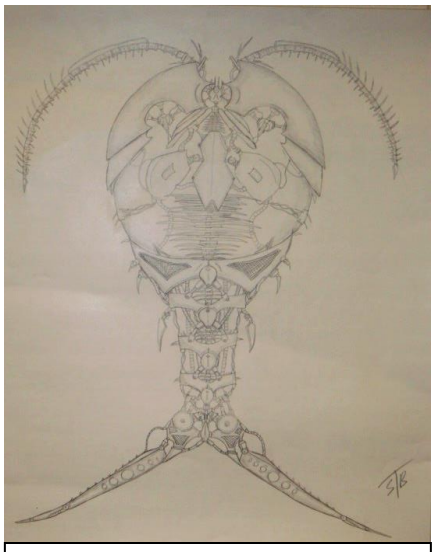
CBGS Warsaw Students Find Art Inspiration in Tiny Drifters
Bethany Smith

March 4, 2013



"Biomechanical Copepod"
Pencil Drawing by Tyler B.

The ocean's microscopic drifters served as inspiration for a variety of artwork created by Mrs. Smith's 11th grade Marine & Environmental Science I classes. The word plankton is derived from the Greek work *planktos* meaning wanderer or drifter. Characteristically microscopic, and unable to move against a flowing current, planktonic organisms are a vital link in both freshwater and marine food webs. Phytoplankton (plant plankton) trap the sun's energy, jumpstarting the food web, and zooplankton (animal plankton) graze on the phytoplankton, similar to how herbivores graze the world's grasslands. Both phyto- and zooplankton provide food for commercially valuable Chesapeake Bay seafood species such as blue crabs, oysters, menhaden, striped bass and many more.

"The Colony"
Jewelry Design by Laura E.

Students were tasked with creating artwork inspired by these aquatic drifters. On Wednesday, February 27th, the CBGS classroom was transformed into an art gallery as students displayed and presented their work. After researching the different types, forms, and shapes of plankton, students used a multitude of art mediums including pencil drawings, paintings, sculpture, quilling, photography, food, fashion design, and jewelry to represent their chosen source of inspiration. Planktonic organisms that inspired artwork included diatoms, dinoflagellates, radiolarians, copepods, jellyfish, ctenophores, and even the bioluminescence produced by some planktonic organisms. Some pieces of artwork were very literal translations of the plankton that inspired them, while others were much more abstract. Several students even used their personal experiences with jellyfish and bioluminescence to inspire them. The final products were a result of analytical research, creativity, design, and presentation, thus allowing the students to exhibit higher level thinking skills and problem solving, and see just how connected science and art can be.

"Quilling and Krilling"
Quilling Collage by Mary S.