



*"As we honor the creativity, sense of wonder and exuberance in childhood, we hope to stir in our students enthusiasm for learning as an exciting, lifelong activity."*

- TCS Mission Statement

Tree  
Jane, Grade 7  
Fractal Geometry Class

One of the great educational challenges of our day is to learn how to embrace technology in a manner that is not merely utilitarian. To be sure, there is no lack of virtue in the unadorned quality of usefulness. Yet, while there is no satisfactory substitute for the simple spoon that sits beside a bowl of soup, place two such spoons in the able hands of a lad or lassie during the performance of a rousing reel, and the intricate and compelling rhythms that result may well inspire you to master this marvelous and creative application of a simple "utensil."

Are computers nothing more than multipurpose utensils? Fundamentally yes, but their inherent speed and their power to mesmerize presents a challenging problem. If computing power is used only to spoon feed our children "knowledge" and modern vocational skills, the battle is lost. Technology then becomes the master, and the student, a passive receptacle; electronic interfaces take their place as little more than dulling, desensitizing means of entertainment, spawning generations of insular, detached youth who, worse yet, have been digitally *trained* to expect convenience and immediate gratification.

At TCS, our motivating principle is to harness the tremendous power of the computer as a creative tool for exploration, investigation, and understanding. Indeed, nurturing creativity is key; every simple act of creation holds the potential to provide the proverbial spark of inspiration that ignites a student's interest for the day, for a week, or for a lifetime. Moreover, students who have experienced the rewards of fruitful exploration gain an innate and lasting understanding, not only of the subject at hand, but more importantly, of their own power to comprehend, appreciate, and affect the world around them.

Tough problems get solved only when there is a pressing need. For many students, the tough problem is simply the act of thinking in a rigorous and precise fashion. By teaching computer languages like Logo and HTML, we give students the opportunity to invest themselves in an original expression of their individual personalities and thus provide them with precisely the impetus they require: the pressing need to make their own creations work.

As educators, we need to be willing to examine the possibilities and perils presented by an inescapable, ever-changing technological landscape. I suggest that, in the end, "willingness" is exactly the habit we wish to foster in our students; fundamentally active in nature, it is the antidote to detachment and complacency. It is the willingness to explore, investigate, and solve problems that opens the doors to a lifetime of learning, enthusiasm, and genuine engagement.

Harlan Brothers  
Director of Technology