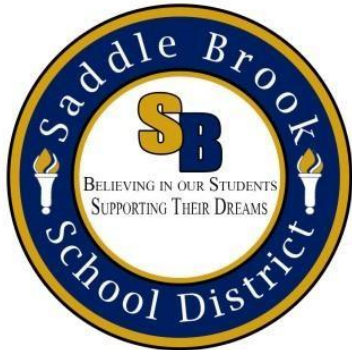


# *Saddle Brook Schools Gifted & Talented Program*

## 2020-2021



"The term 'gifted and talented,' when used with respect to students, children or youth, means students, children or youth who give evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who need services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities."

-S.P. Marland, Education of the Gifted and Talented: Report to Congress, 1972

# *Gifted & Talented Overview*

Due to Covid-19, the Saddle Brook School District's Gifted & Talented program was held remotely in grades 1-6 during the 2020-2021 school year. Students met twice a week at 7:45 AM on Google Meet. The program was broken into 3 units. Each unit was 8 weeks long, for a total of 24 weeks of instruction.

*Thank you to the Gifted & Talented teachers who worked tirelessly to be sure the students received the same fun and rigorous program as always and who made this virtual G&T program a success:*

***Ms. Borzilleri, Ms. Byrnes, Ms. Dalie, Ms. Festa, Ms. Harmon,  
Ms. Hazley, Ms. Lyons, Ms. Mazzone, & Ms. Takach***

# *Grades 1-2:*

## *Unit 1, Changes Over Time*

The youngest students in our Gifted & Talented program began the year working on changes over time! The students studied several different kinds of dinosaurs and learned about what they looked like, what they ate, and how long ago they lived. Each student was able to choose one dinosaur to research more thoroughly.

Next, they learned about how the Earth has changed over time and discussed slow and fast changes, changes in weather, and land changes. The unit ended with learning about climate change and how it has impacted the people and animals on Earth. The students' final project was to write a letter to someone to persuade them to do more to combat climate change.

[G&T Unit 1 Final Letters](#)

# *Grades 1-2:*

## *Unit 2, Computer Coding*

The youngest students in the Saddle Brook Gifted & Talented program were given a glimpse into the world of computer coding. Coding, at its base level, is giving a computer commands to tell it what to do. Gifted & Talented students in 1st and 2nd grade began with the basics of coding, including problem solving, debugging, and looping commands. They also learned how to write their name in binary code, the most difficult and basic form of computer code.

The students were able to create art using code and they created their own computer games and stories using programs on [www.code.org](http://www.code.org).

[Coding Projects Website](#)

# *Grades 1-2:*

## *Unit 3, The Life Cycle*

The first and second graders in the Gifted & Talented program ended the year exploring more about living things! They started off learning the 4 rules for something to be considered “living,” then transitioned into discussing animal life cycles and plant life cycles. This included their stages in life, the type of environment they would live in, and how we see them change over time. Students used their compare and contrast skills to find similarities and differences between penguins and sea turtles, as well as similarities and differences between pumpkins and trees. The unit ended with a lesson about animal adaptations (behavioral, physical, and life cycle), how they help, and why they are important. Their final project was to come up with their own 3 adaptations for a “new animal” of their choosing. They either had to adapt a fish to live on land, or a lion to live in the water. After creating their 3 adaptations they were to draw a picture of their “new animal”.

# *Grades 3-4:*

## *Unit 1, Ancient Egypt*

Students in grades 3 and 4 studied the Ancient Egyptians. They learned about Pharaohs, the children of Ancient Egypt, buildings and architecture, the food they ate, and the clothing they wore. At the end of the unit, students created their own Pharaoh headdresses and researched/wrote out recipes that were common in Ancient Egypt.

[Recipe Examples](#)

# *Grades 3-4:*

## *Unit 2, Alaska & the Iditarod*

Students in grades 3 and 4 moved on to study Alaska, dog sledding, and the Iditarod dog race. They enjoyed learning about dog sled teams and were amazed by how hard the dogs work and how smart they are. They also learned facts about Alaska and the terrain of the state. At the end of the unit, they researched Native American tribes that lived in the regions of Alaska.

[Example 1](#)

[Example 2](#)

[Example 3](#)

# *Grades 3-4:*

## *Unit 3, Renewable Resources*

The final unit in Grades 3 and 4 consisted of Renewable Resources and different types of Energy. The students learned about wind, biomass, geothermal, hydroelectric, and solar energy. They did wind experiments where they caught leaves in wind traps, they used heat to blow up balloons, and finally, they created a solar oven using pizza boxes. The students worked very hard this year and learned many new and innovative ways to use natural resources.



# *Grades 5-6:*

## *Unit 1, Imagineering Project*

Gifted & Talented students in grades 5 and 6 learned about how theme parks are imagineered from the ground up. The students brainstormed stories and themes to fit their new lands. They mapped out the layouts and designed buildings in an architectural style that matched the theme of their park. Students also researched landscape design and plant life to include in their park, created graphics, compiled sound effects that would play throughout their park and designed menus for restaurants their theme park might have.

Following this, students zeroed in and began focusing on one attraction, learning about the difference between dark rides and thrill rides. They wrote storyboards, learned about various ride systems and used a ride simulator online to design and layout their dark ride. The final project was to build a scale model of at least one of their attractions either by hand or using technology (roblox/ minecraft..etc) along with the option of providing scale models of some of the surrounding features in the park.

[Student Flipgrid](#)

# *Grades 5-6: Unit 2, Passion Projects*

Students in grades 5 & 6 started this project by brainstorming passions and curiosities and taking a career aptitude test. They explored the essential skills of success and narrowed down the list of skills they excel at to the skills they are interested in and developed a driving question that they could research and make shareable. They wrote proposals, kept journals, and took notes. They learned tips and tricks to be a better and more efficient "Googler," and finally, switched gears to make their passion projects tangible in digital form.

[Passion Projects Website](#)

# *Grades 5-6:*

## *Unit 3, Stock Market Game*

In their final module, students in grades 5 & 6 learned about the ins and outs of the stock market exchange, starting with exploring why investing is important and what makes up a company. Students took what they learned to participate in a trading simulation on investopedia.com where they were given \$100,000 (not real money) to invest. To prepare, students explored what a stock and ticker symbol is, how to read a stock quote, and the difference between mutual funds and Exchange Traded Funds. They learned how to research companies and how and when to make a trade. After some time buying and selling stocks in their simulated portfolio, students explored the importance of diversifying investments, what causes stock prices to change, and when to know whether they should buy, sell, or hold.

# *Grades 7-8:*

## *Unit 1, Unintended Consequences*

Gifted & Talented students in grades 7 & 8 considered the unintended consequences of various inventions and products. For example, with the commercial airplane people can travel and visit relatives and vacation in different countries and goods and packages can be delivered faster. All of this creates countless jobs for people. The unintended consequences of the airplane, though, include fossil fuels in our atmosphere, accidents that can result in mass casualties, airports that require large amounts of land and create environmental issues, and epidemics that can quickly become pandemics.

Students considered various products and inventions and researched the unintended consequences that resulted from that product. Students created Google Slides and shared their findings with the class. Students focused more on discussion from their presentation than reading off of the slide presentation.

# *Grades 7-8: Unit 2, Road Trip USA*

For their second unit, students in grades 7 & 8 researched various highlights and attractions in different states throughout the United States in small groups. Students then choose to work with a partner or independently and selected 5 locations in the U.S. to visit on an RV Road Trip. Students created a Google Slides presentation that included pictures of their destinations, a Google map of each location, and fuel costs associated with the trip. Students took into consideration the size of the tank of the RV, the weight, distance, and fuel costs. Students also considered entrance fees to different attractions and any possible lodging options/expenses (other than the RV).

[Example](#)

# *Grades 7-8:*

## *Unit 3, Road Trip USA*

Students ended the year reading the book *Seedfolks*, by Paul Fleischman. The main character starts a garden in a vacant lot by their large apartment complex in Cleveland, Ohio. Each character that contributes to, what becomes, the community garden is from a different ethnicity and culture. Students were each assigned a character to research and share information about the different characters' ethnicities. Students created a square portrait of their assigned character. Some included an actual portrait of the character, information about the character's country of origin, information on the character's seed for the garden, or a combination. Students used construction paper, sewed a quilt-like piece, or used an online program like Canva to create their original square. All of the squares were 'sewn' together to create one quilt of diversity. This quilt will be displayed in the Library Media Center for all to enjoy.