



The New School of Holmdel's Creations on Migration

Posted on [January 25, 2011](#) by [Jennifer Bradshaw](#)

The New School, a K-8 ungraded, alternative school has always been a source of unique lessons and student projects and their latest undertaking is no exception.

The school's "Older Class" (grades 6-8) are working on an ongoing project about migration, as part of the school's year-long theme of "Music and Movement."

The school picks a theme at the beginning of each year and designs their lessons and activities keeping with that theme, including class trips, plays, reading materials and projects. Last year's theme was history.

For the migration project, the class watched National Geographic's "Planet Earth" series and picked animals to base their projects on, elaborating on what each animal eats, their physical makeup, and how they migrate, whether it be for mating or food.

Haley Vallone, 11, based her project on the Pronghorn, a peculiar creature that does not have any living relatives left, she said.

Pronghorns can be found in Wyoming, where they migrate to the Teton National Park to mate, Vallone said. Only about 200 deer migrate each year, while other subspecies of the animal do not.

Vallone said she chose the animal as her focus because of its demeanor – Pronghorn do not fight to the death like some animals do – they fight until one animal concedes to the other.

"They're smarter in that sense to me," she said.

Vallone designed a game-show style game board with the Pronghorn's migration patterns in mind, called "The Brave 200," complete with questions to answer to move along the path.

Melody Chibnik, 12, designed a gigantic collage of a cheetah.

“Everyone else was doing life-sized animals, so I thought I wanted to do something different,” she said, surrounded by created-to-scale paper creations of a zebra and the Pronghorn, as well as a sperm whale created out of string.

Susan Chilvers, the school’s educational director said the lesson is progressing into human migration. The Older Class have created paper caravans representing the migration periods of different cultures.

The next unit in the music and movement theme is the human body-evident by large skeleton models hung around the classroom in different poses.



The New School is having two events for families interested in learning about the school. An open house will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. March. 5, and a graduate night will be held at 7 p.m. March 10.

The New School is located at 301 Middle Road in Holmdel. For more information on the school, visit www.the-new-school.com.