

Plato Academy- Room 9

Classroom Journal: George Melies and The Invention of Hugo Cabret

1/12/2018

This week we started our new book study: *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* by Brian Selznick. As a “pre-reading” activity we watched the first science fiction film, *Le Voyage dans la Lune* by George Melies (1902). The children practiced taking notes on the film so that we can look back when the time comes to figure out what the connection the author made to this silent film. This silent film is suggested on the author’s site and has some relation to our book but we haven’t read that far in yet! The book is filled with cross-sketch illustrations and takes place in Paris in the 1930’s. We will begin studying the culture of Paris in the 1930’s starting with Salvador Dali “The Persistence of Memory” and his famous sundial displayed above Rue Saint-Jacques in Paris.

**“It looks like a seashell”,  
“What is a sundial?” “Why does it have eyes?”  
“Maybe they are his eyes” “That’s a self-portrait”, etc.**

Using just their eyes(visual thinking) the children analysed two works of art. They also got a chance to view his famous mustache and pet ocelot! We followed visual-thinking strategies (What is going on in this picture? What makes you say that? Why?) in studying the painting. Our two new French words: *jouets* and *rue*; our two favorite vocabulary words are: *automaton* (a fancy word for robot) and *rickety* (wobbly, not stable). The children have also been practicing exit slips this week which are short questions before dismissal to recall things that we have read/discussed. The questions are inference and comprehension based. For example yesterday’s was, “Draw an example of figurative language we have read in the first two chapters. Remember to note the two things being compared!” The children through our group discourse are practicing understanding figurative language because there is a lot of symbolism and comparisons present in the story so far: “growled like a dog” or “they (clocks) were like huge round windows and looked out over the city”; and the topic organically emerged through our reading. The illustrations are truly beautiful and I recommend having the book at home for a family read as well!





Mr. Foti has begun his Chess unit with the children and it will continue on Tuesdays and Thursdays. This chess unit comes with a series of books "The Story of Pawn" and the decomposition of the game of chess. The children enjoyed the huge chess board and chess pieces they were able to practice manipulating after the read aloud portion.



During our buddies with Ms. Dionysia's class we watched Martin Luther King's I have a dream speech and the children buddied up to write their own dreams for our community. In our

TIME magazine subscription one of the articles talks about the Little Rock Nine and even had a blurb about Ruby Bridges. All the children are accountable for all of the articles however, 4 groups of three, are given one article to summarize and present to their peers and so, our conversations around some of the most courageous people of American History will continue throughout the month.





Enjoy the 3 day weekend!

Warmly,  
Ms. Bia