

LaFayette Big Picture TGIF

2021

APRIL 23

We are **PRESENT, POSITIVE** and **PASSIONATE!**



The last few weeks have felt more “normal” but the Big Picture staff has embarked on a journey to NOT return to normal. During our PLC time, Big Picture staff is reading the ebook, “9 Big Questions Schools Must Answer to Avoid Going “Back to Normal” (*Because “Normal” wasn’t that great to begin with)”. We are two chapters into the 60 page ebook. We have begun reflecting on What is Sacred? We discussed what things really matter to us; what are our non-negotiables. We walked around our space and looked for physical evidence of our brainstormed list. Our next step is the dive deep into the items on our list to ensure we are really clear about what each of those items mean and how do we illustrate that those are sacred. We will be asking our students and our parents about each of the 9 Big Questions. We are excited about this work and hope that our mission, goals and practices will be even more clear once we have finished reflecting on all 9 questions. The 9 questions are: What is sacred? What is learning? Where is the Power? Why do we _____? Who is Unheard? Are we literate? Are we OK? Are we Connected? What’s Next?

If you would like to read the ebook, the link is here: <https://bigquestions.institute/>
Click on Free ebook.

TGIF from Greg

Our students in the photography internship have been all over this month, despite the crazy weather. They have been to Tinker Falls, where Secorrah took some really nice panoramic photos and showed definite excitement to see spring starting in the park! They have been to The Everson Museum, as well as Stone Quarry Park to see the sculptures. Carson in the past couple of weeks has made vegetable quesadillas, spinach scones and a beautiful lemon meringue pie. They tasted like they were from a restaurant. Hollis has done a really nice job teaching the students how to follow recipes and to try new foods. She also had them shadow in the Lafayette Junior-Senior High School cafeteria. The staff there had the students preparing for the day's lunch and learning about making food on a large scale. Evan has been hard at work with his interns; he's had them sand and do body work on Walt's truck, as well as getting them going on their individual projects for their upcoming presentations. He is also building a bed for a truck in his BOCES class. Hayden has been working really well and learning a lot from Evan, coming up with plans to create a mailbox from metal. Hayden also has been showing great progress keeping up with his classes, internship and sports. We were proud to see Hayden win his last races this week in Track - his speed is *phenomena!!!* Adam has been working on interviewing Crystal about the psychology field for his exhibition. He is in a psych class at OCC and has been tying that into his learning plan to present in a few weeks. He plans on doing the Skinner's Box Experiment on his classmates. Morgan finished her essay for psychology in her college class and got a 100% on both of her quizzes. She's been hard at work with both of her classes, as well as working vigorously on her learning plan and Big Picture studies. Griffin and the On The Dot coffee shop expanded their business to the juniors at the high school. They've had more customers, which has created new challenges for them. They did make the most money this month of all time and showed that they are able to rise to the occasion when needed. Austin did a virtual visit on job readiness in the beginning of April with Susan's sister, a Human Resource Manager. He learned about what makes a good employee, and heard some funny childhood anecdotes about his principal!



Friday morning he was able to go to the school cafeteria to start learning some basic job skills. He's also been hard at work on his creative piece for his D.I.R.T. book, drawing up plans and working with Lenny in the shop on a 3D model of the city he is reading about. Caitlyn has been working on a new journalism essay in her English class at OCC; she chose to interview her father about working in a nursing home during a pandemic and has learned a lot about the point of view from an essential worker. She has been doing a great job balancing her classes at OCC, her internship with Carol, and her Big Picture classes.

Together as a class the 301s have decided to run a food drive for the Food Bank of Central New York. Adam and Evan spoke with Mr. Ryan about making this a school-wide drive, and received permission to hang posters around the high school. Every in-person student is making a poster to display. They will be collecting canned goods until May 10.

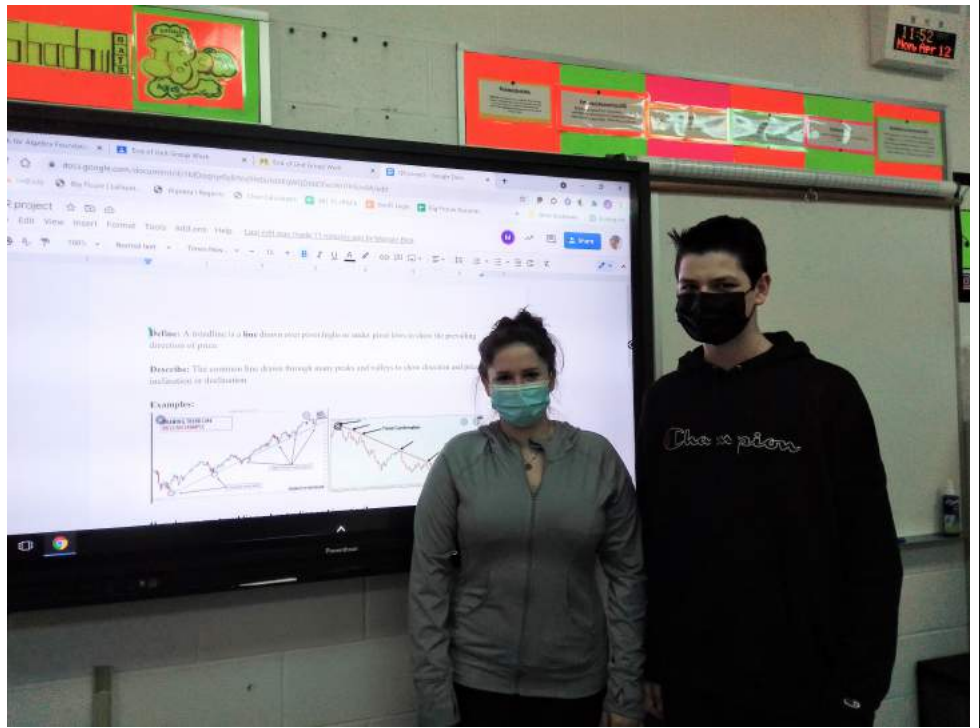
The 301s will be continuing to work on their slideshows and projects, getting ready for their LAST exhibitions as juniors! Carson will be having another shadow day with the cafeteria staff in the high school, learning about commercial kitchens and cooking for BIG crowds of students. We are

looking to get Austin into the cafeteria as well for one or two days a week to get some work experience and learn about more job readiness. In P.E. they are completing the rest of their fitness plans, and working on the final section of their class. In their ER workshop they finished up with their homemade rocket kits with Lenny, launching them early in the week before the snow came. It was great to see them so engaged in their own creations and having fun competing with each other to see whose rocket went the highest, stayed suspended in the air the longest, and how much air pressure it took to blow them to smithereens! In ELA they are still working on the book, *The Kite Runner*, learning about different cultures and the start of the conflicts in the Middle East. They have been working hard on their vocabulary assignments, and are actually using a lot of their new words in conversation now! In QR they are finishing up financial markets on Everfi and moving on to statistics and probability. They have been showing great interest in learning about real-world finances and will be starting a new budget project in advisory next week in place of IXL math.

TGIF from Jessica

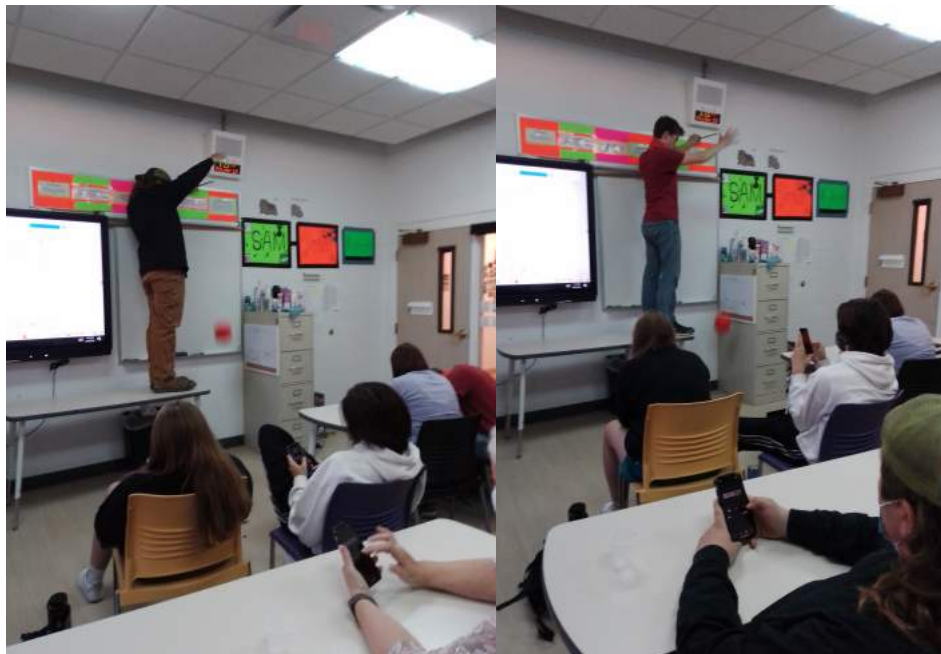
We have made progress in Quantitative Reasoning (QR) over the past few weeks. We have learned about the stock market through the use of Everfi's Marketplaces lessons. Within the unit, the students learned about the history of the stock market, associated careers, types of investments, how to invest based on health of the market, age, and risk tolerance. The students took a risk tolerance survey. QR students learned how business grow from bootstrapping to starting IPOs and how businesses benefit from the stock market. They learned what factors impact the market such as, current events, supply and demand, economic indicators, and the government and central bank's decisions. At the end of the Everfi unit, the students played an investment game that incorporated choosing stocks and growing up, etc. To close out the unit, the students worked with partners to research and present on concepts that influence trading/investing. The students research their terms to define, describe, give examples, and answer a key question about their term's role in investing. Through the presentations, students learned about day trading, swing trading, long term investments, trend lines, bull and bear markets, and calculating 10% growth and 5% loss of a stock.

QR students then moved on to learning a brief introduction to physics. They learned how to use the distance formula and do unit conversions. We then used this knowledge to calculate the acceleration due to gravity based on dropping a ball. Students helped measure the drop distance, they used their stopwatches on their phones to time the ball dropping, and then they calculated the averages of the recorded drop times. We did four trials and discounted outliers before taking a final



average time for the ball dropping. With our data, we then calculated the velocity and acceleration of the ball. We converted our values into meters per second squared and one class was only 1.99 m per square second off from the true value of the acceleration due to gravity! The students then reflected on the factors that could cause errors and impact the accuracy of our data. From here we talked about force and we had students come up to show how forces impact each other and determine the movement and direction of an object. To conclude our intro to physics we talked about projectiles and related it to their work on rockets in Empirical Reasoning with Lenny. We related force and angles to discuss the movement of projectiles and how to maximize height and distance.

In the next few weeks, the QR students will be learning about probability and statistics as our last unit for the year.



TGIF from April

The last few weeks have been active for the Big Picture Ag Program. Bug, Jordyn and Elijah have really been working hard preparing for an active spring on the farm. Bug collected soil samples to send out for testing in preparation for the vegetable and flower garden. Jordyn has been researching markets for the farm and a feeding program for the goats. Elijah has been a constant source of assistance while doing physical labor preparing the farm for animals.

I have been telling Elijah he is our work source! I am SO impressed with his ability and willingness to do any and all physical labor necessary to get the barn and barnyard in order.

In exploratory students who are attending charcoal drawing with me are currently working on, one, two and three point perspective. I so enjoy working with various students and to see how VERY creative and artistic they are! Everyone puts their own spin on the perspective points we work on; and that is the beauty of art- each person perceives an object or art piece differently. I have to give a shout out to Ricky - he struggles with the perspective points, but never gives up!

The USH students are exploring the M.A.I.N. causes of WWI in anticipation of an upcoming



collaborative project. Steven is very interested in Europe and its history, so it is fun to see him get excited about sharing his prior knowledge.

In advisory we continue to work on our tolerance lessons. This week the focus was on tolerance for self. I want students to know that they can be more tolerant of themselves and others, especially with the chaos in the world and the pandemic. The goal of the week was to have 201 students practice one of the three stress relieving techniques we learned about this week, for 10 minutes each day and then record the exact time of day they practiced the technique and then write a brief reflection of how they felt prior to the practice and after the practice.

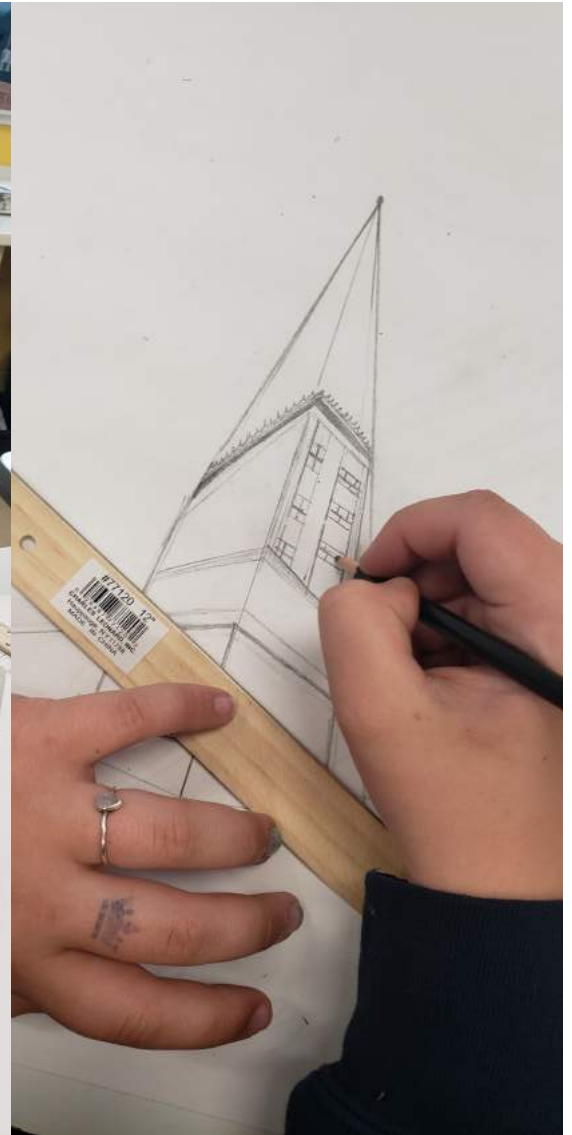
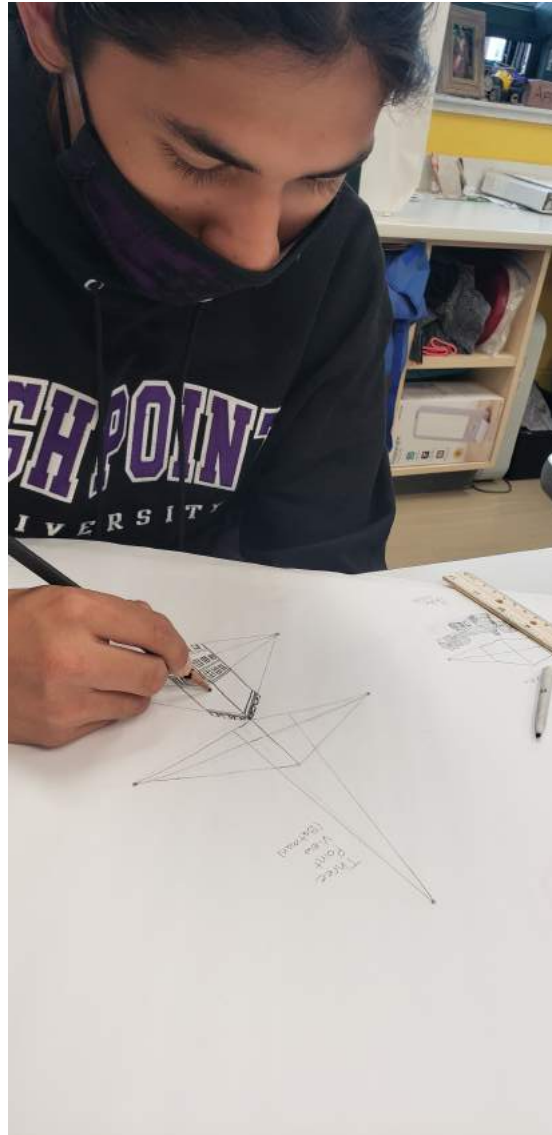
Unfortunately, just the thought of doing the actual practice sent the students into turmoil, for a whole variety of reasons that they expressed. It led to a very 'raw' classroom experience. Some students felt the negativity and responded with very real, very visible physical stress. I felt it. Everyone felt it. As an adult I can look deeper into the behaviors and realize that the teens do not want to face their feelings, they made it clear they would rather escape them through technology. What we have been learning is how very important it is to 'name' our emotions and then learn techniques to help us cope with them in a healthy manner. Make no mistake, this is HARD work. Scary work and they are running from it. Yet, with the state of the world and the mental health (we like to say brain health) of teens and younger and younger adolescents, as well as adults, hitting crisis levels around the world due to the pandemic, I am determined to continue this important work. Even as the 201s display angst at me for it. It is that important. Parents, caregivers, please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

If you think about it ask your student to demonstrate the STAR fish breathing technique, or simply 4x4 breathing. If they ask you to go for a walk with them please DO, that is also a technique and trust me I do it often with students and it works for them.

Walk and talk, walk and be silly, dance while you walk or swing your arms wildly, challenge them to a 10 yard dash- it moves the body, releases stress and gets the teens giggling when you are not afraid

to act a little silly. Now you know my secret-when you see me skipping, twirling or lunging, maybe even in a footrace with a student...we are 'walking and talking' and I am listening to them release their stress, I'm not just acting crazy...WELL...maybe a little FUN type crazy lol. After a difficult week emotionally for many of the 201s we spent a large time in advisory Friday being mindful; I wanted students to go into the weekend on a positive note. They were so engaged in the mindfulness work that when Kym walked into the room she whispered to me: "Wow, it is so peaceful in here!" I was thrilled. Yay! As that was my goal.

Again, please reach out to me if you have any questions, or see signs of stress, depression or anxiety in your teen that you want to inform me of, so we can work as a team to help them in this difficult time of adolescence (in the midst of a pandemic).



TGIF from Lenny

It has been a couple weeks since our last communication and we have been as busy as ever. My ER workshops have been dedicated to building and launching rockets and student's projects are ramping up once again. Here is an overview.

As I mentioned previously, in ER we all built model rockets from kits. This may seem simple. Just follow the directions right? But if it's your first time making a rocket, this can be challenging. Is the engine housing too deep? Did I use enough wadding? Did I fold my parachute correctly? All these questions were answered in real time as we launched our rockets and observed the rocket's path, height, chute deployment and landing. It was equal parts fun and educational.

We used what we learned with the model rockets to design and build custom air powered rockets. We launched those using compressed air at 60 psi (hand pumped by students) and enjoyed observing the results. We have already moved on to building balsa wood bridges in one ER section and learning about AI in the other.

In Living Environment we moved from learning about plants to genetics. We used pea plants as the bridge to Mendelian Genetics and probability. I also asked 101s to help repot and water the seedlings that we have been growing for the garden and Ronnie, Lucas, Kat, Bruce, and Ariyahna eagerly agreed to help out.

There were many projects underway in the shop this week. One particularly cool project was the building of two easels. April was using easels



for her charcoal drawing exploratory, but we only have a couple. So, using one as a template, Lucas and I built another easel from scrap wood. Then with no assistance from me, Lucas built another easel using the skills he acquired building the first. It was a great learning arc.

Other projects include Hayden using the lathe to make a handle for Kyle's grill, Austin making a model city by shaping buildings from high-density polystyrene, and Cody making a wood plaque for his boss. I also made plans with Daryll to build a desk, made plans with Jacoby and Dayton to build a gaga pit, and began to plan out moving plants to the greenhouse as soon as the weather permits.

Having engaging projects on the agenda can be challenging to manage,

but it is more than worth it. Have an enjoyable and productive week!

