

Palmarium

The Classical Academy exists to assist parents in their mission to develop exemplary citizens equipped with analytical thinking skills, virtuous character, and a passion for learning, all built upon a solid foundation of knowledge.



Reflections on Gratitude

••••• Assorted Quotes



Marcus Tullius Cicero
(106 BC – 43 BC)

Image from website (public domain):
<http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cicero.PNG>

Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all others. *Cicero (106 BC-43 BC)*

Gratitude looks to the Past and love to the Present; fear avarice, lust, and ambition look ahead. *C.S. Lewis (1898-1963) in The Screwtape Letters*

The hardest arithmetic to master is that which enables us to count our blessings. *Eric Hoffer (1902 - 1983)*

Do not spoil what you have by desiring what you have not; remember that what you now have was once among the things you only hoped for. *Epicurus (341 BC-270 BC)*

Cultivate the habit of being grateful for every good thing that comes to you, and to give thanks continuously. And because all things have contributed to your advancement, you should include all things in your gratitude. *Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)*

We must find time to stop and thank the people who make a difference in our lives. *John F. Kennedy (1917-1963)*

In ordinary life we hardly realize that we receive a great deal more than we give, and that it is only with gratitude that life becomes rich. *Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945)*

Contents

| | |
|---------|---|
| Page 1 | Quotes on <i>Gratitude Reflection</i> |
| Page 2 | <i>Gratitude</i> : “The Husband, the Wife, and the Small Act of Gratitude”; plus <i>Gratitude Definitions</i> |
| Pages 3 | Veterans Day at TCA; <i>Event</i> Mr. James Downing speaks |
| Page 4 | Average Words Read; <i>Ponderings</i> G.K. Chesterton quote |
| Page 5 | Compliance Corner and <i>Due Dates</i> Upcoming Due Dates for Academic Services |
| Page 6 | <i>Gratitude Poster</i> : George Washington quote |

- Whole Person Focused
 - Relationship Based
 - Classically Oriented
 - Idea Centered



The Husband, the Wife, and the Small Act of Gratitude

“Gratitude is the sign of noble souls.” Aesop

This time of year it is easy to think about all the amazing things we have to be thankful for, but sometimes in the midst of our busy lives gratitude gets lost. My husband, Vance, runs a technology company and has a deep passion for corporate culture. Here is an excerpt from Vance’s corporate blog:

So often we take the little things in life for granted. Every morning when I go by the kitchen on my way to my home office, my wife Betsy has made sure the coffee is waiting for me - and every other day, a super healthy shake. I won't tell you what's in it . . . I don't even want to know what's in it. All natural. It's green (a little scary). No preservatives. No additives. No fun. No animals were harmed in the making of this type of shake. But I digress. The other day I went into the kitchen to get my coffee and shake and said my typical “thank you” to her (I'm not heartless) but it hit me . . . Am I really, really appreciative? How much do I expect this because it's our morning routine? Dare I say, I almost feel entitled to it instead of being grateful that my wife took to the time to care for me. Very different perspective. Later that day, I texted Betsy that I was grateful for her. Her response? She told ME how much that meant to her! I was overwhelmed with the impact of even being able to express my gratefulness; not only did it make her feel good to be told what she did mattered to me, but I was shocked with how good it made me feel to TELL her that! My mood was lifted immediately. - See more at: <http://www.cherwell.com/ceo-blog/the-impact-of-gratefulness-on-corporate-culture#sthash.q4QNF8J.dpuf>

True story and the names haven’t even been changed to protect the innocent. But if you go and read the full blog you will notice that Vance makes a slightly snide comment about the number of shoes I have in my closet. I choose to practice forgiveness and gratitude as I am being thrown under the bus.

If you know me you know I love all 24 character strengths and virtues, but you would be hard pressed to find a character strength that has more impact on your well-being and the well-being of those around you. If you don't believe me take a look at the research on this website: <http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/topic/gratitude>.

Gratitude boosts happiness, reduces depression, improves physical health, strengthens relationships and makes you look 10 years younger (okay, I made that last one up, but it certainly sounds feasible!). So let’s all take a moment to notice and be grateful for all the amazing gifts in our lives. Here are some specific practical suggestions: 1) Start a gratitude journal; 2) Write a thank you letter to someone who has impacted your life and read it to them; 3) Start your dinnertime conversation with the three best things about your day; 4) Create a gratitude wall in the teacher’s lounge where people can post notes of gratitude and encouragement to their colleagues; and 5) Have students participate in a gratitude challenge.

So the moral of the story is that if you savor the little blessings and practice gratitude every day, you will be happier and healthier!

by Betsy Brown, TCA Director of Character Education



CHARACTER STRENGTHS

chapter on “GRATITUDE” in *Character*
“Gratitude is a sense of thankfulness and tangible benefit from a specific other or a moment of peaceful bliss evoked by natural beauty. The word gratitude is derived from the Latin gratia, meaning ‘grace,’ ‘graciousness,’ or ‘gratefulness.’ . . . Prototypically, gratitude stems from the perception that one has benefited due to the actions of another person. . . . Individuals with this strength would strongly endorse such statements as the following: It is important to appreciate each day that you are alive; I often reflect on how much easier my life is because of the efforts of others; For me, life is much more of a gift than it is a burden; One of my favorite times of the year is Thanksgiving; I am basically very thankful for the parenting that was provided to me; I could not have gotten where I am today without the help of many people; It seems that I can even find reasons to feel thankful for bad things that happen; I have been struck by the beauty or awe of something that I felt grateful in return” (see page 554 in the Peterson and Seligman book cited below).

CLASSIFICATIONS and DEFINITIONS: In their *Strengths and Virtues*, Peterson and Seligman write: joy in response to receiving a gift, whether the gift be a
 The word *gratitude* is derived from the Latin *gratia*, meaning ‘grace,’ ‘graciousness,’ or ‘gratefulness.’ . . . Prototypically, gratitude stems from the perception that one has benefited due to the actions of another person. . . . Individuals with this strength would strongly endorse such statements as the following: It is important to appreciate each day that you are alive; I often reflect on how much easier my life is because of the efforts of others; For me, life is much more of a gift than it is a burden; One of my favorite times of the year is Thanksgiving; I am basically very thankful for the parenting that was provided to me; I could not have gotten where I am today without the help of many people; It seems that I can even find reasons to feel thankful for bad things that happen; I have been struck by the beauty or awe of something that I felt grateful in return” (see page 554 in the Peterson and Seligman book cited below).

Peterson, C., & Park, N. (2009). Classifying and measuring strengths of character. In S. J. Lopez & C. R. Snyder (Eds), *Oxford handbook of positive psychology*, 2nd edition (pp. 25-33. New York: Oxford University Press. www.viacharacter.org

Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*. New York: Oxford University Press and Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. www.viacharacter.org



APPRECIATION OF BEAUTY & EXCELLENCE: Awe; wonder; elevation
GRATITUDE: Thankful for the good; expressing thanks; feeling blessed
HOPE: Optimism; future-mindedness; future orientation
HUMOR: Playfulness; bringing smiles to others; lighthearted
SPIRITUALITY: Religiousness; faith; purpose; meaning

Gratitude: 2014 Veterans Day at TCA



Veterans Day this year was a truly memorable event for all of the TCA community. The TCA North gym was packed with veterans and their families, students from all grades, and other special guests. The oldest living Pearl Harbor survivor Mr. James Downing (pictured below) was the keynote speaker for the morning activities. In August 2014 he celebrated his 101st birthday. During his presentation Mr. Downing shared about his experience on the USS *West Virginia* on that fateful day in December 1941 and challenged the students and all those in attendance to keep America strong. As Mr. Downing made his way out of the gymnasium at the end of the event the

spontaneous, lengthy, and truly moving standing ovation touched the hearts of many in attendance.

As we reflect on gratitude this month during the Thanksgiving season it is important that we also continue to reflect on the sacrifices of all those who have served to keep American strong and protect the freedoms we enjoy each day. Our core values document at *The Classical Academy* clearly expresses an appreciation and gratitude for those who have served and for the important place of senior citizens in our community.

We value the fact that freedom isn't free and honor the sacrifices made by the men and women who serve or have served in the Armed Forces.

We value the wisdom and life experience of the senior citizens in our community.

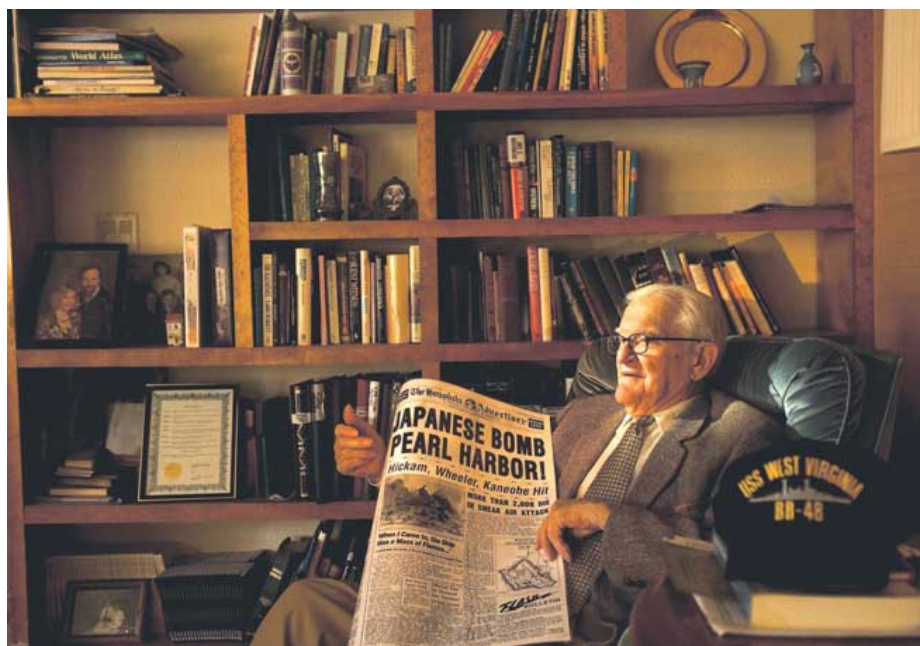
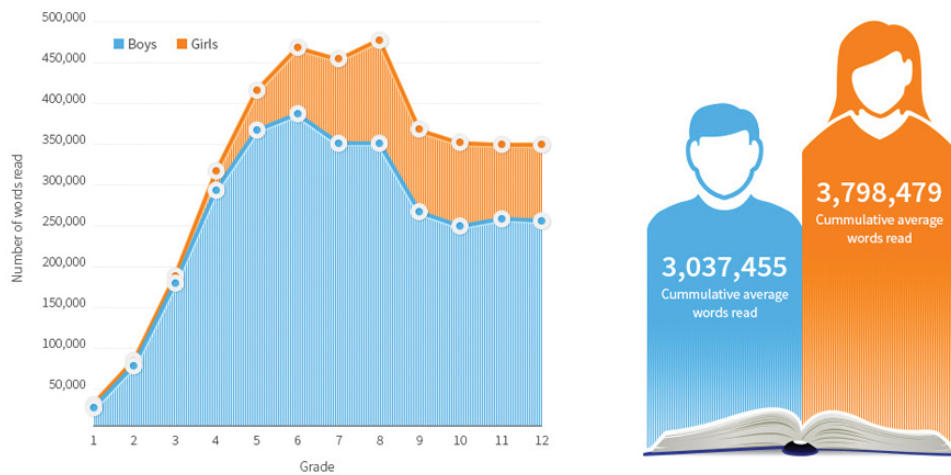


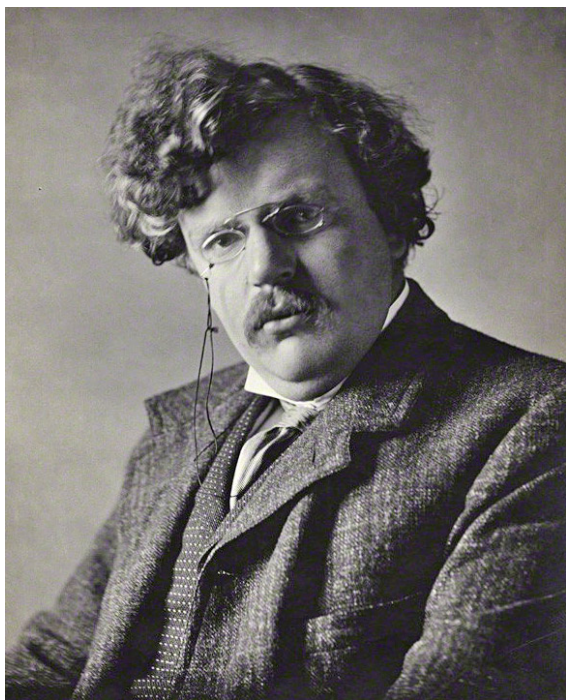
Photo of James Downing included with *The Denver Post* article from December 2013 (photo taken by Cyrus McCrimmon). See article and image at http://www.denverpost.com/news/ci_24673595/pearl-harbor-survivor-100-shares-story-that-fateful

Average Words Read Comparisons by Grade Level for Boys and Girls

Average words read by grade level in 2013-14 school year



The infographic above can be found at the *Renaissance Learning* website at the following blog link authored by Heather Nagrocki – <http://blog.renaissance.com/what-kids-are-reading-and-why-it-matters/>



G. K. Chesterton

by Ernest Herbert Mills, 1909

(1874-1936)

Image from website (public domain):
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/G._K._Chesterton#mediaviewer/File:Gilbert_Chesterton.jpg

“When it comes to life the critical thing is whether you take things for granted or take them with gratitude.”



Upcoming DAS Meetings and Due Dates:

ALT Meetings (11:00 am-12:30 pm):

- Wed, Dec 3: ALT Meeting - Colorado Room
- Wed, Dec 17: ALT Meeting - Colorado Room

Due Dates and Upcoming Events:

Mon-Fri, Nov 24-28: Thanksgiving Break for Students

- Mon, Dec 1: Cabinet Meeting (10:30-12:00)
- Tue, Dec 2: DAS/Central Principal Mtgs (9:00-10:00 am)
- Thu, Dec 4: Ridgeview Classical Administration Visit
- Thu, Dec 4: CSP Winter Concert
- Fri, Dec 5: Theatre Show - College Pathways, East Atrium
- Sat, Dec 6: Winter Dance - High School, North Gym
- Mon, Dec 8: TCA Board Meeting (6:00-10:00 pm)
- Tue, Dec 9: DAS/North Principal/SSS Mtgs (8:00-11:00 am)
- Tue, Dec 9: Band Concert - North Gym
- Thu, Dec 11: DAS/East Principal Meetings (1:00-3:00 pm)
- Fri, Dec 12: Choir Holiday Concert - North Gym
- Mon, Dec 15: DAS/CCCC Meeting (8:30-9:30 am)
- Mon, Dec 15: Cabinet Meeting (10:30-12:00)

Fri, Dec 19 - Mon, Jan 5 Winter Break for Students

- Thu, Dec 25 Christmas Day
- Thu, Jan 1 New Year's Day
- Tue, Jan 6 DAS/Central Principal Meeting (9:00-10:00 am)
- Tue, Jan 6 Cabinet Meeting (10:30-12:00)
- Thu, Jan 8 DAS/Compliance Mtg (8:00-8:30 am)
- Thu, Jan 8 DAS/East Principal Meetings (9:00-11:00 am)
- Mon, Jan 12 TCA Board Meeting (6:00-10:00 pm)
- Tue, Jan 13 DAS/North Principal/SSS Mtgs (8:00-11:00 am)
- Thu, Jan 22 New Parent Info Night (CP/CSP) - East Gym



Compliance and Accreditation Corner

Check here for updates on compliance and accreditation items as we move through the year:

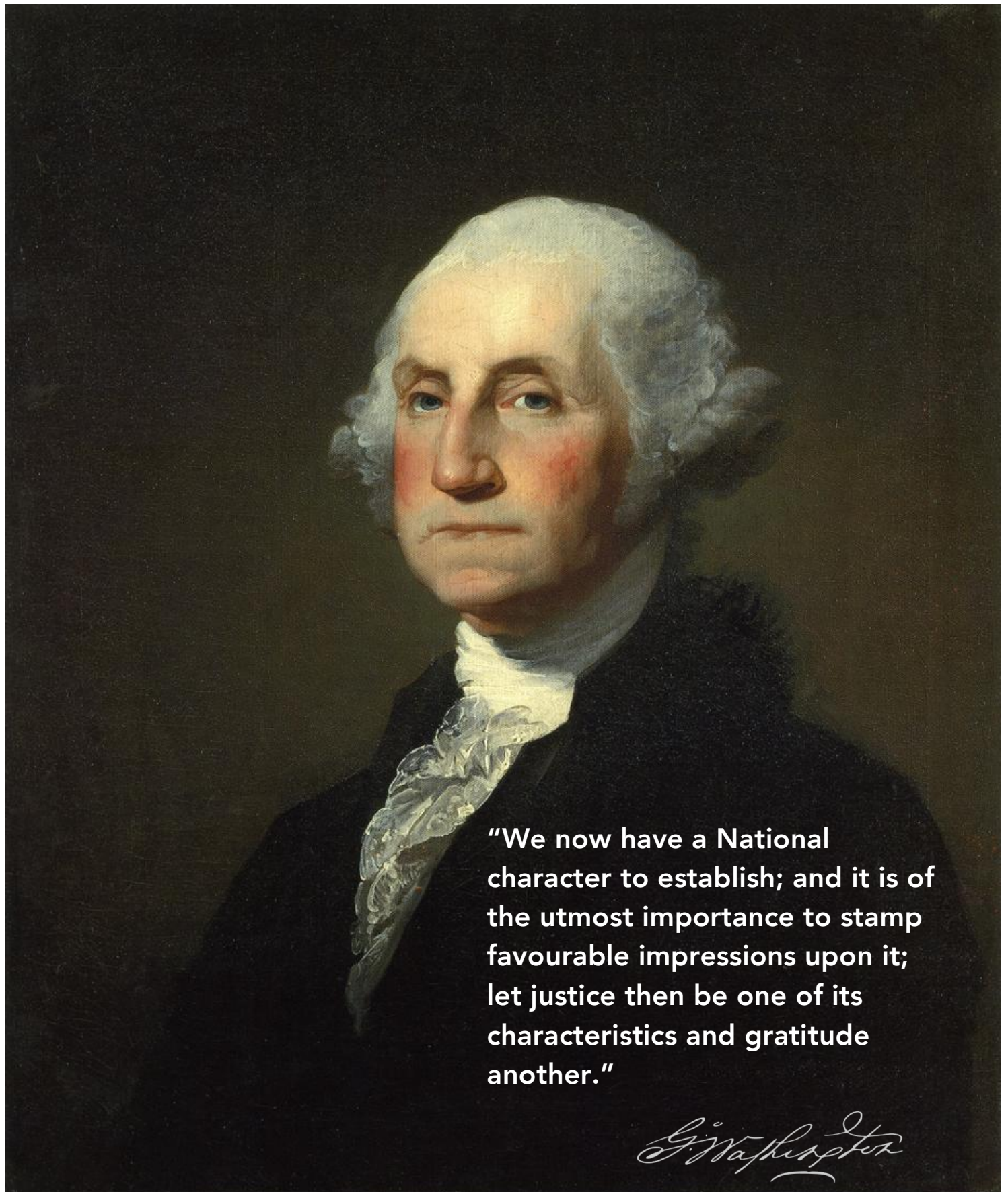
SAC BUSINESS TO COMPLETE:

- quarterly meetings
- update SAC by-laws
- e-mail SAC minutes to Cheri throughout the year

ITEMS DUE IN FUTURE:

- **District Accountability Committee (DAC)** - reviews SIPs/UIPs on *Tuesday, December 9.*





"We now have a National character to establish; and it is of the utmost importance to stamp favourable impressions upon it; let justice then be one of its characteristics and gratitude another."

G. Washington

George Washington to Theodorick Bland, April 4, 1783