

At Nightingale's
Lower School, we
live in community.
We read, ask, sing,
learn, share, try,
laugh, help, write,
jump, build, count—
and we do it all
together, rooted
in the relationships
that distinguish
the Nightingale
experience.

These connections to each other are mirrored by the connections found within our curriculum.

In this book, we showcase a few of the distinctive programs your daughter will experience as a student in our Lower School—along with a sampling of related lessons.

We hope you'll see that no project at Nightingale belongs to just one class. That no learning is limited to a single method, a single moment—or even, sometimes, a single answer.

IDEALS DAY

Central Park is key to our students' experience, so it was no surprise that when our Kindergarteners were asked to design an activity for a schoolwide day of service, they chose to clean up the park.

In true Nightingale fashion, faculty collaborated to integrate many aspects of learning into the project. Students discussed the importance of serving others with their homeroom teachers, they studied recycling with science teacher Ms. Helgeson, and they learned recycling vocabulary with Spanish teacher Srta. Porrás. They even worked with their technology teacher Mr. Rosen to design and build their own tools to collect trash—using recycled materials from around the schoolhouse, of course.

That afternoon, students swept through the park, recycled shovels in hand and smiles affixed firmly to their faces.

ROUND SQUARE

Ideals Day was inspired by our partnership with Round Square, an international network of schools committed to character education and experiential learning.

PUT A PIN IN IT

Class III spent Ideals Day making flower pins, which they then sold to raise money for Inner Wheel Karachi School in Pakistan.

REPRISE

Kindergarteners continued their recycling by transforming plastic bottles into musical instruments, creating scrapers, shakers, and bottle cap castanets.

MOONSHOT!

Nightingale students are no strangers to solving problems. On Exponential Education Day, Class III developed bold solutions and prototypes to three of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals: clean water, sustainable cities, and life below water.





A MONUMENTAL EXCURSION

Class I visits the Donald M. Kendall PepsiCo Sculpture Gardens each year, where art teacher Mr. Meikle guides the students through an interactive walk. Girls discuss various sculptures while sketching them, and they even involve their bodies as they develop poses based on the works of art.

MEETING ANDY

As part of our Visual Education Program, several grades received personal tours of the Whitney's epic Warhol retrospective.

SHARED IMAGINATION

Last year, each student in Class IV selected a painting by an Upper School student and wrote a story inspired by what they saw in the colors and brushstrokes. When writing was complete—including editing, revising, and proofreading—they stood in front of their peers, next to their selected painting and its older artist, and read their stories aloud.

HOPE IS A THING WITH FEATHERS

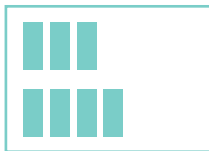
Students in Classes II-IV wrote their thoughts about the word "peace" onto paper and then folded them into origami doves. These doves made up part of "Les Colombes," an art installation in which more than 2,000 doves hung from the ceiling of the Church of the Heavenly Rest.

MODELING MATH

With a blend of direct instruction and open exploration, our math program builds mastery of key concepts while being both challenging and engaging.

Readily available manipulative materials broaden logical and creative thinking skills, while abstract concepts are given concrete meaning through a variety of tools.

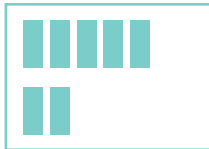
$7 = 3 + 4$



$7 = 1 + 6$



$7 = 5 + 2$



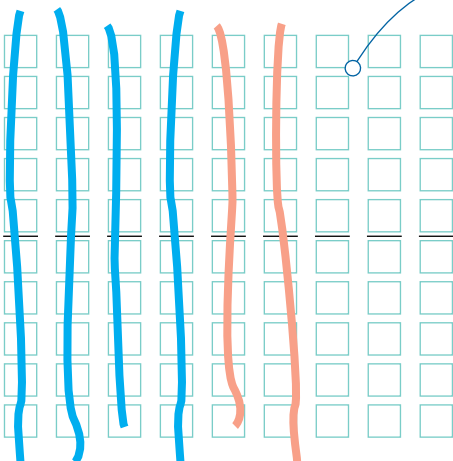
COUNTING ROWS

These Class I visual models, based on groupings of five, help students see numbers inside of larger numbers—which helps with counting and builds flexibility.



RACE TO ZERO

Students draw lines through blocks of ten to practice subtraction. For instance, a girl might say, "I drew a blue line through four ten-strips to subtract 40." Amidst other lessons, they learn that subtracting multiples of ten is similar to subtracting single-digit numbers: for instance, $40 + 50 = 90$ and $4 + 5 = 9$.

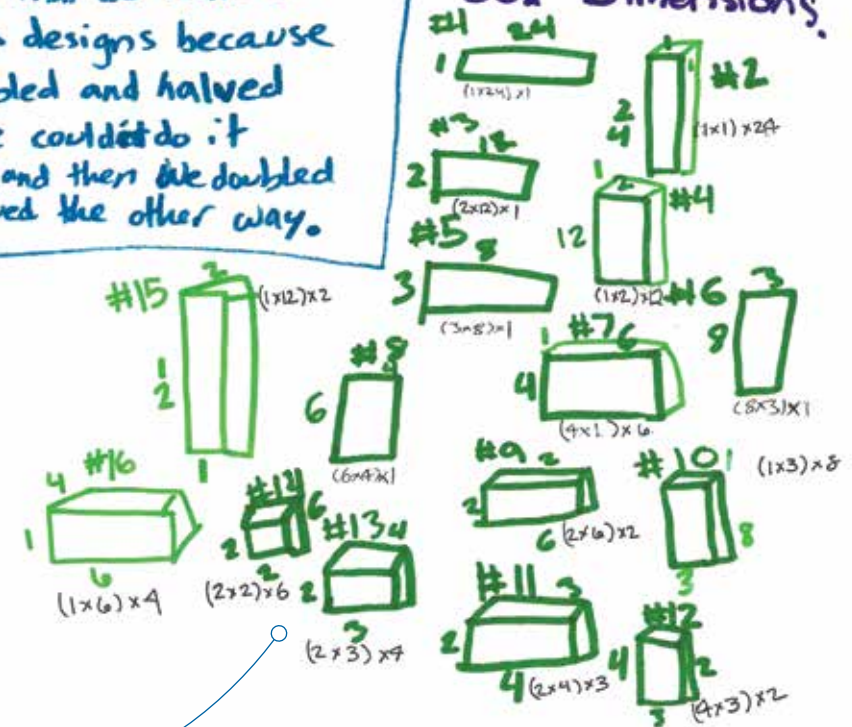


How many different boxes are there that can hold 24 objects?

Strategy: Halving and Doubling

We know that we found all the box designs because we doubled and halved until we couldn't do it anymore, and then we doubled and halved the other way.

Box Dimensions:



BUILT TO ORDER

In this example, Class IV was tasked with finding all the different ways a box could be built to hold 24 units. To ensure they found all the possible options, they doubled one dimension and figured out how that affected other dimensions, then continued to double or half. To make the numbers more concrete, students then went and built their boxes out of found materials.



COMMUNITY CLASS

Students have dedicated time each week to explore new cultural perspectives. In addition to storytelling, Community Class has time for open questions, when students can ask about any ideas they've encountered and learn from each other and from teachers.

By discussing these various ideas in a free and safe space, students develop a stronger sense of self while, at the same time, embracing the power of difference and diversity.

PARTNER PALS

For two-week periods throughout the year, Kindergarteners are assigned "partner pals," and the two of them will walk to class together and collaborate in math and skills lessons; they're also encouraged to have a playdate together. This helps students get to know and befriend their peers throughout the class.

EYE STATEMENTS

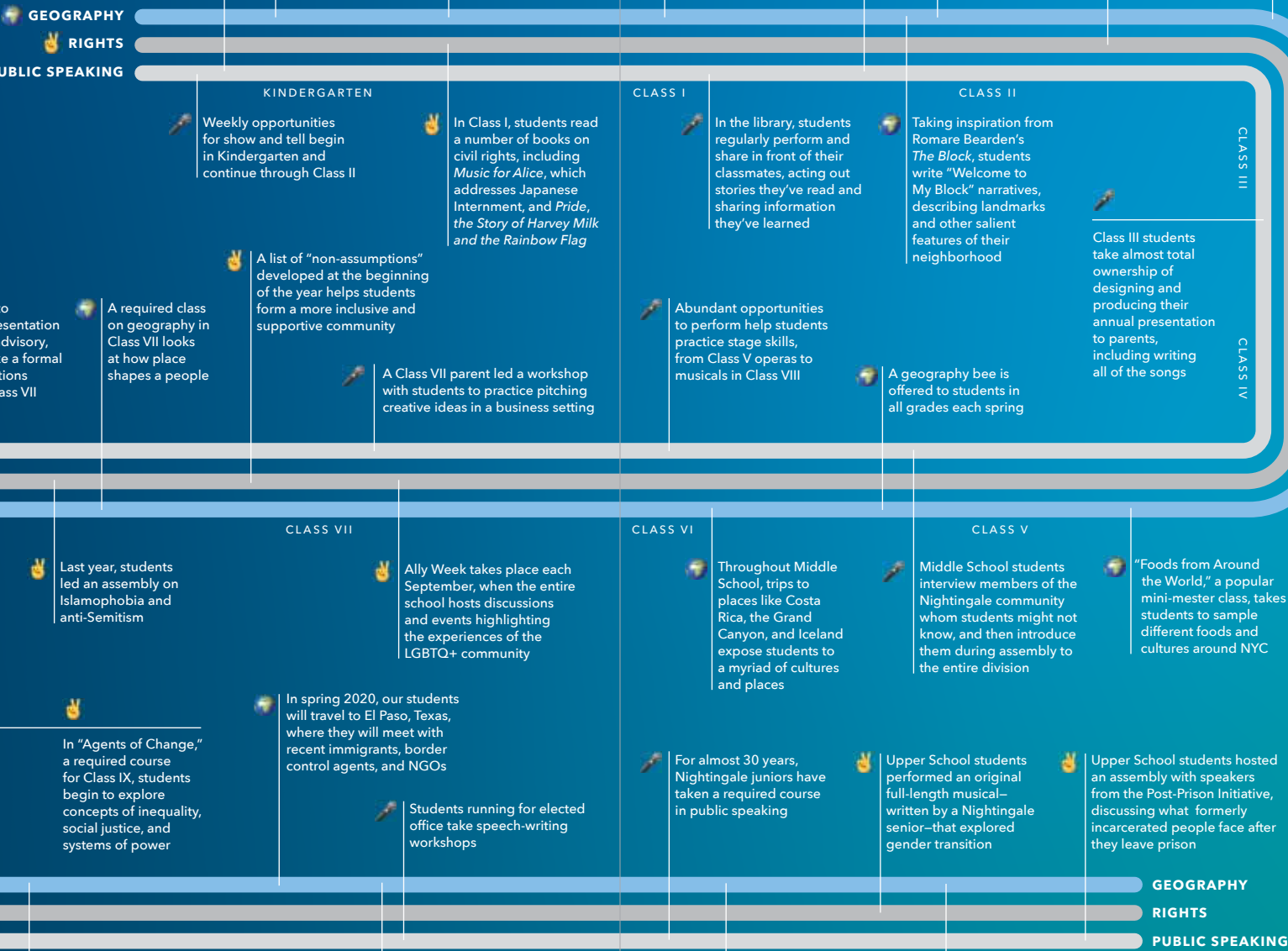
After reading *The Invisible Boy* by Trudy Ludwig, Class II girls made posters that responded to the question of "How to tell if someone is feeling invisible?"

LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER

In addition to learning about Islam in the classroom, Lower School students had a special assembly this year where they learned about Eid and Ramadan from students in the Upper School.

TAPESTRY OF LEARNING

Thematic threads connect any number of classes, projects, and experiences as students journey from Kindergarten to Commencement. Here we can see illustrative moments when students engage with three of these threads.



Community Class, beginning in Kindergarten, offers dedicated time to ask questions and discuss ideas in a group setting

In all grades, students and their parents give heritage presentations, when they share their family's history with their homeroom

Kindergarten studies the works of Yuyi Morales, a Mexican author/illustrator, identifying Mexico on a map and making connections to lessons from Spanish class



Class I learns about the role of place through visits to the Met Museum, where they look at traditional shelters from around the world, and visits to the Museum of the City of New York, where they study urban planning

All Lower School students are invited to participate in an April library poetry reading featuring works selected and written by students

Students throughout the Lower School participate in World Read Aloud Day, learning about other participating schools and pinpointing them on a map

As a precursor to the human rights curriculum in Class III, Class II students create a community agreement to ensure an open and safe space for all



Class III craft their own geographically accurate globes, while also working with the Lower School librarian on a travel guide research project on different regions of the world

GEOGRAPHY

RIGHTS

PUBLIC SPEAKING

KINDERGARTEN

Weekly opportunities for show and tell begin in Kindergarten and continue through Class II

In Class I, students read a number of books on civil rights, including *Music for Alice*, which addresses Japanese Internment, and *Pride, the Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag*

CLASS I

In the library, students regularly perform and share in front of their classmates, acting out stories they've read and sharing information they've learned

CLASS II

Taking inspiration from Romare Bearden's *The Block*, students write "Welcome to My Block" narratives, describing landmarks and other salient features of their neighborhood

CLASS III

Class III students take almost total ownership of designing and producing their annual presentation to parents, including writing all of the songs

CLASS IV

Using HyperDocs, a collaborative interactive program, Class III created a digital book detailing the impact and actions of the Women's Rights Movement. This was part of their year-long and immersive human rights curriculum

After learning about cardinal directions, coordinate grids, and scale, Class IV students design an imagined state map, incorporating knowledge of geography, mapping skills, and abundant imagination

In addition to ongoing presentation practice in advisory, students take a formal communications course in Class VII

A required class on geography in Class VII looks at how place shapes a people

A list of "non-assumptions" developed at the beginning of the year helps students form a more inclusive and supportive community

A Class VII parent led a workshop with students to practice pitching creative ideas in a business setting

Abundant opportunities to perform help students practice stage skills, from Class V operas to musicals in Class VIII

A geography bee is offered to students in all grades each spring

CLASS VII

Last year, students led an assembly on Islamophobia and anti-Semitism

Ally Week takes place each September, when the entire school hosts discussions and events highlighting the experiences of the LGBTQ+ community

CLASS VI

Throughout Middle School, trips to places like Costa Rica, the Grand Canyon, and Iceland expose students to a myriad of cultures and places

CLASS V

Middle School students interview members of the Nightingale community whom students might not know, and then introduce them during assembly to the entire division

"Foods from Around the World," a popular mini-mester class, takes students to sample different foods and cultures around NYC

CLASS VIII

At an assembly last year, students educated their peers on influential house and senate races during the midterms

CLASS IX

In "Agents of Change," a required course for Class IX, students begin to explore concepts of inequality, social justice, and systems of power

In spring 2020, our students will travel to El Paso, Texas, where they will meet with recent immigrants, border control agents, and NGOs

Students running for elected office take speech-writing workshops

For almost 30 years, Nightingale juniors have taken a required course in public speaking

Upper School students performed an original full-length musical—written by a Nightingale senior—that explored gender transition

Upper School students hosted an assembly with speakers from the Post-Prison Initiative, discussing what formerly incarcerated people face after they leave prison

GEOGRAPHY

RIGHTS

PUBLIC SPEAKING

CLASS X

Every year, the entire ninth grade spends a week in London, using the city as lab and classroom

Students from Classes X-XII are in a pilot program with four other schools to design and test student-focused workshops around the concept of internationalism

CLASS XI

As part of our Round Square partnership, juniors are traveling to Indore, India, for a week-long conference to discuss international issues

CLASS XII

For the Block Project, students research and then present the social, economic, and architectural history of a single NYC block from 1919 to today

RIGHT AT HOME

An embodiment of Nightingale's interdisciplinary and collaborative approach, the Class II curriculum is built around a year-long study of New York City. Trips to museums and landmarks are supplemented by reading of contemporary and historical fiction and nonfiction, the study of maps and geography, and numerous art projects.

One of the culminating projects is a study of the city's distinctive bridges, particularly the Brooklyn Bridge. Students paint watercolor representations in art class, then spend time in their technology class studying engineering principles and building their own free-standing models out of paper and tape.



SOUNDS OF THE CITY

The Class II presentation each year transforms their study of New York City into recitations, dance, and music. The program features completely original songs, written by Class II with support from composer-in-residence Mr. Lerner.

IN DEPTH

Year-long curricula help students synthesize many of the skills and concepts they develop in a particular grade. In Class III, for instance, projects and learning are structured around a global human rights curriculum.

GIVING BACK

We don't just study the city—we live in it and we give back to it. We have long-standing partnerships with All Souls Church, Sweet Readers, and Manhattan Children's Center.





IMAGINE THAT

Girls are used to adopting roles and improvising, since dramatic play is purposely and regularly built into their days. This chance to imagine themselves in another's shoes builds empathy and encourages creative thinking.



TAKING THE STAGE

This mercado is just one of dozens of special uses for the black box theater, one of our signature spaces. Throughout the year, you might see student-written musicals, parent meetings, music recitals, and yoga classes.



IN STYLE

Kindergarteners studied many other aspects of Mexico as part of their Spanish study. After learning about artist Frida Kahlo, students designed gowns that she might have worn, and then proceeded to make the dresses themselves.

MEXICAN MERCADO

Kindergarteners studying with Srta. Porras found themselves one April morning in the midst of a real-world mercado. Building on their year-long study of Mexico, half the class acted as sellers of fruits, vegetables, breads, and cheeses, setting their own prices and responding—en español—when their classmates approached and asked “¿Cuánto cuesta?”

In addition to this joyful and hands-on opportunity to practice the Spanish vocabulary and grammar they'd been learning, students also had to use their burgeoning math skills as they paid and received change for their goods.

A DAY IN THE LIFE

Nightingale uses an eight-day cycle for our academic calendar, and this is an actual Class III schedule for one day of that cycle. It was designed to balance small-group learning with full-grade experiences, and since we use different groupings for different classes, students do not travel with the same group of peers throughout the day.

Girls have dedicated time for recess and physical activity every single day, and play is often incorporated into their academic exploration.



SCHOOLHOUSE

Once per cycle, the schedules for Lower, Middle, and Upper Schools align for Schoolhouse, an opportunity for the entire community to come together and play, learn, or celebrate.

FIELD METTLE

Field studies is an extended block for scientific exploration. Students often use this time for hands-on experiments in Central Park or around the neighborhood.



DANCE AND P.E.

With equal focus on technical skill and joy, students develop fluency in all sorts of movement, including modern dance, rock climbing, parkour, swimming, and competitive games.

8:00	Homeroom		
	Math		
9:00	Spanish		
10:00	Recess / Roof		
11:00	Schoolhouse		
12:00	Science + Lunch	Art	Health
		Lunch	
1:00	Break		
2:00	Dance	Reading	
	Reading	Technology	
3:00	Homeroom + Dismissal		

MATH

The class breaks into four equal sections, about eleven students each, led by math specialists and homeroom teachers.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Students entering Kindergarten after the 2019-2020 year will study Spanish through Class III. Once they reach Class IV, they will be exposed to French and Mandarin. Latin is added in Class VI.

PLAYGROUND

Play is integrated throughout the day; the rooftop playground is a favorite for many students.



READING

Class III is broken up into six reading groups, about seven students each, for individualized reading instruction and library time.

SINGING IN TIME

Laughter echoes constantly through the halls of Nightingale, but nowhere more so than in the Lower School music room—especially during Sing Time.

In these regularly scheduled periods, an entire grade gathers together to learn songs, dance around, and play music-based games. Girls are immersed in cultures ranging from Mexico to Finland, often singing in other languages and often connected to things they are learning in other classrooms. From day one, students experience music not only as a source of joy, but as a means of self-expression.

Dance is key to this, as it is in all of our music study—from the structured steps of folk dances to more intuitive movement, which encourages the girls to experiment and communicate non-verbally. (“Make a ‘high’ shape with your body when you hear a high sound!”)

This fluency with improvisation leads to what is perhaps the most distinctive element of our music program: student composition. Whether in small phrases imagined during class, or full songs written collaboratively and then performed in concert, students at all ages create the very material through which they learn, sing, and communicate.

CONNECTING THE DOTS

After studying Hokusai’s *The Great Wave off Kanagawa* as part of a language arts unit on personification, Class IV students wrote letters from one part of the painting to another—for instance, from the mountain to the wave—and used those letters as the basis for songs they wrote in music class.

LEARNING FROM THE BEST

Our students aren’t the only ones dancing. Assemblies throughout the year bring in performing groups from around the world, including Ballet D’Afrique and the Sachiyo Ito dance company.

FROM THE HEART

Last year, Class IV wrote their own graduation song. Each section of the grade developed musical themes and lyrics with Lower School music teacher Ms. Alexander—each line of text connected to a memory of their five years in Lower School. They taught each other snippets during Sing Time, and then performed the final piece, as an entire grade, at the year-end Daisy Ceremony.



DUETS

“We Can Be Heroes” was the title of Class III’s presentation last year, which drew on their year-long study of human rights. In addition to readings and dances—one taught by a Class II parent—the presentation featured a song written by Class III, who were then joined on stage by members of the Upper School Chamber Choir.

IF RELATIONSHIPS DISTINGUISH US, OUR PROGRAMS DEFINE US.

INFORMED BY EXPERIENCE AND RESEARCH, OUR pedagogy is both responsible and adventurous. Student interest guides everyday learning within a thoughtful and sequenced structure, and we embrace the joy of collaborative discovery while leaning into the innate curiosity and whimsy of young girls.

During their time in Lower School, our students gather the tools of self-expression. A deep-seated commitment to writing in both English and Spanish is complemented by a schoolwide commitment to public speaking that begins in the earliest years. Our celebrated Visual Education Program develops fluency in the language of art, work with programming fundamentals lays the groundwork for future coding, and advanced practice with woodshop and a makerspace allows girls to express themselves in multiple dimensions.

This awareness of self develops alongside deep connections to others. We embrace difference as a source of strength and know that listening is only the first step to hearing. As individuals and as a school community, we move when the world moves, and we adapt to the needs of those around us, whether in the next seat or around the world.

As our students move into Middle School, they leave with not only a desire to learn more, but the knowledge of how to learn more. How to balance their own strengths and weaknesses, how to find and triage information, how to swim the lengths of a good idea.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

ADMISSIONS OFFICE

admissions@nightingale.org
212-933-6515

The surest way to learn about Nightingale is to visit us in person, feel the joy in the hallways, and see the excitement in our classrooms. There are opportunities to visit throughout the fall admissions season, so please join us at one of our events and get to know us better. We look forward to seeing you at the blue doors!

PHOTOGRAPHY

MCNY by Terecille Basa-Ong (page 11 Museum of City of New York); Chela Crinnion (pages 14-15); Amanda Goodwin (page 10 assembly); Scott Meikle (pages 4-5); Emily Peters (pages 8-9); Bryan Rosen (pages 2-3); Matthew Septimus (page 16 PE, page 17 rooftop, pages 18-19); Susan Tilson (page 16 schoolhouse); Lauren Toppeta (page 11 globes)

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