

# Advanced Learner Newsletter

## McFarland School District

**WINTER IS A GREAT  
TIME TO WRITE!!**

### YAHARA RIVER

Yahara is a writing/cartooning contest for ALL students in **grades 5 – 8**. It is sponsored by the Greater Dane County Advanced Learner Network. Students may enter ONE piece in any ONE of the following categories:

Cartoons      Short Stories  
Editorials      Poetry

The entries need to be formatted in a certain way. Cartoon templates are available at the following web address: <http://www.gdcaln.org/yahara/> Scroll down for the cartoon templates

**Entry Deadline:**  
**January 11, 2017**

Here are the requirements:

**Short Stories:** Maximum of 850 Words

**Poetry:** Minimum 12 lines; maximum 36 lines and spaces

**Editorials:** Maximum of 475 Words

**Cartoon:** One 4.5 square or three 3" squares or one 3/9" rectangle. Available from your Advanced Learner Resource Teacher or the website.

Girls Coding Day Build a Mobile App

4th-6th graders: Build your own app with Swift Playground and MIT AppInventor!

Section 1 - 9:30am - 12:30pm

Section 2 - 1:30pm - 4:30pm

Build a Website in a Day

7th-12th graders: Impress the world by putting creativity to the web. Learn programming and web design by building your own interactive website using HTML, CSS, and Javascript.

Visit <http://www.maydm.org/girls-coding-day> to learn more and to REGISTER.

\*The intent of this program is to expose girls/young women to technology and coding, but both the library and Maydm have coding programs open to all. Check out our calendar or [www.maydm.org](http://www.maydm.org) to learn more.

### SCENARIO WRITING FUTURE PROBLEM SOLVING

Write a story set at least 20 years in the future and related to one of the FPS topics for the 2016-17 year: Energy of the Future, Educational Disparities, It's All in the Genes, 3D Printing, Identity Theft. Maximum of 1500 words

Single author

3 divisions: grades 4-6; 7-9; 10-12

Entry fee is \$25. Feedback is provided!

Due Date: January 20, 2017

Top three winners in each division present at the State Bowl April 27-29. Visit <http://www.wisfps.org/#!scenario-performance/c12so> for more information.



### Parent Tips: *Down time*

Make sure that your child has plenty of down time. Resist his insistence (or yours) on getting involved in too many activities or lessons. Suggest that your child focus each year on a few areas he wants to excel in, and maybe even one in which your child feels inadequate and would like to improve. When he has to struggle in some area in which other youngsters are easily better, he may become more empathetic for classmates whose weakness is in academics. Encourage day-dreaming, socializing, and goofing off. Emphasize the importance of a balanced life. From: Winebrenner, Susan (2012) *Teaching Gifted Kids in Today's Classroom*. Free Spirit Publishing, Minneapolis. **De-Stress**

Stress causes the brain intake systems to send information into the Reactive brain (automatic-fight, flight, freeze) and prevents information flow through to the Reflective prefrontal cortex where long-term memory is constructed. Supportive classroom communities lower brain stress and open filters for learning.

Dr. Judy Willis

*The holidays offer a good time to De-stress, connect with family through stories, make memories and experience some down time together. Enjoy!!*

## REAL GIFTS FOR THE GIFTED

## MATERIAL GIFTS FOR THE GIFTED

Acceptance

Permission & support in pursuing passions

Appropriate Challenges

Permission to make mistakes

Social & Emotional support

Appropriate Expectations

“Real” work/authentic application

Connections with gifted peers

Here are some resources for you to find a gift that will challenge your child in a fun and appropriate way:

**Hoagies' Shopping Guide** offers a variety of ideas:

Smart Toys to play with

Software Favorites

Nerd Shirts

Kids & Teens Books

Magazines for kids and young adults

Books for Parents & Professionals, Journals

Educational Products for parents and professionals

Music for the eclectic gifted ear,

Movies Featuring Gifted Characters.

### **More Cyber Shopping Ideas**

**Mensa Mind Games** <http://www.us.mensa.org/shop/>

**MindWare** <http://www.mindware.com/>

**Bright Ideas:** [www.brightideascatalog.com/](http://www.brightideascatalog.com/);

**Critical Thinking Company:** [www.CriticalThinking.com](http://www.CriticalThinking.com)

**Museum Tour** [www.museumtour.com](http://www.museumtour.com)

**Dr. Toy** <http://www.drtoy.com/site-map/>

Winter Break is a good time to encourage Creative Thinking!

## Math 24 Cards

A holiday gift idea! Math 24 Cards! Math 24 is a game of computation where you need to add, subtract, multiply or divide 4 numbers to reach the number 24. Teams at various grade levels will be forming in the late winter/early spring.

### Places to buy Math 24 cards:

Amazon  
The Learning Shop  
Giggles in Stoughton

### Decks for each grade level:

Third Grade: Single Digits  
Fourth Grade: Double Digits  
Fifth Grade: Variables  
Sixth Grade: Integers  
Seventh Grade: Fractions and Decimals  
Eighth Grade: Algebra/ Exponents

### *Gift Ideas*

*Math 24 Cards!* Click [here](#)

*101 Success Secrets for Gifted Kids*

by Christine Fonseca

*A Parent's Guide to Gifted Children*

by Webb, Gore, Amend, & DeVries

*Mellow Out, They Say. If I Only*

*Could* by Michael Piechowski

*The Gifted Kids' Survival Guide*

by Galbraith & Delisle



*McFarland  
School District  
ADVANCED  
LEARNER  
SERVICES*

Amanda Jamae, District Coordinator  
of Advanced Learner Services & MHS  
Advanced Learner Resource Teacher  
Mary Donagan, IMMS Advanced Learner  
Resource Teacher  
Lisa Sheil, WIS Advanced Learner  
Resource Teacher  
Carol Greig, CE/MPS Resource Teacher

*“Creativity is inventing, experimenting, growing, taking risks, breaking rules, making mistakes, and having fun.”* Mary Lou Cook

### Feed the Imagination of Your Junior Engineer, Mechanic or Architect

Many gifted children love to build various kinds of structures. They may start out building towers out of simple wooden blocks and progress to building complex structures from houses, boats and cars to structures that exist only in their imaginations.

[LINK](#)

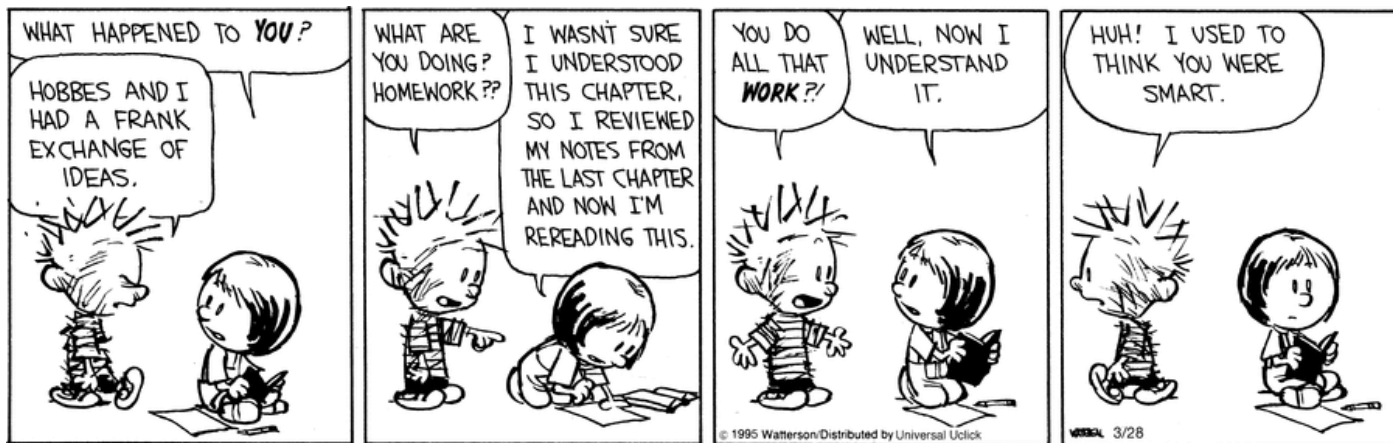
### Gifts that Keep on Giving

When shopping for gifts for the gifted, think about the unusual. For our globally aware children, consider making a donation to a charity instead of giving another toy. Some gifted families boycott "giving" altogether, opting instead to spend extra time with other family members, perhaps cherishing each other's company, or perhaps donating their family time to help those less fortunate. For more ideas, visit [Gifts to Share: Humanitarian Opportunities for Gifted Families](#)

**I Thought You Were Smart** The comic below presents a frame of mind that many gifted kids share: if you have to work, you're not smart. Show this comic to your kids and have a little discussion. No need to preach! Let them share their thoughts. Let them do the talking.

Possible questions: Why is Calvin right? Why is Susie right? Who will do better on the test?  
Who is learning a better long-term skill? Who would you want in your study group?

This might be an interesting avenue into the “we only get stronger when it's difficult” discussion. From [www.Byrdseed.com](http://www.Byrdseed.com)



## VISIT OUR WEB SITE!

[HTTP://WWW.MCFARLAND.K12.WI.US/FAMILIES/ADVLEARNER.CFM](http://www.mcfarland.k12.wi.us/families/advlearner.cfm)

### *Is My Child Gifted?*

*An article from NAGC describing characteristic of gifted people*

### *Handbook for Families*

*A comprehensive resource which includes information about giftedness, the identification process, programming options building level services and more!*

### *Programming Options*

*The unique approaches at each building*

### *Gifted Identification Power Points*

- ◆ *K-5 PTO Presentation*

*Specific Information describing out ongoing identification process*

### *Frequently Used Terms*

*A glossary that defines common vocabulary*

### *Monthly Newsletters*

*Archived for the past four years*

### *Resources for You*

*Organizations that support the Gifted and their Web Addresses*

*Programming opportunities to meet the unique needs of gifted people.*

## Parenting a Gifted Child Is...

By Jane Hesslein

- Exhausting
- Exhilarating
- Unnerving
- Having a front row seat for the greatest entertainment ever
- Working hard to craft a delicate partnership with you children's teacher, especially if you are one
- Wrestling with your own enthusiasm for your child's passion so she discovers it for herself
- Teaching your child to use the library himself instead of surprising him with books you've checked out for him
- Enough to bring you to tears—of joy as well as sadness
- Intense
- Much easier when you find a community of like-minded souls
- A real education, homework included
- Not reacting visibly when your 2 month old swears in public—appropriately
- Knowing it is normal for our 3-yr-old to yell in a museum, "Oh my gosh, that is the biggest trilobite I've ever seen IN MY ENTIRE LIFE!"
- Hearing your child's cello teacher say after six lessons, "That child was a cellist in a former life."
- Figuring out that every request for extra attention for your child in school should include an offer to help the teacher
- Charging the kid a quarter every time he brings up the Batman movie at the table
- Learning to be a little subversive with the folks in charge at school so they'll test the kid and "discover" that the "reading problem" you requested testing for is that he's reading years above grade level.
- Chuckling at the sound LEGOs make when they're vacuumed up
- Realizing that your pre-verbal child is humming and you can recognize the tune
- Having your dinosaur pronunciation corrected
- Watching your kid wake up reading one morning and then refusing to learn math facts because he expects to wake up one day knowing them, too!
- Feeling really relieved to learn that your child's spouse has an equally absurd LEGO and Star Wars fascination
- Throwing the Tooth Fairy's money into a room so messy that your child takes weeks to find it
- Explaining to teachers why your child's late project should not receive full credit
- Working to convince school that matching the special needs kid with the right teacher is good for both of them.
- Thanking the teacher who recommended all those sci-fi books with the strong female protagonists to your son
- Remembering the itinerant teacher of the gifted at the end of the year
- Thanking the teachers who've helped, and putting it into writing
- Befriending librarians
- Swallowing hard when your child finally hits the wall academically, especially if this doesn't happen until the university years
- Taking early declarations of independence in stride—eventually
- Watching with pride as your introverted child functions in another country and another language

## Grandparenting a Gifted Child is...

- Smiling and thinking smugly, "What goes around..."