



GIRLS' TALK

Calgary
Girls' School

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Voices of Our Girls

"It is told, it is recounted here how the ancient ones...the people of Aztlan, the Mexicans... came to [founded] the great city of Mexico-Tenochtitlan, their place of fame, their place of example, the place where the tenochtli cactus stands amid the waters; where the eagle preens...and devours the snake...among the reeds, amid the canes."

-Aztec Foundation Legend

"All about us we saw cities and villages built in the water, their great towers and buildings of masonry rising out of it... When I beheld the scenes around me I thought within myself, this was the garden of the world. And of all the wonders I beheld that day, nothing now remains. All is overthrown and lost."

-Spanish Account of the Conquest

On arriving in Tenochtitlán, the Spaniards were deeply impressed by the beauty, order and cleanliness of this city with between 150,000 and 300,000 inhabitants, one of the biggest metropolises in the world at the time. The Aztecs literally built the island in the sense that they extended it by driving stakes into the lake-bed around an area and lashing the stakes together then filling the enclosure with mud dredged up from the lake bed. The space between the enclosures then served as canals, which facilitated the transport of material within the city. The city was accessed by four causeways, each several miles long, with bridges that could be quickly dismantled to prevent entrance to or escape from the city. Great pyramids and palaces dominated the city's central precinct, and thousands of people visited the great market every day. Tenochtitlán is unlike other ancient cities in the sense that it exists only in the past. We cannot see the city as it truly was. This is why we can consider Tenochtitlán a "lost city," and it is also why it is so difficult to understand what it would have been like to live in this budding metropolis, with its "great towers and cues and buildings rising from the water." The information that historians have about this great city, what it looked like, how it was built, is mostly from Spanish accounts, and no primary source paintings exist to help us with a visual image.

Students were asked the question: What do you think historians have had to do to piece together the information they would need to create an accurate picture of what the great city of Tenochtitlán looked like before the arrival of the Spanish? Using their skills in research and locating information, as well as their creative ability and understanding of mathematical concepts relating to scale and design, students planned and built a model of an Aztec community plot. A local model-making expert from Replicate Designs came in to demonstrate tools and procedures for the girls, in order to enhance their work and experience real-world application of mathematical concepts. To compliment the hands-on learning experiences with proportion, scale, 2D shapes and 3D objects, students wrote journal entries in the descriptive style of the Aztec's Florentine Codex. The following photos and excerpts illustrate our Grade Eight interdisciplinary inquiry into the 'lost city' of Tenochtitlan.

"As I absorbed the sun's heat into my skin, I could feel the warm and soft sand finding it's way through my toes. I love walking to the market. You can hear the birds singing, their stunning and radiant colors stand out in the light blue sky. Sometimes I go to the market with my father so that he can trade our crops. But today while my father went to the chinampas to collect crops, my mother and I went to the market to buy some cotton and maguey fiber. Today was special, I was learning how to weave."

Paulina P.



"I awoke to a bark outside, immediately blinded by the sun's rays beaming through the opening of my house. I sat up on my mat upon which I sleep. I looked around, rubbed my eyes and suddenly remembered there was work to be done. I got up, brushing the dust and dirt off myself. Stumbling I made my way outside fighting the constant sunshine on my face and hurried under the shade of the trees, eager to view my crops."

Rida M.





"I needed to paddle across the flat stream to get to my friends house to ask if I could have some of their seeds. I stepped slowly down into the smooth wooden canoe. When I had finally arrived at my friend's house she came running out yelling "Anacaona!" I explained to her that I was planting brand new tomato seeds. We both started desperately looking for the seeds, we look everywhere for the seeds. About an hour of time slipped away from us and we then gave up. We sat under the warm sun for hours complaining about our chores."

Emma H.

"I picked up the bucket my mother prepared with all the scrap pieces of rabbit meat and headed outside. The sun shone on my face. I could feel the intense heat instantly. Right then Tayanna walked out of her house. Tayanna is my best friend. Everyday she helps me feed the dogs and the turkeys and our families usually have our meals together. As the heat intensified we hurried over the arch bridge to the animal pen."

Jazmin G.

"In the morning, the sunshine beamed down on my face. The fresh air smelled like my newborn daughter Citalmina's delicate smooth skin. After that I prayed, at our shrine, to our honourable god Huitzilopitchli, for a successful day and healthy crops. Our fancy shrine was decorated with lots of green, blue and red colour, god statues and our beloved Eagle, who let my ancestors settle in Technochitilan."

Kelly G.



MESSAGE FROM CGS STAFF

CGS students have recently participated in a series of special events that have highlighted the incredible work that goes on at the school. The quality of the work done at the school shows when one looks at their breadth of their achievements and the way they are recognized in so many different forums. It is clear to us that the girls are the best ambassadors for the school. We are so very proud of all of you!

Congratulations are offered to:

Science Teams

2010 Science Olympics: Teams of girls from grades 6 – 9 worked with parent volunteer/ engineer Glen Hermanson and the science teachers to complete a design project. This extra curricular group met weekly to fine-tune their designs then on Saturday, Feb 27 showcased their design at a competition that included new design challenges and problems. Our girls made a strong showing winning silver in two categories!

Tech Head – On Saturday March 7th, other members of Team Science represented CGS at *Tech Head*. This event took place at Telus World of Science. Congratulations to all Team Science members for your enthusiasm and commitment to the team. Special thanks to parent coach Glen Hermanson for your time and talent.

Senior Girls Basketball Team

Congratulations to the Senior Girls Basketball Team who won their 3rd straight CAAA Championship. This achievement speaks to the quality of athletes we have at CGS and with over 100 girls trying out for the grade 7, 8 and 9 badminton teams we're sure to put forth a good showing this year.

Concert Choir

Recently, the Grade 6 – 9 Concert Choir under the direction of Quan Le, competed at the Kiwanis Music Festival. The choir placed first in their category with a "Superior" rating. Additionally, they have been chosen to represent Calgary at the Provincial Music Festival that will take place in May of this year.

Grade 4 and 5 Choirs

The Grade 4 and 5 Choirs were showcased at Choralfest, an event sponsored by the Alberta Choral Federation. Congratulations to these groups for their musical performances and their hard work.

Pink Tea

As part on the activities associated with International Women's Week, the grade 6 classes hosted a *Pink Tea* on March 12th. The tea was fashioned in the spirit of the teas hosted by Emily Murphy and other members of the Famous Five in their quest to see women recognized as "persons".

The CGS event was a beautifully planned event that included several women politicians and activists who encouraged girls to take action and participate in politics.

Thank you to all participants for your insightful questions, active listening and lively discussion.

By now, parents will know that our online registration system is alive and working. Please remember that it is important to register by April 15th or we will assume that your daughter is not returning to CGS and her spot will be given to a new student.

Special thanks to those parents who "test drove" our system and provided us with valuable feedback. Your help enabled us to go "live" and hopefully "glitch" free.

Parents of Grade 9 Girls should save the afternoon June 4 for their daughter's graduation. It's hard to believe that we're thinking of the end of year when it seems that we just started!

On behalf of everyone at CGS, we wish all families rest, rejuvenation and relaxation this Spring Break.



SPECIAL PARENT INFORMATION SESSIONS

- Have you ever wondered if your daughter has the skill set to live life well after the protective “bubble” of CGS?
- Do the stories of adolescent girls sometimes scare you?
- Have you ever wished that girls would come with a user manual?

If these or other questions have occurred to you, please join us for a series of Parent Information Sessions in the coming weeks. Stacy McRae from the Youth Addiction Services branch of Alberta Health Services will be presenting four sessions entitled *Kids and Drugs: A Parent's Guide to Prevention*.

These informative sessions stress prevention through strategies and practices that parents can put into place early. They are meant to be proactive and will hopefully offer a forum where CGS parents can connect with each other.

Please save the following dates on your calendar:

- Monday, April 12
- Monday, May 3
- Monday, May 17
- Monday, June 7

As we firm up other information around these sessions, information will come to you through Parents in the Loop.

CASINO NEWS

We have learned that CGS earned \$72,742.56 from the casino in September. Not bad for 48 hours worth of work! As well, the Board has given its support for the use of the funds for a playground/outdoor recreation area for the Lakeview Campus. Thank you again to all the volunteers and keep in mind that we have another casino scheduled for the second quarter (April/May/June) of 2011.

TOP MARKS

Top Marks will be at Lakeview on Friday April 30 from 3:00 - 5:00. Please note that we will be doing our annual fitting session at the Lakeview campus from Monday May 17 to Thursday May 20 from 3:00 - 7:30. During this time you can have your daughter fitted for new pieces of the uniform. Orders can be placed at that time.

