



SUMMER 2021 NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 1

SUMMER 2021

WHERE AMBITION
MEETS ACHIEVEMENT

FAST FACTS

OVER 240

the number of classes MEK will hold in Summer 2021

OVER 5500

the number of hours of Zoom meetings MEK hosted during the first week of Summer 2021

OVER 725

the number of students participating in MEK courses in Summer 2021

Welcome to our Summer Newsletter!

Throughout the summer, we want to keep parents and students up-to-date on what's happening in our summer courses.

MEK REVIEW
SUMMER NEWSLETTER

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WEEK 1 & 2 HIGHLIGHTS

- 1** Most test prep students completed anywhere from **two to six practice tests.**
- 2** Students settled down into virtual class and homework procedure, **with Zoom and Canvas.**
- 3** Teachers started tracking students' progress and discussing milestones, overall goals, and study techniques with students.

TEST PREP | Milestones & Achievements

SAT 1500	Class average improved 25 points by end of week 2!	(P)SAT Core Reading & Writing	Students learn annotation skills, reading closely and evidence strategies, and subject verb agreement.
SAT Foundation	Students solved 160 math problems, learned annotation skills, reading closely and evidence strategies, parts of speech and verb grammar lessons.	Exam Prep 8	Students learned reading strategies for main idea, inference, and detail questions. Students learned analogies and sentence completion skills and covered number theory, fractions, decimal, ratios, proportions, and percentages.

HIGH SCHOOL HONORS & AP COURSE PREP | Topics Covered

AP Calculus AB	Algebra and Pre-Calculus Limits Derivatives	Honors Analysis I	Cell Cycle and Reproduction Intro to Genetics DNA Replication and Protein Synthesis
AP Calculus BC	Differentiation Techniques Implicit Differentiation	Honors Analysis II	Analytic Geometry Multivariable Linear Systems
AP Chemistry	FRQ Techniques Atomic Structure Quantum Numbers Periodic Trends Periodicity	Honors Biology	Science of Life: an Intro to Biology Chemistry of Life Biochemistry/Macromolecules Cell Structure and Function
AP U.S. History	Answering the Long Essay Question Answering the Document Based Essay Question Colonialism, Slavery, and Mercantilism in 1607-1754 French and Indian War and American Revolution	Honors Chemistry	Atomic Structure Models of the Atom, Isotopes, and Ions Quantum Numbers Electron Configuration
Honors Algebra II	Linear Functions Arithmetic Series, Geometric Series, and Binomial Series	Honors Geometry	Logical Reasoning Rigorous Mathematical Arguments Basic Geometric Definitions Two-Column Proofs
		Honors Pre-Calculus	Conic Sections Matrices

MEK LEARNING CIRCLES | Milestones & Achievements

Critical Reading Circles	Students in grades 6-8 read and analyzed three texts, across fiction, nonfiction, and poetry genres. Students also learned literary techniques such as alliteration, assonance, imagery, tone and narration.
Writing Circles	Students completed 4 essays, 2 initial drafts, and 2 polished revision essays. They were introduced to expository and persuasive writing prompts.
Vocabulary Circles	Students learned almost 50 words in the first 3 sessions!
Math: Operations & Number Sense Circles	Students completed approximately 260 problems so far!
Math: Problem-Solving Math Circles	Students solved approximately 280 problems so far and completed about 20% of the curriculum in the first 3 sessions.
Non-Fiction Reading	Students tackled current and complex issues such as advertising and corporate moral obligation, voting rights, and U.S. voter suppression.

STUDENT OF THE WEEK

MEK LEARNING CIRCLES



RENEE LEE, 7TH GRADE

PROBLEM-SOLVING MATH CIRCLES

“Renee brings her A-game to every class and every assignment she completes. When I call for volunteers she is the first one to answer, and her hard work on her homework assignments and her willingness to ask questions makes her a star student.”

- Jessica Conlon, Math teacher

Out of over 400 students, Renee Lee was chosen by her teachers to be our Middle School Student of the Week because of her hard work and great attitude.

Way to go Renee!

Let’s learn a little bit more about our Student of the Week:

What do you like about your class?

I like how you don’t spend much time learning about a specific lesson for a long time. The teachers make sure it’s easy to understand the content.

What have you learned so far?

I’ve learned a lot about using operations in scientific notation and rational/irrational numbers.

What is your favorite subject in school?

I’m most interested in language arts, although I also enjoy learning more about math.

What do you like to do outside of MEK?

My favorite things to do are play tennis, read, and spend time outdoors.

TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

NICHOLAS LANG



Nicholas Lang, MEK Math & Science Teacher, BCA Alumnus, Gaming Fanatic

Nick Lang is the Assistant Director of SAT Prep and Coordinator of High School Admissions Prep at MEK Review that teaches SAT1400, Exam Prep 8, MAPC - Competition Math, AP Chemistry, and High School Honors Chemistry.

The following is an interview between him and our marketing writer:

Interviewer: *What is your favorite part of working at MEK?*

Lang: I really enjoy teaching a class where students feel free to be themselves and be honest with me. When students are comfortable they are honest about what they know, what they don't know, and what they need help on. And then I can be honest with them about what questions are easy that they should be getting right, and which questions are genuinely difficult. At MEK, I get to work with a really good group of students that care about their education and are not afraid to ask questions. And that makes my job very rewarding and enjoyable.

Interviewer: *What is the best advice you have for students on learning in a virtual setting?*

Lang: Make sure your physical environment is conducive to virtual learning. The opportunity to learn at home on your bed and in your pajamas is tempting. But you want to make sure you're not sacrificing your mindset. You want to make a space that is dedicated to virtual learning. Try and create a nice comfortable space where you don't have a lot of clutter and you have your materials ready to go.

Interviewer: *Now, you are an alumnus of BCA, correct?*

Lang: I am. I am Class of 2015 from the Academy of Science & Technology.

Interviewer: *What advice do you have for your students who are looking to apply to BCA in the fall?*

Lang: The students who are successful at BCA are the students who can really figure out what they want to do or a big passion that they want to explore. You don't have to know exactly what college you want to attend or what career you want, but if you can know what type of college you want to attend or the subject you want to pursue it will go a long way. At its best, BCA rewards students who have a plan and stick to it, and are willing to put in the work.

Interviewer: *What if a BCA student does discover that their academy is not a subject they're passionate about?*

Lang: Well, you can't switch academies. But it's better to figure out in high school, rather than college, that this isn't the career path for you. Many BCA students don't end up in the field of their academy. And your academy only determines about half of your schedule. You still have the other half of your schedule to pick humanity courses, additional science courses, additional projects, and electives. There are lots of opportunities to supplement your schedule with other subjects you might find you're more interested in.

In my class, many of my fellow AAST students ended up focusing on computer science, even though they weren't in the computer science academy.

Regardless, BCA will provide you with the mindset and drive that you need to succeed, and will provide you with an education that will put you far above almost everyone else.



Interviewer: *As Assistant Director of Test Prep and Coordinator of High School Admissions Prep, what is your leadership role at MEK?*

Lang: So I oversee many aspects of AP and Exam Prep 8 classes. I make sure that all the teachers are on the same page and that as a department we can create and meet deadlines for materials. I facilitate communication between teachers and admin, especially for AP courses. The teachers and I hold weekly AP course meetings to make sure that students are on track with their progress and grades, and that anything that needs to be communicated to admin or parents about a student is quickly addressed.

Interviewer: *So as the leader of Advanced Placement prep, do you have advice for students looking to get 5s on tough math and science AP tests?*

Lang: Well, students tend to do better on multiple choice questions than free responses. So I would advise for free responses that they really look at the key words in the information and learn what AP is looking for in responses. And read the whole thing first. Often in the AP Chem and AP Calc test the topics are related, so if you read everything it will often contextualize the questions. For instance, if one question asks you for a derivative, the next question may ask you to do something with the derivative. So if you read the whole thing through, you know to keep your result in mind.

Interviewer: *And when you're not at MEK, what do you like to do with your free time?*

Lang: I am a massive nerd. So I like every possible nerd thing in the universe - video games, video game leagues, board games. I play Magic: the Gathering; I play Warhammer - which is a really expensive hobby - and I have a densely packed library of video and board games. I also watch and read a lot of science fiction and fantasy. I'm more into horror, so Stephen King and H.P. Lovecraft are probably my favorite. King is more fun and easy to read, while Lovecraft can be almost pretentious in his language, so he can be more difficult to parse and read through. But all in all, my friends and I are all about nerdy games.

WHAT'S NEXT?

WEEK 3 & 4 OF SUMMER 2021

Now that students have learned the routines of class, ***it's go time!***

Teachers will be challenging students to really push themselves in these next few weeks to make those big jumps in skill level, score, and overall progress.

FALL 2021

We will be launching our Fall 2021 courses on July 26th, so be on the lookout for an email announcement!

In the meantime, expect to see:

- + In-person BCA Prep Classes, hosted at the Palisades Park campus
- + In-person SAT Prep Classes, hosted at the Palisades Park campus
- + Year-long AP classes, aligned closely with CollegeBoard curriculum and AP Central
- + NEW College Essay Fall Workshop: group college essay workshop for high school seniors
- + In-person tutoring and consultations, hosted at both Closter and Palisades Park campuses

RESOURCES OF THE WEEK



FOR PARENTS

With students in a virtual setting, it's easier than ever for students to take shortcuts. [Find out](#) some of the surprising root reasons your child may be tempted to cheat and how to fix it!



FOR STUDENTS

All students have been learning the importance of building a strong vocabulary to succeed on standardized tests and in the classroom. [Read this blog](#) to learn 10 great tips for building your word bank quickly!



CANVAS ORIENTATION

Did you miss your Canvas orientation before the start of class? Or do you want a refresher about the different functions of Canvas that you can take advantage of? Watch the orientation [here](#)!