

From: Jason P. Lewis [mailto:jlewis@chasemail.org] **Sent:** Sunday, February 23, 2014 1:35 PM **To:** Steve Barker **Cc:** cc_Division Heads **Subject:** Fwd: Marco Polo

Steve:

I think that I speak for everyone when I say that Denis Belliveau was a HUGE success. Below is a note that I received from Tom Cayer regarding the program and the time that Denis spent with the 6th grade. The students made some wonderful thank you notes for Denis and all his efforts.

Thank you,

Jason

***** *Jason P. Lewis – Head of Middle School* Chase Collegiate School, Waterbury, CT 06708 Phone: 203-236-9520 Fax: 203-236-9494 jlewis@chasemail.org www.chasecollegiate.org

Begin forwarded message:

From: Thomas Cayer <tcayer@chasemail.org>
Subject: Marco Polo
Date: February 21, 2014 at 4:03:56 PM EST
To: Jason Lewis <JLewis@chasemail.org>

Hi Jason,

Today's program, *In The Steps of Marco Polo*, was absolutely fantastic! I don't remember the last time I witnessed the whole middle school; sixth, seventh, and eighth grades; so enthralled in a presentation. Denis had a story that connected to both their academic studies and their imaginations.

Specifically, my kids are currently learning the value of in-depth research. Denis spoke of the amount of time he had to spend researching the history, the geography, and the different cultures that he would encounter on his journey. He showed the kids one of his many journals and stressed how valuable it was for him to now have a vivid and detailed record of the places he had been and the challenges he encountered. This made journal writing real for the kids. I plan to build on this in a future class.

The session that the sixth grade had in the morning with Denis worked very well. I wasn't really sure how valuable it would be to have the kids draw a simple Islamic geometric pattern, but it worked perfectly. He was able to connect his story to the importance of geometry in Islamic art; he connected with several of the lessons I have been teaching on Islamic culture; and he showed the kids how his writing (in his journal) had improved from his first entries to the later entries.

This was one of the best cultural enrichment programs we have *ever* had. Please feel free to forward my comments to the appropriate people.

Thanks,

Tom