explore the connectedness of the global community through the lens of economic, social, political, and environmental crises, and the constant threat of war. The goal of the game is to achieve global prosperity for all which, by the rules of the game, is defined as resolving the 50 interlocking game crises and increasing the net asset value of each country, without military intervention if possible.

Hunter has become a familiar person around PDS since he and filmmaker Chris Farina formed a strategic partnership with the Martin Institute for Teaching Excellence in January 2012. Hunter was named as the Martin Institute's first Teaching Excellence Fellow. The Martin Institute is a non-profit established by PDS and The University of Memphis through the generous funding by PDS Trustee Brad Martin and his family. The goal of the Hunter-Farina-Martin Institute partnership is to advance the reach of Hunter's teaching as well as the viewership of the film that Farina made about the *World Peace Game*.

Farina's film, *World Peace and Other 4th Grade Achievements*, chronicles Hunter's class playing the *World Peace Game*. The Martin Institute's success in securing sponsorship for the film, *World Peace and Other 4th Grade Achievements*, resulted in the film being broadcast on 85% of public television stations across the country. The Martin Institute and FedEx were the film's primary sponsors.

IF WORLD PEACE IS TO HAPPEN, IT WILL BE SOLVED BY THE STUDENTS AROUND THE WORLD WHO ARE IN SCHOOL TODAY.

PDS had the thrill of hosting one of eight Martin Institute for Teaching Excellence Master Classes with John Hunter that took place in the summer of 2012. Students played the *World Peace Game* while teachers observed a master teacher at work and attended afternoon sessions to learn from Hunter. Other locations included Atlanta, Houston, New York, Charlottesville, Wilmington, Delaware, Milwaukee, and Los Gatos, California (Bay Area). The Master Class at PDS was also one of only two locations that also included a *World Peace Game* Camp for students.

John Hunter has ascended to Teacher-Rock Star status since his TEDtalk on the main stage at the TED conference in Monterey, California in March of 2011. TEDtalks are 18 minute presentations given to live audiences then uploaded and shared widely at TED.com. Hunter's TEDTalk was named by Huffington Post and TED as the most influential idea of 2011. Hunter's talk about the *World Peace Game* surpassed the TEDtalk of Sal Khan, an investment banker-turned-teacher and the founder of Kahn Academy, an online learning site whose TEDtalk was selected as the second most influential idea of 2011. It is striking to note that education continues to rise as a central and critical consideration in the future of our communities and country.

On the first day of game play, after a brisk reading from Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*, the *World Peace Game* at PDS began with Mr. Hunter selecting Prime Ministers who in turn selected their cabinets and nation teams. Each country has its own state of affairs, varying in wealth and resources, budgets, conflicts in progress, and state agendas. There is also a World Bank, United Nations, Arms Dealers, a displaced tribe, and a slew of random elements shaped by the Weather Goddess, a volatile stock market, and a chaos agent, called the Saboteur, whose identity is secret and whose job is to covertly undermine convention and predictable connections so that everyone's thinking is enhanced and deepened. PDS 6th-grader Call Ford played the role the Saboteur, which is like a double agent, and was successfully uncovered by fellow players in a trial on the last day of game play.

In the *World Peace Game*, students construct meaning out of chaos. They propose and test out solutions in a dynamic environment. Reactions by other nations to their game moves provide teams with real-time feedback on their thinking and decision making. Beliefs and positions have to be reconsidered and examined often as the students forge their way towards winning the game. Through this iterative environment that is discovered, developed, and negotiated by the students, the *World Peace Game* teaches its players to live and work comfortably at the frontiers of the unknown.

The World Peace Game is spiked with ethnic and minority tensions, arms proliferation, resource disputes, famine, coups attempts, and environmental problems. Summer players at PDS spent about 18 hours in the course of the week collaboratively gaining greater understanding of the critical impact of information and how it is used to solve issues. Game play was challenging and invigorating. Conversations about arms dealers, rebel coups, water rights, and other real world issues easily spilled over into dinner conversation as well as spontaneous and voluntary learning expeditions at home.

During the *World Peace Game* session at PDS, students learned quickly that war is not always easy to avoid and that, at times, military intervention might be a viable strategic alternative. Students learned that making

decisions is conditional to the specifics of any situation at a given time. They also learned that strategic decision makers must be flexible, adaptable, agile thinkers who understand the interdependence, complexity, and ambiguity of issues. Struggling to make meaning of the many fluctuations in the game, students realized that information must be contextualized and that a sophisticated level of critical thinking and synthesis is required.

The World Peace Game structure is a tower made of four 4' x 4' sheets of plexiglass threaded through five metal poles, one in each corner with a stabilizing pole in the center. Besides Hunter's school in Charlottesville, PDS is the only other school in the country to have a *World Peace Game* board.

"If world peace is to happen, it will be solved by the students around the world who are in school today,"

Hunter explains. "They must bring to the task more actionable wisdom and mastery than our generation has in cooperating over resources and collaborating through dilemmas and problems. They will need well-honed skills of critical thinking and problem solving. Their interpersonal skills must encompass resilience, diplomacy, deep compassion and empathy for people and the quality of their lives. They will need a well of respect born through understanding people from different circumstances, religious beliefs, and traditions, people with different skin colors, languages, and cultural behaviors. And, most important, they will need a sense of ownership of this world and a confidence to contribute."

Hunter's *World Peace Game* gives students an opportunity to develop these skills. PDS is thrilled to introduce this type of learning to students and teachers around the world through the Martin Institute for Teaching Excellence. ■





Adapting to the Learner + Adjusting the Curriculum

A Customized Approach to Math



A changing world creates design opportunities for the smart and flexible school like PDS. “Historically, learning is one size fits all, yet classrooms have very diverse learners. Some students master concepts and skills relatively quickly and are rarely challenged, while other students need extra direct instruction and practice time on various skills and concepts,” says PDS Headmaster Lee Burns. “Smart schools are designing learning environments that adapt or adjust the curriculum on a daily basis to the needs of each learner rather than the learner being expected to plow through a set curriculum at a set pace.”

PDS 5th-grade math teacher Windy May put it this way, “If one of my students has already mastered order of operations, why should his class time be wasted on that when he is ready for a more advanced concept that day?”

Two summers ago, Mrs. May began working with Assistant Headmaster for Teaching and Learning Susan Droke and Chief Information Officer Cathy Kyle to develop a customized approach to teaching math for PDS. They collectively invested thousands of hours to design and implement an adaptive approach that allows for guided yet customized math learning journeys for PDS boys. In 2011-2012, May piloted the 5th grade approach they were developing in her classroom, improving the approach iteratively.

The goal for each boy's quest is to achieve learning mastery so that he has a secure and lasting foundation for higher concepts and math reasoning to be layered upon.

“It's scary for a teacher to discard a very traditional, safe, standard-sized curriculum, but we knew that we could provide a better learning experience for boys by designing learning for the individual. It's a huge, exciting challenge and an opportunity to design and implement a customized approach,” says Melissa Smith, PDS Technology Coordinator for Virtual and Adaptive Learning.

To add to the project research, team administrators visited Stanford University and traveled to several reputable and innovative schools in New York and Silicon Valley to meet with educational leaders, teachers, and students about their adaptive curriculum and learning environments.

The learning atmosphere they witnessed was so full of high levels of engagement, student ownership, problem solving, and great learning outcomes, their belief that a customized learning approach for each boy at PDS was the best approach for learning was confirmed.

In designing this customized program, each component skill that PDS 5th grade students needed to learn was mapped and sequenced. Mrs. May and the development team reviewed and curated hundreds of different math activities related to the different skills. They selected the best or designed their own activities for each skill. Recognizing that many boys would progress well beyond what is typically taught in 5th grade math, they also mapped and sequenced many more advanced math concepts and skills, creating a range of activities and projects to keep boys challenged and growing. Understanding that boys learn in different ways, they designed a variety of different approaches for each skill that incorporated the spectrum of learning pathways.

“Mrs. May's math class looks very different than it did a few years ago,” says Droke. “Boys are learning in different ways and on a different timetable. Some are working in small groups while others are conferencing one-on-one with the teacher or learning coach or even a virtual tutor. Some are using a specialized math program on their laptop, while other boys are working on a project. Learning approaches depend on what the learner needs that day and how he best learns. There is great energy and focus in the classroom, and the boys have a greater sense of ownership of their learning.”

The customized learning approach at PDS can be described as each boy journeying on a learning quest. The goal for each boy's quest is to achieve learning mastery so that he has a secure and lasting foundation for higher concepts and math reasoning to be layered upon. The example of customized learning from 5th grade at PDS explained on the following pages offers a look at how a customized approach is better for students, offering each boy an opportunity to self-direct his learning path based on his particular learning profile.

A 5th Grade Math Quest

In 5th grade, each math quest is divided into an eight day unit. A learning objective is introduced, and each student is expected to achieve and show mastery within the eight day period. How each boy progresses towards mastery, however, depends on his particular abilities, skills, styles, and mindset at that particular time.

Classroom Instruction

During the first three days of a new quest, Mrs. May introduces the material to be mastered in a variety of ways, including class lectures. However, Mrs. May has “flipped her classroom.” The classroom is “flipped” in that homework becomes classwork and traditional class lecture becomes homework. Mrs. May posts recorded lectures of herself explaining the learning topic. Students are able to watch these lectures at night as their homework. Students are able to view the teacher's lectures once, twice, three times or more, as he chooses. And, if a student misses class, the lectures are online, so catching up or doing make-up work is a simple process. Short, frequent (often daily) assessments keep the teacher apprised of how each student is learning.

Class time is used for student to work problems while the teacher is there to give guidance and re-teach in the moment of application. Re-allocating how the teacher's time is focused and applied allows her to actively work with students as they are learning to apply new information and skills. Her expertise is better utilized working directly with students seeing how they are learning than to use class time to introduce information.

A Choice

After three days of instruction and practice with the material, each boy can decide if he would like to take the mastery assessment for the unit. There is no pressure or obligation to take the mastery assessment. There is no penalty for not passing the mastery assessment. It's just an attempt. If a boy does not pass the mastery assessment, he has strategic information he can use in working towards mastery.



myQuest

5TH GRADE MATH

day1-3

Classroom Instruction

day4

Mastery Assessment

day4-6

Learning Circuit

day5-7

Guided
Challenge

day7

Review

day8

Challenge
Assessment

day8

Mastery Assessment



Guided Challenge

If a boy passes the the mastery assessment with a score of 90% or higher, he can spend the next four days working independently or in a small group to explore math related topics. A boy might apply what he has learned to solve real world problems, work on a math project, or he can use the time to learn a more advanced math skill that will not be covered in the traditional 5th-grade math curriculum. This time is called guided challenge.

Mrs. May meets with each student individually to help him design his challenge time. She directs each boy to particular math activities she has either designed or selected as being excellent in developing the advanced skills for which the individual student is ready. She also develops a challenge assessment to measure each student's success in learning the material he set out to learn. This time allows each boy to develop his own interests and to initiate his own learning.

“On these guided challenge days, individual boys may be learning math concepts at anywhere from a 5th-9th-grade math level. Each is working at his level according to his interests,” says Mrs. May. “In a traditional math classroom, these boys would have been bored after mastering the lessons scheduled, having to wait for the teacher to continue to teach the skills they already knew. In the traditional classroom, all students must learn the same thing at the same time regardless of their mastery level.”

Learning Circuits

Boys that do not pass the mastery assessment with 90% or higher or who choose not to take the assessment early focus for the next four days on working through a learning circuit that is designed to help them learn the concept from many different perspectives and learning strategies. The learning circuit is like circuit training that one might do at the gym. Learning coaches are available to guide and support students through the learning circuit. At the end of the learning circuit, students take the mastery assessment to complete the unit.

“Our various learning circuits enable us to target instruction to the particular skills that each individual needs,” says Mrs. May, “and the circuits include several different types of instruction for each learner. This greatly enhances each boy’s ability to master the skills.”

Goal: Mastery of Math

The important thing to realize about the math quest is that the learning objectives and mastery assessments are the same for each student. What is changed is how each student progresses to the learning objective. One student might pass the mastery assessment early in one unit and make use of the learning circuit in the very next unit. The important thing is that each student masters the concept, understands it deeply, and can apply and show what he knows.

On these guided challenge days, individual boys may be learning math concepts at anywhere from a 5th-9th-grade math level. Each is working at his level according to his interests...

“One of the many challenges of this approach is keeping track of where each individual student is on his customized journey,” says Chief Information Officer Cathy Kyle. “We have explored various algorithms and used our technological assets to help us chart the progression of each boy. It is vital to be able to track this.”

“It’s remarkable what we can do when really smart and adaptable teachers harness and leverage our intellectual capital and technical assets,” Kyle continues. “Being a 1:1 laptop school, and having a team of technology coordinators, learning specialists and learning coaches,

have enabled us to create our customized math program which we are calling MyQuest Math.”

Designing and implementing a curriculum that adapts to the learner calls upon the teacher to be creative and flexible, yet also disciplined in systematically gathering and analyzing data on each student. “We have more frequent, yet short, assessments than before,” says Mrs. May. “Most of the assessments,” Mrs. May continues, “are for me to use in understanding what each student needs right now and what customized path he should journey down.”

Along with a small number of other outstanding schools around the country, we believe we are on the leading edge of customizing learning to the individual student, and we are delighted with the very strong results we are seeing.

Customized learning programs developed and piloted in both 1st and 5th grades during 2011-2012 were so successful in the levels of excitement, engagement, and excellence evidenced that this year PDS is extending the approach to all other elementary grade classes. The adaptive approach in math is inspiring and informing a customized reading curriculum as well. Of course, how each grade level is using customized approaches and technology is different because each grade level keeps in mind what is developmentally appropriate for the learner's age.

“While we believe that math was the most logical place to start with customizing the curriculum, we believe the approach can work in other subjects as well,” says Burns.

In addition to reading, PDS has also begun some adaptive curriculum approaches with parts of our world language program. “Customizing is about being nimble and flexible in meeting each learner where he is and giving him what he needs when he needs it.”

The math program at PDS assures that each boy is strong both with computation and conceptual thinking and reasoning. Says Burns, “We’ve studied a variety of math programs from around the country and world, including Singapore Math, the online approach of Khan Academy, various software programs, and other traditional programs. We’ve pulled what we believe are some of the best elements from a number of these and other approaches, but we’ve created multiple paths, modalities, and timelines that each individual boy can take. We think this is a better approach to designing learning than relying on any single textbook or any single program.”

Implementing a completely different approach to teaching math has engendered a number of powerful outcomes at PDS: increased understanding and performance in math across the spectrum of learners, greater responsibility, independence and ownership for their learning by students, a growth mindset about the effort required to learn effectively, decreased test anxiety, and deep engagement and excitement about math.

“Along with a small number of other outstanding schools around the country, we believe we are on the leading edge of customizing learning to the individual student,” says Burns. “And we are delighted with the very strong results we are seeing.”

“While our math scores have been good in the past, we have seen large gains in student performance since we began customizing the curriculum,” says Droke. “The standardized test scores are outstanding and the highest we’ve ever seen. In fact, our current 6th graders have average math scores at or above the 9th-grade level.”

One other important outcome of this new customized approach delights PDS: math seems to have become many PDS boys' favorite subject. 🍎



TEST YOUR MATH SKILLS

Take a look at what PDS boys are learning! Below are a few math problems that the 6th grade boys are working in class right now. Try your hand at a few of these. Can't figure them out? Ask a PDS 6th-grader or turn to page 30 for the answers.

? Question 1

Quarterback Tyler Russell has made a total of 122 completions this season. At the home games he has made 20 more than two times the completions he has made at away games. How many completions has he made at the away games? How many has he made at the home games?



? Question 2

Find what the letters represent.

$$CBD \times ACD = DCDAF$$

? Question 3

There are four brothers that attended PDS. Their names are Bo, Sam, Jim, and William. Bo and Jim are twins. Bo's age is three times more than Sam's age. William's age is three more than Sam's age. The sum of all their ages is 35. Find the ages of all the brothers.

? Question 4

Bobby was making sugar cookies for a party. He waited until the last minute and only had $\frac{3}{4}$ cups of white sugar to put in the mix. How will he have to adjust the recipe in order to proceed with the white sugar he has on hand?

Original Recipe

makes 4 dozen

- $2 \frac{3}{4}$ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking powder
- 1 cup butter, softened
- $1 \frac{1}{2}$ cups white sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

What is your favorite thing about math at PDS?

BOYSPEAK

"I like math because whenever I get a 100% on a test, it gives me the confidence to get through the day and has a sort of domino effect." —Charlie Eason, 5th Grade

ALUMNI NEWS

Have some news about a PDS graduate? Send it to alumni@pdsmemphis.org.



Ross Spain, Battle Boyd '11, and Mark Fruitt

Boyd Wins Keeper of the Dream Award

Congratulations to **Battle Boyd '11** for being honored as a 2012 Keeper of the Dream Award Winner. This award given by the National Civil Rights Museum recognizes youth who have demonstrated extraordinary courage, compassion, leadership, or service toward others.

While at PDS, Battle was involved in several successful community projects, including a local shoe drive where Battle solicited over 300 pairs of shoes for

Soles4Souls to distribute to the people of Haiti after the country was devastated by an earthquake. He continues to read and mentor to underprivileged children. Battle has also developed a sports uniform drive that will benefit community youth centers and teams in underprivileged areas of the Mid-South. Keeper of the Dream Awards were given at the 2012 Freedom Award Public Forum in October.

PDS Alumni Seniors at MUS Earn High Distinctions

• Congratulations to **Charles Belina '06**, **Danny Galvin '06**, **Wil Hergenrader '06**, **George Ormseth '06**, and **Mark Sorensen '06** who graduated Summa Cum Laude, and to **John Grayson '06**, **Daniel McLeod '06**, and **Ross Warner '06** who graduated Magna Cum Laude.

• **Mark Sorensen '06** earned the Valedictorian Award, and **Garrott Graham '06** captured the Faculty Cup for General Excellence.

• Two-thirds of the recipients of the Ross McCain Lynn Award were PDS Alums: **Britt Colcolough '06**, **Charlie Freeburg '06**, **Scott Freeburg '06** and **Danny Galvin '06**, while almost half of the recipients of the D. Eugene Thorn award were PDS Alums as well: **George Ormseth '06**, **Mark Sorensen '06** and **Ross Warner '06**.

• **Jack Stukenborg '06** received the Scott Miller Rembert Senior Service Award. Other awards winners were: **David Brandon '06**, Art Award; **Danny Galvin '06**, English Award; **Mark Sorensen '06**, Spanish Award and the Margaret Owen Catmur Science Award; and **Toby Baker '06**, James R. Haygood III Best All-Around Athlete Award.

• **Wil Hergenrader '06** served as Senior Class President, and **Garrott Graham '06** was Honor Council President.

Class of 2006 Honored

The Class of 2006 was honored as high school graduates at a reception held at PDS. Classmates took a trip down memory lane as they watched the 6th grade memories video, shared moments with faculty, and toured the school visiting former classrooms and teachers.

We wish them continued success and remind them to read the letter corresponding to high school graduation from their Letters of a Lifetime that were given to them six years ago at PDS Graduation.

Alums Matriculate at Wide Range of Outstanding Colleges Around the Country

The Class of 2006, with millions of dollars in merit-based scholarships, is off to colleges around the country. They are attending: Auburn University, Bob Jones University, Cornell University, Davidson College, Georgia Institute of Technology, Harvard University, Kenyon College, Middlebury College, New York University, Princeton University, Rhodes College, Southern Methodist University, Texas Tech University, The University of Alabama, University of Arkansas, University of Georgia, University of Mississippi, University of Richmond, University of Southern California, University of Tennessee at Knoxville, University of Virginia, and Vanderbilt University.

“It’s nice to see our graduates matriculating at such a wide range of outstanding colleges all over the country,” says Assistant Headmaster for Teaching and Learning Susan Droke.

13 Earn National Merit Recognition

Thirteen PDS alumni from the Class of 2007 have earned the distinction of National Merit Semifinalist or Commended Scholar for scoring in the top 1-5% of all high school seniors on the PSAT. Students are tested in critical reading, math and writing skills.

Philip Aiken '07, **Forrest Field '07**, **William Hoehn '07**, **Farhan Kathawala '07**, **Bennett Mercer '07**, **David Montgomery '07**, **Andrew Renshaw '07**, and **Mac Trammell '07** were named National Merit Semi-Finalists. **Will Kaelin '07**, **Andrew Miller '07**, **Bobby Scott '07**, **Edward Simpson '07**, and **Nathan Vogt '07** were named Commended Scholars.

ALUMNI NEWS

Have some news about a PDS graduate? Send it to alumni@pdsmemphis.org.

PDS Alum Pens Outdoors Book

PDS Alum **Buck Neely '73** has recently written a collection of short stories relating to the great outdoors called *Take Me Back*. Amazon.com reviews offer praise for Neely's work: "This book is a great collection of short stories that will resonate with anyone who has ever had the pleasure to experience the joys of the great outdoors. Sportsmen will find themselves drawn back to their own childhood memories of crisp mornings in the field and hot evenings on the water.... Highly recommend!" Neely's book is available at Amazon.com and The Booksellers at Laurelwood.

PDS Alum Excels at McCallie

Hal Boyd '08 was one of 13 McCallie freshmen welcomed into the Thomas Edward Peck Society (TEPS). TEPS recognizes sophomores who have demonstrated spirit, service and leadership on campus. These characteristics are seen on athletic teams, on musical stages, in clubs, in organizations, in publications or in the theater.

Wittenberg '98 to Play on PGA Tour

Casey Wittenberg '98 won the Wichita Open Golf Tournament on June 24. It was his second victory on the Nationwide Tour this season. Wittenberg finished with a two-stroke victory after he tied for 10th in the U.S. Open the prior week. Finishing 1st on the Web.com Tour, Wittenberg has earned his PGA Tour card.

Bomar Fulfilling His Dream

Adam Bomar '01 has taken a position as a firefighter/paramedic with the Mountain Brook (Birmingham) Alabama Fire Department. Bomar became a nationally registered paramedic in 2011 and is planning to obtain his master's degree in Fire Science. He says he "is realizing his childhood dream."

State Chess Champion

Congratulations to **Nathan Vogt '07** for becoming the 2012 Tennessee State High School Chess Champion. This is his fourth state championship. He represented Tennessee and competed in the US National Tournament of High School Champions. Nathan currently coaches the MUS chess team and also teaches chess at several schools in the area.

Honor Council Representative

Congratulations to **Smith Duncan '12** who was elected as one of the MUS 7th grade Honor Council Representatives for Lower School.

Two PDS Alums Participate in Olympic Trials

Lee Moore '01 competed in the 400-meter hurdle event in Eugene, Oregon on June 28. Moore, who is currently in medical school at UTHSC, ran in college for the University of Mississippi.

Crews Wellford '06 swam in the men's 200-meter backstroke in the Olympic Trials on June 29. Wellford swims for The University of Alabama.

Sports Stars



Britt Colcolough '06 was named one of 26 finalists for the 2012 National Football Foundation High School National Scholar-Athlete Awards by the National Football Foundation and College Hall of Fame. Colcolough currently attends Princeton University.

Scott Freeburg '06, was named a Lacrosse Academic All-American by US Lacrosse. Freeburg is one of only three student-athletes from the state of Tennessee to receive the honor. He will play lacrosse for Kenyon College.

Patrick Dimento '08 was named ESPNHS Lacrosse Regional Player of the Week after he scored four goals, including the winning goal with 11 seconds remaining, for MUS in the Tennessee State Championship Game against Brentwood for the 12-11 win.

Congratulations to PDS Alums who earned their place on the 2012 MUS Lower School Golf Team: **Wyatt Berry '12**, **Jackson Bridgforth '12**, **George Crews '11**, **Jack Crosby '11**, **Lamar Mallory '11**, **Goodman Rudolph '11**, **Mason Rudolph '11**, and **Trent Scull '11**.



PDS Alumni Enjoy 2nd Father-Son 6th Grade Trip

Many PDS alumni traveled to St. Louis this fall with their sons for the annual Father-Son trip. Among the upcoming Class of 2013, there were 14 Alums with sons in 6th grade.

Pictured above are: (front row from left to right) **Mott Ford '77** and Call, **Philip Zanone '80** and Philip, **Walker Upshaw '78** and Hall, **John Ogle '74** and David, **Frank Allan '83** and Frank, **Glenn Crosby '71** and Walker, **Bo Allen '80** and Louis, **Stilly McFadden '69** and Stillman, **Philip Wunderlich '84** and Philip, (back row from left to right) **Richard Nichol '79** and Ev, **Thomas Quinlen '87** and William, **Kerr Tigrett '90** and Jacob Herter, **Sellers Shy '84** and Sellers, and **Allen Hughes '75** and Allen.

PDS From Alabama to the Senate

After graduating from the University of Alabama, **Graham Gillespie '99** is working as a legislative correspondent with the United States Senate in the office of Richard Shelby of Alabama.

PDS Alumnus and Nationally Recognized Journalist Visits PDS

Noted health and medical journalist, **Robert J. Davis '76**, Ph.D., M.P.H. of Atlanta, recently visited PDS and toured campus with fellow PDS classmate, **Steve Threlkeld '76** and PDS Board Chair **Don Batchelor '66**.

Davis has more than 20 years of experience as a health and medical journalist. Currently he serves as president and editor-in-chief at Everwell, a company that creates and distributes consumer health news content. Previously, he was executive producer of the award-winning PBS series Health Week, a producer and columnist for WebMD, and a columnist for The Wall Street Journal. Robert teaches at Emory University's School of Public Health, and is author of two books. He is a graduate of Princeton University, holds a master's degree from Emory and a Ph.D. in health policy from Brandeis University.

PDS Perfect Score on the ACT

Congratulations to **Andrew Renshaw '07** for acing the ACT. Renshaw received the highest possible composite score (36). In 2011 over 1.6 million students took the ACT, and only 734 earned a perfect score.

PDS Mah Featured in the CA

David Mah '70 was most recently featured in a front page article of *The Commercial Appeal* as being instrumental in a pilot program to measure art student progress. ●

Support PDS Today and Support Your Heirs Tomorrow

How charitable lead trusts can work for you in your desire to help PDS.

Through careful estate planning, you can support PDS today using funds that will be returned to you or your loved ones in the future.

A charitable lead trust can be an especially attractive way to meet multiple personal and charitable planning goals. A multi-year pledge to the *Building Boys, Making Men Capital Campaign* could be structured as a charitable lead trust, allowing you to support both PDS and your heirs.

The combination of low interest rates and generous gift and estate tax exemptions create a very attractive planning environment for anyone who is considering this plan.

Through a charitable lead trust, you establish a trust as a source of gifts to PDS that will begin immediately and continue for as long as you decide, typically a fixed number of years.

The amount of the charitable gifts can be fixed or vary over time.

You or your advisors can continue to manage the funds in the trust, if desired.

Such a gift can serve to reduce or eliminate income, estate and gift taxes now—and in future years as well.

You may be able to provide younger heirs, such as children, grandchildren, or nieces and nephews, with a larger inheritance at a time when it is more appropriate that it be received.

PDS will receive gifts in the form of payments from the trust and the gifts continue for the period of time you determine. At the end of that time period, assets remaining in the trust are returned to you or the loved ones you designate.

Gift and estate taxes can be due on amounts over a certain amount given to others during lifetime or through your estate. Because of the front-end gifts to PDS over time from a charitable lead trust, however, you are allowed to reduce the amounts that would otherwise be taxable by the value of those gifts. Plus, there is currently a generous exemption for federal gift and estate tax purposes. Depending on the amount of the payments, how long they last and other factors, it can be possible to greatly reduce, or even entirely eliminate, gift and estate tax on amounts ultimately passing to heirs.

We will be happy to answer any questions or provide more information to you or your advisors about how charitable lead trusts can work for you in your desire to support PDS. For more information, contact Steve Hearn, Chief Advancement Officer, 901-842-4602. ●







Paul Tudor Jones '66 Named 2012 Distinguished Alumnus

On Friday, April 27, PDS honored Paul Tudor Jones II '66, at the

2012 Distinguished Alumnus

Luncheon. Jones is founder, Chairman, and Chief Executive Officer of the Tudor Group of companies. Over 400 PDS alumni, parents, and friends attended, as did the 6th-grade class. Of the luncheon, Jones said that he has "...never felt so much love in one room, and that it is a tribute to the concerned, giving and loving community all centered upon our Christian faith."

Jones spent his morning at PDS, touring the school, visiting classrooms, and meeting teachers and boys. He offered high praise for PDS and remarked that the PDS boys "...will be the best educated in the world

After graduating from PDS, Jones attended MUS and the University of Virginia. Jones made his fortune in 1987 after taking large short positions before the market crashed. "I had the biggest financial score of my life that day and the first thing I thought of is what can I do for the least of my brothers and sisters?" To that end, Jones founded the Robin Hood Foundation, which seeks to alleviate poverty in New York City. Fortune Magazine calls the Robin Hood Foundation "one of the most innovative and influential philanthropic organizations of our time."

Jones is also active in several other philanthropic and environmental efforts. He founded Excellence Charter School, is a former chairman of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and currently chairs the Everglades Foundation. In *The Daily News* Jones stated that "Going to a very religious school like Presbyterian Day School

that was steeped in Christian principles went a long way towards teaching me the importance of both service and selflessness."

Next to faith, the topic that received the most attention was school discipline, particularly how it has changed to the boys' advantage. Jones shared a light-hearted story recalling a particularly strong paddling after a spitball incident on a field trip, noting that boys now instead receive "early school" admonishment from Coach Fruitt, and the assignment of an essay incorporating verses from the Bible. "The

next time you have to sit down with Coach Fruitt in early room, just be thankful that you can actually sit down!"

Jones concluded his address by saying "let's be grateful for the wonderful times that we all spent here and the ones that our children get a chance to spend here and how beautiful and wonderful and full it has made our lives."

Jones' daughter Caroline, a singer-songwriter, also was a part of the ceremony, performing a stirring rendition of "How Great Thou Art," along with a traditional folk song. Jones' daughter also performed for PDS students the next day and visited several music classes. ●

Jones spent his morning at PDS, touring the school, visiting classrooms, and meeting teachers and boys. He offered high praise for PDS and remarked that the PDS boys "...will be the best educated in the world.

- 1 Oscar Atkison '90, Paul Tudor Jones '66, and Headmaster Lee Burns.
- 2 Mike Harris, Ellis Haguewood, Steve Reynolds, and Kem Wilson
- 3 John Colcolough, Wilson Orr, and Don Batchelor '66
- 4 The 6th Grade boys performed a rap about Mr. Jones.
- 5 Mr. Jones shared some proverbs from Mrs. Hodgson's 5th grade binder where

- he and his classmates were required to write their favorite scriptures.
- 6 Mr. Jones daughter, Caroline, a singer-songwriter, performed a stirring rendition of "How Great Thou Art," along with a traditional folk song.
- 7 More than 400 alumni, parents, and friends attended, as well as the 6th grade class.

SIXTH GRADE AWARDS

Congratulations to the following sixth-graders from the Class of 2012 who received awards in recognition of their outstanding achievements during their PDS careers.

1 THE HEADMASTER'S TROPHY

Rucker Williamson '12

**2 THE WETTER-BOYLE
MEMORIAL AWARD**

Bobby Wade '12

**3 THE ROBERT E. GENTRY JR.
CREATIVE WRITING AWARD**

Jackson Moody '12

4 THE MUS BOOK AWARD

Javan Smith '12

5 THE A.W. DICK TROPHY

Smith Duncan '12

**6 THE CHARLOTTE G. NEAL
SPIRIT AWARD**

Barry Klug '12

7 THE VICKY C. SPICER AWARD

Hastings McEwan '12

**8 THE MINNA POTTS THOMPSON
BIBLE AWARD**

Sam Payne '12

**9 THE MOTSEY HUDSON
SPEECH AWARD**

Jason Wang '12

**10 THE HENRY EDWARD RUSSELL
SCHOLARSHIP**

Zachary Street '12

**11 THE MARY HEARN
COLEMAN AWARD**

Rick Reinhard '12

**12 THE ROBERT J. HUSSEY
SCHOLARSHIP**

Jackson Moody '12

13 THE WENDY EDWARDS AWARD

Mathon Parker '12

**14 THE ELISABETH HORTON LAIOS
AWARD FOR GENERAL EXCELLENCE**

Charlie Horton '12

15 THE JANE EAST AWARD

Bradley Kerkhof '12



ANSWERS TO CHALLENGE (From Page 21)

Answer 1

Tyler made 34 completions at away games and 88 completions at home games.

Answer 2

$324 \times 134 = 43416$

Answer 3

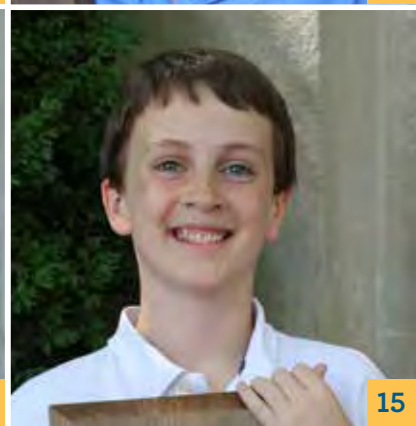
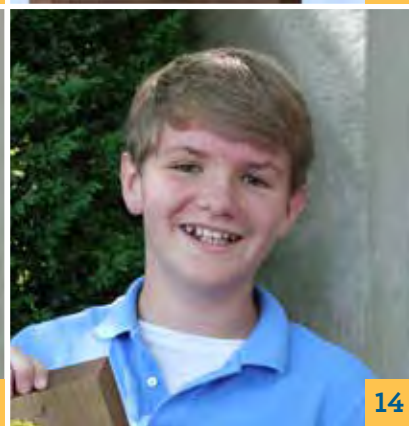
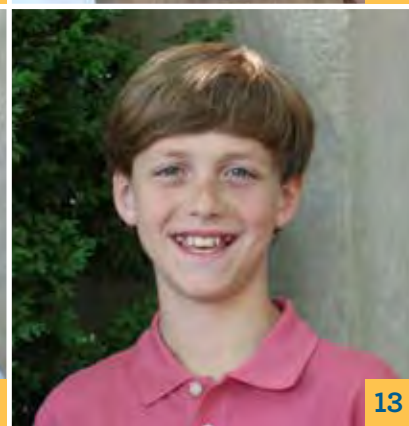
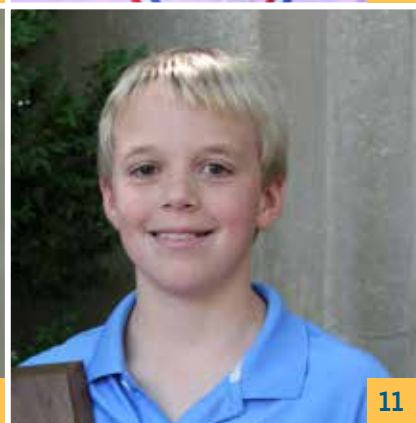
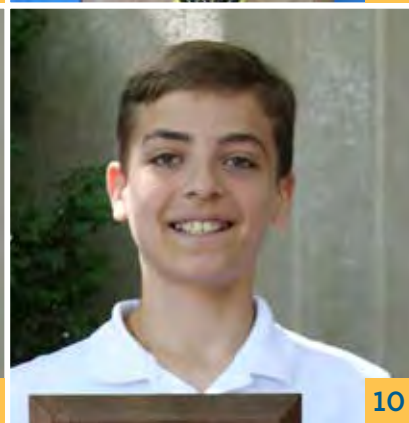
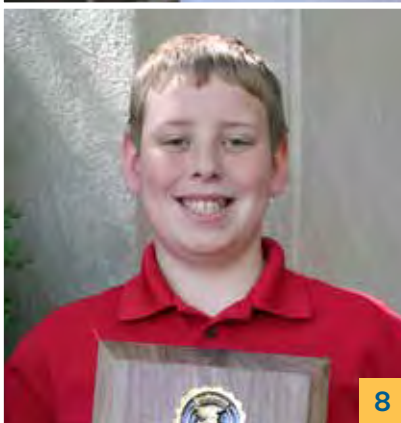
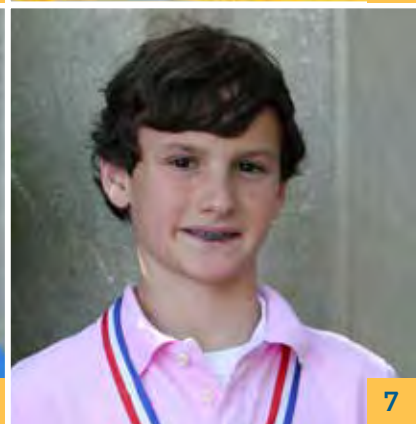
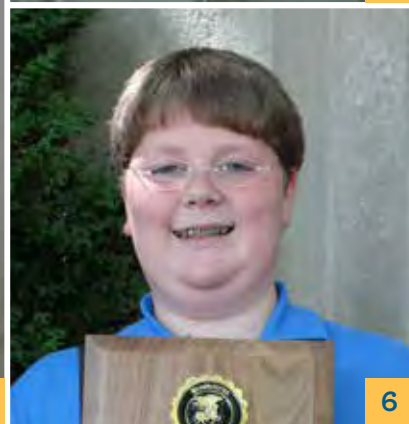
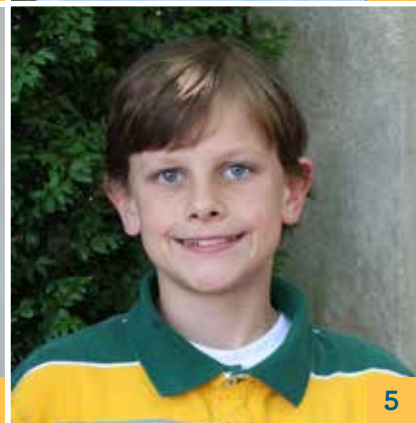
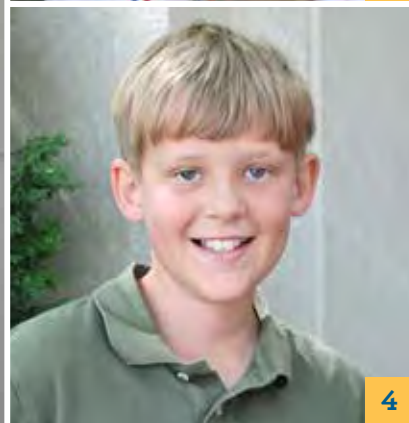
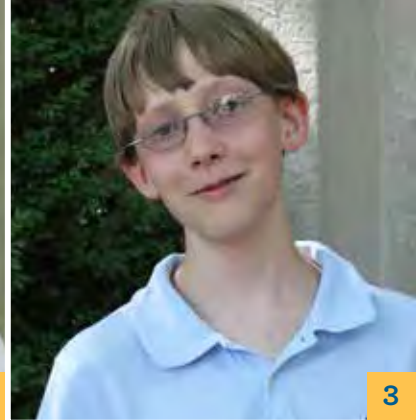
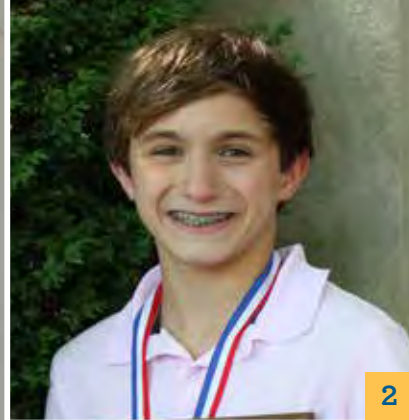
Sam is 4, William is 7, and Bo and Jim are 12.

Answer 4

Bobby's Recipe

makes 2 dozen

- 1 3/8 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 3/4 cups white sugar
- 1/2 egg
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract





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