



# GEOMETRY AS PUBLIC ART: TELLING A STORY

Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway  
Boston, Massachusetts

**Geometry as Public Art: Telling A Story**, an innovative curriculum inspired by the design and geometric features of Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston that tells the story of the immigrant experience to unite and connect us, welcoming all coming together on common ground.

The intent of the multi-disciplinary curriculum is to:

- Spark awareness of geometric shapes, and their creative expression of ideas and thoughts, and
- Engage students in sharing their own, families' or ancestors' immigrant experience, building common ground and community, cross-cultural understanding and respect.

The multi-disciplinary curriculum creatively integrates geometry, art, language and social studies while promoting cross-cultural understanding and respect.

Together, we are making a difference: With thanks to the Boston Public Schools, 4th grade teachers implementing the curriculum and their principals; Presenters at the Park offering the second lesson in collaboration with the teachers; The Columbus Foundation | Stephen H. Barmakian Family Fund for their financial support and to the Friends of Armenian Heritage Park and all who join us!

## **Geometry as Public Art: Telling A Story, the three-lesson curriculum**

### **Lesson One: Classroom - Discover Geometric Shapes Surrounding Us**

Students discover geometric shapes in the classroom. They are introduced to the Curriculum by viewing About the Park, power point presentation. They discuss the About My Family questionnaire to guide the student in speaking with a family member or friend to learn about the first person in their family who came to this country or were indigenous people.

### **Lesson Two: Armenian Heritage Park - Geometric Features Telling the Story of the Immigrant Experience**

Students visit the Park and experience first-hand how the geometric features - Abstract Sculpture, split rhomboid dodecahedron (solid, Euclidian geometry), Labyrinth (plane) and Reflecting Pool (circle) - tell the story of the immigrant experience. Students and their teachers engage in activities to build common ground, celebrating what unites and connects us.

### **Lesson Three: Classroom - I AM Poem with Portrait**

Students create their I AM Poem told in the voice of the first person in their family to come to this country, incorporating the information from the About My Family questionnaire (first lesson).

Students illustrate their I AM Poem with portrait of the individual or geometric illustration.

Students share their work.

## 2024 OVERVIEW

Together we are **building common ground and community**, and **celebrating all that unites and connects us** - a key intent of the curriculum.

- o **784 students, 12 elementary schools, 37 fourth grade classes and teachers, 30+ para professionals** participated in the curriculum with **parent volunteers** joining for Lesson Two at the Park.
- o **Two elementary schools walked** to/from their school to the Park and **ten were provided bus transportation.**
- o **Six elementary schools implemented the curriculum for the first time.**
- o **One first time school initially confirmed**, but due to unexpected staffing changes **asked to defer to 2025.**

New this year, for Lesson One in the classroom prior to the visit to the Park, **an introductory power point presentation, About the Park**, introducing the geometric features and how they tell the story of the immigrant experience. The power point was well-received and now is an integral part of the curriculum.

Also, new this year, an **Introductory Virtual Training** for teachers offering the curriculum for the first time. This proved valuable by providing the opportunity to review and discuss the curriculum while building teacher confidence. We will continue to offer and suggest that all first time teachers participate. All are welcome.

During the visit to the Park, the second of the three lesson curriculum, **each student received a two-sided card: side one: About the Park; side two: Photos of the Annual Reconfigurations, to date, of the Abstract Sculpture.**

During Lesson Two at the Park, while the focus is experiencing first-hand how the Park's geometric features tell the story of the immigrant experience, we also reflect on how we **warmly welcome and greet one another when the**

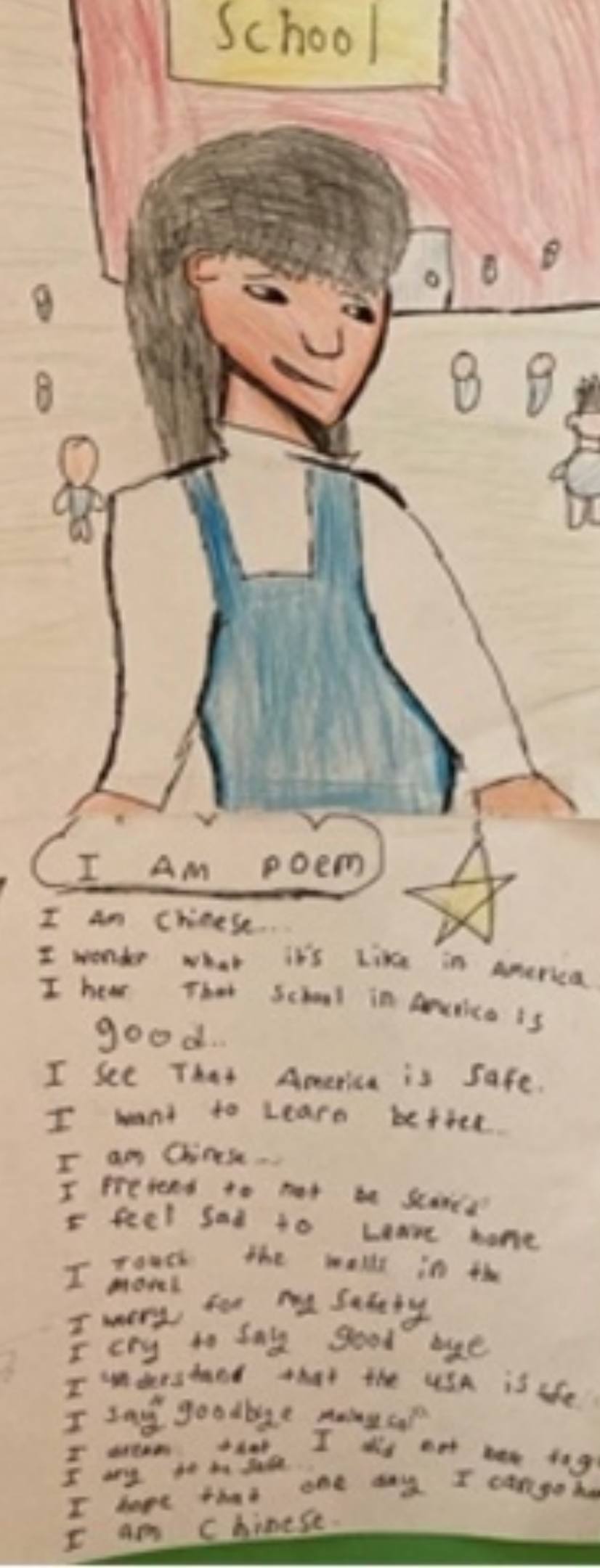
## 2024 OVERVIEW - continued

**students and their teachers arrive at the Park.** These are **core values of the Park and the classroom.** We speak of the importance of welcoming and greeting one another, **especially welcoming new students in the classroom.** During the program, the students are **actively engaged, participating and freely asking questions.** This **warmth and camaraderie** are clearly evident throughout the program.

**For 2025, with continued funding for transportation, we will focus more actively on engaging the teachers in offering Lesson Two at the Park.** There are several ways: 1) Introducing Walking the Labyrinth; 2) Leading the One Step Forward Game, and 3) Continuing to be attentive to the wishes being written on ribbons by the students for The Wishing Tree. Several wishes are very insightful. As value would be added to the learning experience, we will request funding to provide each classroom with a 3-D model of the Abstract Sculpture, split rhomboid dodecahedron. This offers the opportunity for the students to create the sculptural shapes and discover new ones, and to prompt continued discussion.

The **Curriculum Planning Team**, an initiative of the Friends of Armenian Heritage Park, is comprised of those who 1) Engage Schools, Teacher Introduction and Schedule School Visits to the Park, 2) Arrange for and oversee round-trip bus transportation to/from the school to the Park and 3) Curriculum Presenters, those who warmly engage and present the Curriculum at the Park in collaboration with the teachers. Many Curriculum Presenters are retired teachers.

Geometry as Public Art: Telling A Story, inspired by the design features of Armenian Heritage Park was initially developed through a **collaboration of the 4th grade teachers at The Eliot K-8 Innovation School, BPS School in the North End and the Friends of Armenian Heritage Park**, the educators among us. The curriculum continues to be enhanced by the teachers implementing the curriculum each year and the Presenters.



“The three thoughtfully planned lessons take educators and students on a path of self-discovery and storytelling, intertwine interactive classroom lessons and the hands-on nature of visiting the Park. The culmination of celebrating the immigrant experience is just as heart-warming and thought-provoking as the rest of the unit as students share proudly their I AM poetry.”

- Morgan Atkins, former Coordinator of Culture and School Climate,  
The Eliot K-8 Innovation School, Boston Public Schools

**Thank you! 2024 Boston Public Schools, 4th Grades that implemented the curriculum - \* indicates first year**

**Blackstone Elementary School, South End \***

Principal: Courtney Sheppeck

Teachers: Shakeeda Barteo, Isabel Jones, Annette Costas-Rodriguez

**Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. K-8 Elementary School, Dorchester \***

Principal: Michael McGean

Teachers: Angela Francis, Rochelle Woodard, Maureen Houston

Coordinator: Gee Gee Bishop

**The Eliot K-8 Innovation School, North End**

Executive Director: Traci Walker Griffith

Head of School: Holly McPartin

Teachers: Alyssa Kotsiopoulos, Emily Roberts,

Roxanne Emokpae

**Franklin D. Roosevelt K-8 School Hyde Park \***

Principal: Bannet Steele

Teachers: Melinda Hawkes, Kimberly Canuto,

Heather Marom-LeClair

**Harvard-Kent Elementary School, Charlestown**

Principal: Ben Russell

Teachers: Nicholas Free, Samuel Novak

**Higginson-Lewis K-8 School, Roxbury**

Principal: Dana Skelly

Teachers: Julie Coakley, Abigail Salzillo

**Joseph P. Tynan Elementary School, South Boston \***

Principal: Matthew Fredericksen

Teachers: Kerianne Heppner, Celines Rodriguez,

Linda McGrath

**Josiah Quincy Elementary School, Chinatown**

Principal: Cynthia Soo Hoo

Teachers: Nicole Terranova, Chun-Hei Chan, Susan Connelly,

Matthew Lydon, Alphonsus Ho, Debbie Hsaio

**Mather Elementary School, Dorchester \***

Principal: Hải Sơn

Teachers: Shakira Stokes, Uzuri Wilkerson

**Nathan Hale School, Roxbury**

Principal: Risa Espara

Teacher: Jonathan Holden

**Samuel Adams Elementary School, East Boston \***

Principal: Joanna McKeigue Cruz

Teachers: Alyssa Perez, Madeline Flores, Jill Kindorf

**The William Monroe Trotter K-8 School, Dorchester**

Principal : Sarita Thomas

Teachers: Ayesha James, K. Pritchard

“The best thing about the curriculum is the immediate connection for so many of my students to their family history. Introducing the class to immigration push and pull factors and then visiting Armenian Heritage Park...lends a sense of importance and value to our own shared experiences and how they connect to the rest of Boston and the country.”

Jonathan Holden  
4th Grade Teacher  
Nathan Hale School, Roxbury



# **Lesson One: Classroom**

## **Discover Geometric Shapes in the Classroom**

### **Introduce the Curriculum:**

We will experience how the geometric features at Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway tell the story of the immigrant experience and view *About the Park*, the power point presentation.

and **About My Family questionnaire**

to guide students in speaking with a family member or friend to learn about the first person in their family to come to this country or were indigenous people.



## Lesson Two: Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston

Welcome! Students experience first-hand at the Park how the geometric features - Abstract Sculpture, split rhomboid dodecahedron (solid, Euclidian geometry), Labyrinth (plane) and Reflecting Pool (circle) - tell the story of the immigrant experience. Students and their teachers engage in activities that celebrates all that unites and connects us.





The **Abstract Sculpture**, a split rhomboid dodecahedron made of stainless steel and aluminum, is annually reconfigured, symbolic of all who pulled away or were forced to pull away from their country of origin and came to these Massachusetts shores, establishing themselves in new and different ways.

Annually, a crane lifts, pulls apart and reconfigures the two halves of the split rhomboid dodecahedron to create a new sculptural shape, symbolic of a new life.



# Annual Reconfigurations of the Abstract Sculpture

Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway  
Boston, Massachusetts



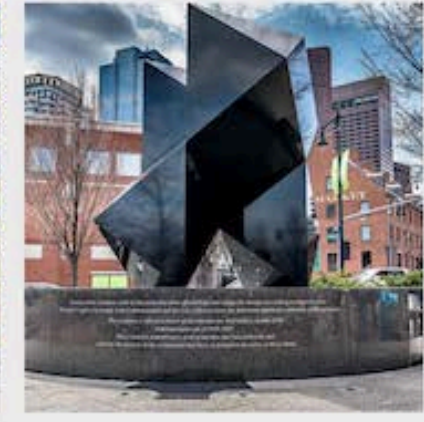
2024



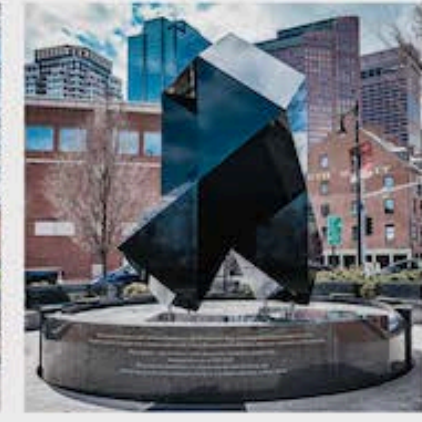
2023



2021



2019



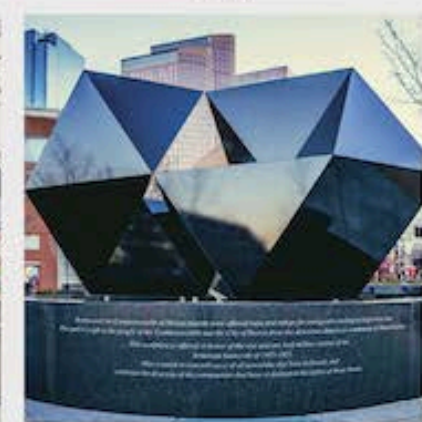
2018



2017



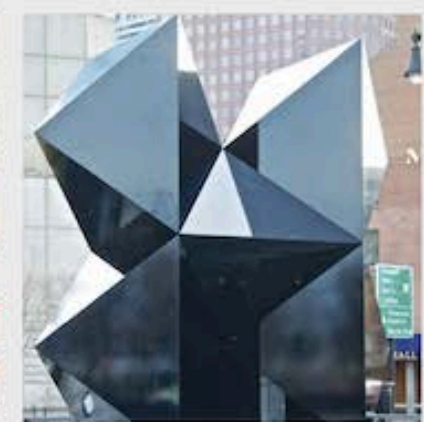
2016



2015



2014



2013



2012



Commonwealth of Massachusetts have offered  
the people of the Commonwealth and the City of  
This sculpture is offered in honor of the  
Armenian Genocide  
May it stand in remembrance of all  
celebrate the diversity of the communities that

immigrants seeking to begin new lives  
Armenian-American community of Massachusetts.  
on  
tion victims of the  
15-  
es  
ollowed, and  
e safety of these shores.





“The program is amazing and the Harvard-Kent is so appreciative of the time and energy that you put into the program. Our students learn so much about themselves and each other. The part that I love is the fact that the conversations about their heritage continue throughout the school year. They remember the field trip. I look forward to continuing to implement the curriculum again next year.”

Nicholas Free  
4th grade teacher  
Harvard-Kent Elementary School, Charlestown

Left: Don Tellalian, the Park's architect/designer with a student.

Students are introduced to the **Labyrinth**, a key geometric feature of the Park. A series of concentric circles, the Labyrinth is symbolic of life's journey. There is one path leading to the center and the same path leading out.

At the Labyrinth's center is a single jet of water, symbolic of hope and rebirth. The water emerges from the Reflecting Pool upon which the Abstract Sculpture sits.

The students and teachers **Walk the Labyrinth** together, an ancient practice for meditation. A brief introduction is offered prior to the Walk.





Students discover the words etched around the **Labyrinth's Circle**  
**Art, Science, Service & Commerce**  
in tribute to contributions made by all to our life and culture.

We speak about how each of us can contribute to the quality of daily  
life in the classroom and when we are all together.

"The geometric sculpture and labyrinth at Armenian Heritage  
Park on The Greenway is unique in the way it reflects and  
reveals our collective pasts, celebrates diversity and the  
immigrant experience, engages citizens in conversation from  
varying cultural backgrounds, drives attachment to place, and  
most of all ignites the imagination and the possibilities  
for our interconnected world."

Lucas Cowan, former Public Art Curator,  
Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy







Activities include playing the **One Step Forward Game**.

Students and their teachers form a circle, stepping forward in response to specific questions about the first person in their family - often the student - to come to this country. At the end, all have stepped forward, realizing all that unites and connects us.

Students write a **Wish on a Colorful Ribbon to Tie on The Wishing Tree**.

Many of the wishes are thoughtful and insightful.

*"I wish to make everybody to be happy and nice."*





What a wonderful visit and opportunity to share this experience together!

---

“As different as we are from one another, as unique as each one of us is, we are much more the same than we are different. That might be the most essential message of all, as we help our children grow towards being caring, compassionate and charitable adults.”

- Mister Rogers

Source: Wisdom from the World According to Mister Rogers

## Lesson Three: Classroom

### **I AM Poem**

Students create their I AM Poem told in the voice of the first person to come to this country (from About My Family, first lesson) and illustrate with a portrait of that person or geometric illustration.

Students share their I AM Poems, leading to better understanding one another and all that unites and connects us, continuing to build common ground.

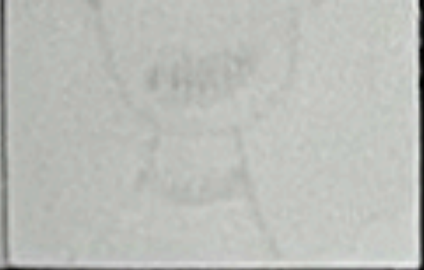
---

**We share a few examples.**

“The curriculum is an exciting and engaging way for students to learn more about their family heritage and reflect on the American immigration experience.  
... a wonderful way for teachers to learn about and better understand their students and for the students to learn about one another.”

Brianna Greene, former 4th Grade Teacher,  
The Eliot K-8 Innovation School, Boston Public Schools,  
co-developers of the curriculum with Friends of Armenian Heritage Park

Handwritten text on a white card with a pink border.



Decorative letters 'A' and 'M' with colorful floral patterns.

Handwritten text on a white card with a pink border.



Handwritten text on a white card with a pink border.



Decorative letter 'P' with floral patterns.

Decorative letter 'C' with floral patterns.

Decorative letter 'E' with floral patterns.

Handwritten text on a white card with a blue border.

Handwritten text on a white card with a green border.

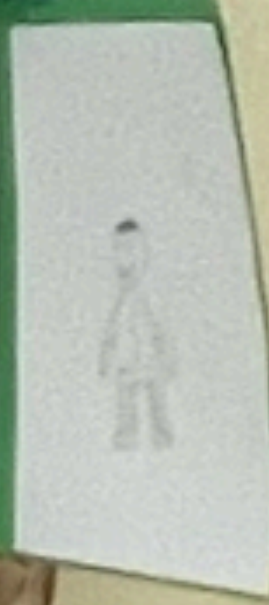


Handwritten text on a white card with a blue border.



Decorative letter 'M' with floral patterns.

Handwritten text on a white card with a green border.



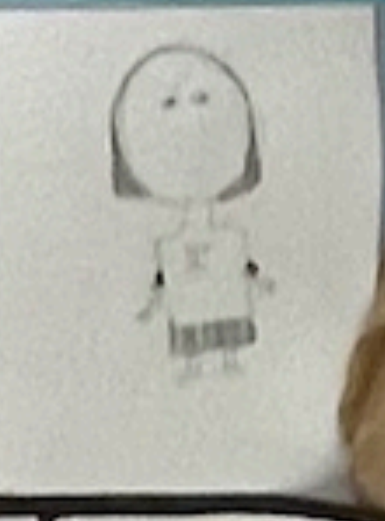
Handwritten text on a white card with a red border.



Handwritten text on a white card with a blue border.



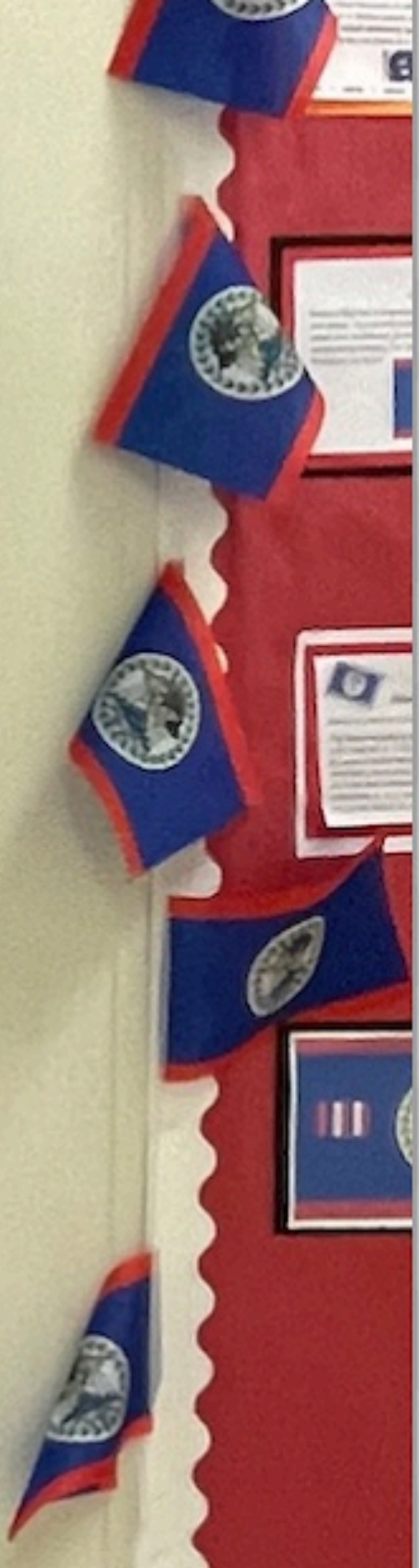
Handwritten text on a white card with a blue border.

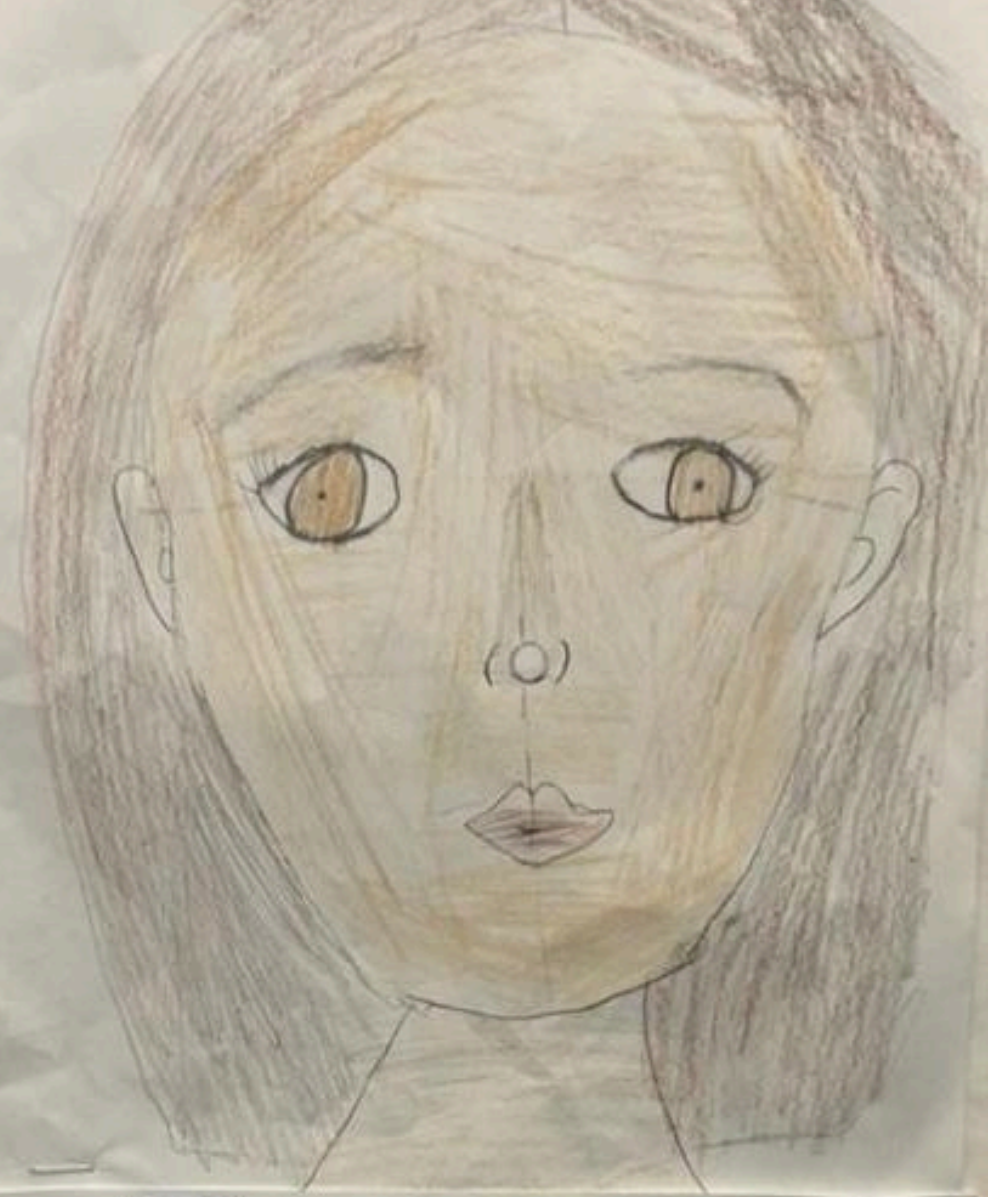
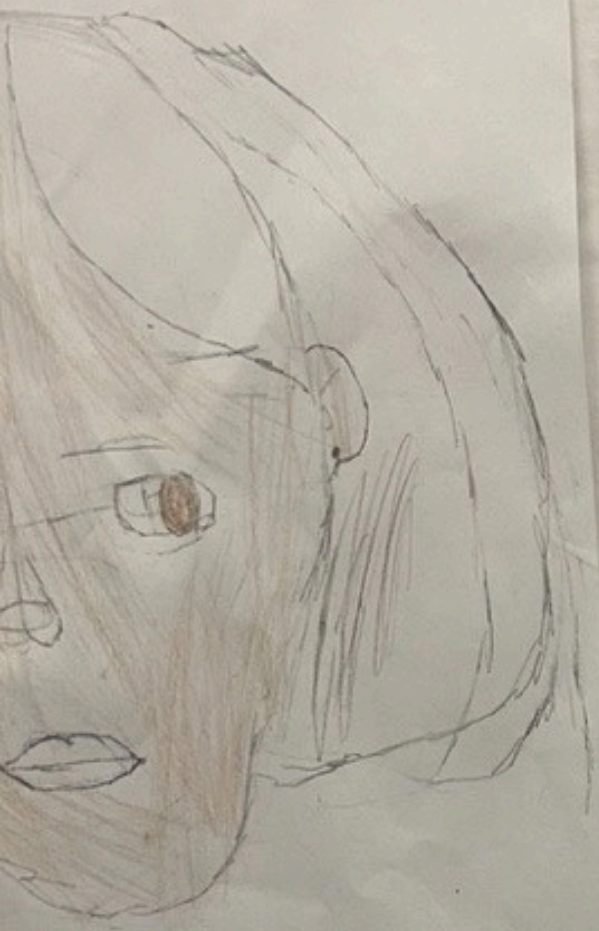


Handwritten text on a white card with a blue border.



Handwritten text on a white card with a blue border.





I AM

I am from England  
 I wonder why I had to leave England  
 I hear I hear the trolley  
 I see I see buildings  
 I want I want to go back to England  
 I pretend I pretend I am back in England  
 I feel I feel sad when I left England  
 I touch I touch my houses doornob  
 I worry I worry I'll never go back to England  
 I cry I cry when I think about leaving England  
 I understand I understand one day I'll visit England  
 I say I say I like England

I AM

I am African  
 I wonder what would happen if I did not leave  
 I hear the airport buzzing for I am not the only one seeking for a better life  
 I see the airplanes ready to take off  
 I want to go back but I know this is for the best  
 I pretend I am back in Ghana  
 I feel sad to leave  
 I touch family's picture every day  
 I worry about my children every day  
 I cry every day about my children  
 I understand that there will be obstacles on my journey  
 I pray a prayer every day  
 I hope of a better life  
 I try to find where I belong  
 I hope that one day I will reunite with my family  
 I am Freda Antwi

I AM

I am from The UAE  
 I wonder what it's like like in The USA  
 I hear good and bad things That happen in the USA.  
 I see a lot of days  
 I want to stay in UAE.  
 I pretend to be happy.  
 I feel sad scared nervous  
 I touch and hug people while saying goodbye  
 I worry about what will happen  
 I cry because I will miss everything  
 I understand I have to go  
 I say goodbye and go.  
 I hope to go back and visit the family  
 I try to stay close

I AM

I am from England  
 I wonder why I had to leave England  
 I hear I hear the trolley  
 I see I see buildings  
 I want I want to go back to England  
 I pretend I pretend I am back in England  
 I feel I feel sad when I left England  
 I touch I touch my houses doornob  
 I worry I worry I'll never go back to England  
 I cry I cry when I think about leaving England  
 I understand I understand one day I'll visit England  
 I say I say I like England



## I AM

I am strong for who I am

I wonder what will happen when I get there and will I have a better future there?

I hear peace and quiet and cars flashing

I see the people with bright smile and some sad and tired ones too

I want to be helpful when i grow older

I pretend to be a firefighter to save the world!

I feel nervous when I got there. Will it be better for me?

I touch the glass from the airport admiring will I like it here of will I not be

I worry if it was not great but I would have to see

I cry because I wanted to leave

I understand that it won't be that bad, I will come back to vietnam sooner or later

I say to myself "I will be ok"

I dream to be a well being man when I grow older and maybe save the world

I try and try in school then I achieve my goals!

I hope I will finish college and find true love

I am brave for who I am, a well being man and I love american, I achieve all of my goals and now I have kids and a wife I'm excited that

I am a adult

## I AM

I am ... Cape verdean ( creol)

I wonder ... what America will be like

I hear... my family cry in worry

I see ... a better future in america

I want ... to live a better life and receive better health in the usa.

I pretend ... to not be sad so my family doesn't have to worry

I feel ... sad to leave some of my family behind

I worry ... what life i will have in the usa

I cry ... because i'm leaving behind my family, but i know they will come after  
I understand... i may have to make certain sacrifices in order to go to america

I say ... “I have finally reached America!”

I dream ... for a better life

I hope... to provide better for my family in the us

I am... excited to see what life i will have in America

## I AM

I am Vietnamese

I wonder What America will be like.

I hear this country has better people.

I see myself going on an incredible, and hard journey.

I want a better life

I pretend to be with the people I love

I feel myself coming to America as I get closer to it.

I touch the railings of the ship as it sails on.

I worry what will happen to my family.

I cry because I want to live.

I understand that my family might not turn out as I want it to be, but all I can do is hope.

I say that I hope for a good life.

I dream of a nice home my family can live in.

I try to find my dream so it can come true.

I hope to have a good life in America.

I am Vietnamese

## I AM

Hispanic and english.

I wonder how long I will stay.

I hear the crickets every night.

I see the flies.

I want to visit the whole world.

I pretend to act like I know the language.

I feel scared.

I touch the leaves

I worry about whether people will be mean if I don't know the language.

I cry because I am worried.

I understand a little bit of the language.

I say I miss Puerto-Rico.

I dream about the food in Puerto-Rico.

I am trying to learn the language.

I hope I can go back to Puerto-Rico.

I am hispanic

# I AM

I am Polish

I wonder what America is like

I hear people and animals

I see land and life

I want a better life and job

I pretend I have lived here my whole life

I feel happy, glad, and nervous

I touch land

I worry that I won't fit in

I cry because I left my country

I understand that this trip was hard I say we will make it

I dream that everything will be okay

I try to make life great

I hope we fit in

I am Polish

# Thank you!

Friends of Armenian Heritage Park (“Friends”) extends heartfelt appreciation to all for their leadership and commitment on behalf of the curriculum. Friends is an initiative of the Armenian Heritage Foundation, sponsor of Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway.

## **PARTNERS**

Boston Public Schools  
Boston Public Library  
Cass the Florist | Faith Cass  
The Columbus Foundation |  
Stephen H. Barmakian Family Fund  
Eastern Bus Company  
EdVestors  
Northeastern University

## **ADVISORS**

Rebecca Grainger  
City of Boston, Senior Advisor for Youth & Schools  
Jisca Phillippe  
City of Boston, Director of Youth & Schools  
Amira Madison  
City of Boston, Supporting Indigenous  
Communities Fellow  
Marchelle Raynor  
Boston School Committee, retired  
Alia Verner  
EdVestors Director, Equitable Improvement  
Ruth Mercado-Zizzo  
EdVestors Vice President, Programs and Equity

## **TRANSPORTATION**

The Columbus Foundation |  
Stephen H. Barmakian Family Fund  
for providing funding for round trip bus transportaion  
to/from Boston Public Schools to the Park.

Eastern Bus Company  
Charles Winitzer, President  
for providing the round trip bus transportation  
and significantly underwriting the cost.

Arleen Mancini  
Eastern Bus Company  
in collaboration with  
Arleen Ashjian  
Curriculum Team: Transportation  
for coordinating the round trip bus transportation  
for each visit to/from school to Park.

Karen Dederyan  
Treasurer, Armenian Heritage Foundation,  
sponsor of Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway


ArmenianHeritagePark.org

## **CURRICULUM TEAM: PRESENTERS**

### **LESSON TWO AT THE PARK**

Ann Babbitt \*  
Susan Deranian,\*  
Greeters’ Team Leader  
Eleice Latham \*  
Catherine Minassian  
Josephine Mullins  
William O’Connor  
John O’Reilly  
Simon Pongratz  
Marchelle Raynor  
Chris Sabbey  
Patricia Sabbey \*  
Barbara Tellalian \*  
Constance Vanne  
Douglas Vanne

\* indicates Presenters for most all school visits.  
Presenters are also Greeters, who welcome  
and introduce the Park to visitors during the year



For information, please email or call  
Friends of Armenian Heritage Park:  
[hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org](mailto:hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org)  
617.803.8785  
[ArmenianHeritagePark.org](http://ArmenianHeritagePark.org)