

MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

MOC-FV CSD

March

2022

Special points of Interest:

- Washington D.C. Trip
- IASAP Testing
- Finishing the Year off Right
- Parent-Teacher Conferences



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Finishing the Year off Right

Around this time of year, students begin to get the “Spring Itch” and at times, their academics suffer as a result. There are some things that you can do to help your child fend off the “Spring Itch”.

1. **Make sure that your student is in school. Regular school attendance is the #1 school success factor.**
2. **If your student is ill, or misses school, help them get caught up with their missing assignments. Sometimes, students feel like there is so much to do, that they can't create a plan to get the missing work completed. Help them chunk the work, or create a manageable plan to get the work completed.**
3. **Encourage your students to study ahead of time for tests and work ahead on projects in their classes. Procrastination can create a sense of panic in students, and as a result stress impacts their ability to do their best, interact with peers and adults, and feel prepared for the upcoming tests and projects.**
4. **Help your students manage their time while they are at home. Limit games, TV, and time online. Many times these activities, while fun, can end up wasting time that might have been better used reading, doing homework, or studying for tests.**
5. **Encourage your student to ask for help if they don't understand something. They can ask a teacher, friend, or even you as the parent. If as a parent, you are unsure how to do something (I am thinking specifically of math) you can try finding the answers together. YouTube is a great resource for us parents on how to do Math...just type in the style of problem that you need help with.**
6. **Continue to check in and connect with your middle schooler. Many of them want to connect with you and share things about their day. Make time to connect with how they are doing academically & socially.**

As parents, we can help our students navigate this time of year and help our students have a successful end of the school year.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

The Spring Parent -Teacher conferences are scheduled for Monday, March 21 and Tuesday, March 22 from 4:00-8:00pm. Your student's STAR teachers will be contacting you to arrange a conference time. We appreciate your efforts in attending and look forward to visiting with you about your child's progress.

**NO School
Friday, March 25
(Teacher Comp Day)**

IASAP Testing

This Spring, we will once again be taking the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (IASAP). These tests will be taken between April 4-8, 2022. The tests will be administered at the beginning of the school day and students will have whatever time that they need to complete the tests. Please plan on having your student to school on time during these testing days so they will be able to take the tests during the designated testing times. This year we are spreading the tests out, in an attempt to avoid “testing fatigue” and allow students to perform their very best on these tests. The teachers will limit homework during this time in an attempt to allow students to be at their best for these tests. Prior to the tests, teachers will be familiarizing the students to the new tests and will be talking with them about the importance of doing their best on these tests. The results of these standardized assessments will be used to not only demonstrate growth for your student in the areas of Reading, Math, Writing, and Science (8th grade only) but will also be used to rate our Middle School. ISASP results are one of the components used on the “School Performance Profile” which ranks our school district and the individual buildings to others across the state. Because of the importance of these tests, we ask that each student do their very best so we can show what kind of a building we have...we appreciate your help with reinforcing this message with your student as well. Once we receive student scores, they will be sent home with your student.

Washington D.C. Trip

Dear Parents and Students,

We will be having a mandatory parent **AND** student meeting for the Washington, D.C., trip on **Monday, March 28, 2022, at 7:00 p.m.** This meeting will take place in the MOC-Floyd Valley Middle School new gym. I anticipate the meeting will last about 30-45 minutes. It is **imperative** that at least one parent **AND** the student attend the meeting. All parent chaperones going along on the trip are expected to attend this meeting as well. We will be going over numerous items / directions for the trip. There will also be time to ask questions. The north door will be open for you. Each student is asked to bring **\$8.00 to this meeting** on March 28 to cover tips for our bus drivers, tour guides, and on-site coordinators. It is much easier to gather these tips now than to try to collect once on the trip. Thanks!

IF any of you have a son or daughter who takes daily prescription medications, these medications will need to be stored and administered by a trained adult while on the trip to Washington, D.C. and Philadelphia. These medications will need to be turned in to Mrs. Ashley Van Voorst AT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL (MOC-Floyd Valley school nurse) by **Thursday, March 31, 2022**. The medications **MUST** be in their original prescription bottle with your son or daughter's name on it. **You may bring these medications to the meeting on March 28 to save a trip!** If your son or daughter takes an over-the-counter medication, please evaluate if it is necessary that it is taken along or if it could be left behind.

Thank you!

Mrs. Oolman

You Gussed it, More Writing in 6th Grade English

By: Mrs. Jacobsma

This month we took on a new writing adventure. We are creating a choose your own adventure story! The kids will put together the final stories and share them with each other and their parents in early March. We have collaborated and conferenced; we have edited and revised. The results are LOTS of growth in thinking, brain power, and writing skills!

Then we will do a short, interim unit on interviewing and poetry before we dig into the final major writing project of sixth grade: the persuasive research writing and speech.

As always, editing and spelling continue regularly. We are weaving grammar skills into our writing projects. Please ask your child often what they have learned as a writer. I think you'll be surprised!

6th Grade World History

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By: Mr. Nonnemacher

Ask your child about our current unit, and hopefully they will explain that it is a little different than normal! We are in the midst of our Ancient China unit, and we approach this unit “backwards.” The students will actually be the teachers in this scenario. A couple weeks ago, we picked topics of all different sorts dealing with ancient Chinese history. In small groups, the kids are in charge of researching their topic, creating a slide show, a poster, and a set of notes. Beginning next week, each group will present what they have learned about their topic to the rest of their class. It has been a lot of fun to see how well the students interact with each other and work together! Winter is very real right now, but soon we will try to beat the cold by learning about the country of Greece! We will explore the geography of Greece and add some bucket list “trips of a lifetime” ideas! Greece is such a unique country. There are hundreds of islands, dozens of crystal clear harbors and bays, and a 4-mile canal that turned Peloponnese into an island about 140 years ago. We will see pictures, videos, and facts that will make the social studies room feel more like a tropical destination! (Oh how we wish...) Many students really enjoy this unit, as we will also talk about ancient Greek mythology and tie the ancient Olympics to the modern-day Olympics as well as our very own 6th grade Olympics! Spring is coming and we are just trying to set the positive here in Room 114!



Read All About It . . . 6th Grade Literature

By: Mrs. TeGrotenhuis

The sixth graders have recently completed a nonfiction unit in which they researched, paraphrased, and created a writing piece. They discovered many facts about our cultural heroes, and many of them did a nice job piecing together their facts and explaining why our culture considers particular people heroes. Students should understand the importance of paraphrasing as well as using citations to give credit to their sources. It was a long process, but the students made great progress!

We have already moved on to our next unit, studying the genre of legends (specifically those that take place in the Middle Ages). To understand the Feudal System more clearly, each student has been assigned a character from the Middle Ages. Students are currently gathering information about what life would have been like for that person (peasant, noble, knight, etc.). With the information they gather, students will create a poem that incorporates facts about their character. Once again, students have another opportunity to develop their paraphrasing skills and organize the facts they found in a more creative way.

Students were instructed to read an award-winning book at some point this quarter. Toward the end of March, we will begin working on our third quarter book project. We will once again go through the research process as we research the author of an award-winning book as well as the award itself. Most of the work for this project will be completed during class time, and it will be important for students to make wise use of class time provided.

Please continue to encourage your son/daughter to reach our class reading goal of 80 pages weekly. Thank you for your continued support of this at home.



7th Grade Math

By: Mr. Baker

In 7th grade math we have just finished up a chapter dealing with different percent concepts. The students worked through a lot of real-life application situations including percent of change, tips, sales tax, discounts, and interest. Maybe your son/daughter can now pay for the check.

For the month of March students will be working with probability. We will complete the month by creating games where probability is a necessary skill to performing well on their game. We will also take an afternoon for the students to play their games with other peers in the seventh grade. It should be a lot of fun. Any questions, please let me know.



7th Grade Global Studies

By: Mr. Wiekling

The 7th graders have just finished their unit covering South Asia. It was interesting to learn about the role ancient civilizations have had on parts of our world. We also learned about the role that contemporary people, like Mohandas Gandhi and Norman Borlaug have had on regions of the world. Our studies focused primarily on the country of India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. We researched global issues like rapid urbanization, poverty, and environmental challenges. Our students did a good job thinking about complex issues that do not have a single simple solution. They asked good questions and thought about the issues from multiple perspectives.

Coming up next the 7th grade social studies students will focus their attention on the global issue of globalization. We will learn about how our world is becoming more and more interconnected. It is not too difficult to find real-world examples of our globally connected world. From diseases, trade, and conflict it seems nearly impossible to escape the impact other nations have on our own country. Our focus will be on finding the benefits and while recognizing the consequences of a globalized world.

Looking forward to warmer weather!



7th Grade English

By: Mrs. VR (Van Regenmortel)

In English class during February, seventh graders finished their personal narratives and learned about writing emails. We focused on how to effectively communicate in an email with correct structure and tone.

The next unit we will begin is writing an argumentative essay. Students will read two articles about a topic. While reading the articles, they will look for evidence that defends both sides of the topic, and after reading the articles, they will take a position about the topic. Next, students will need to defend their position using evidence from the articles that they read. Students will use prewriting strategies and complete graphic organizers to take their position, make claims, and find evidence in the articles. After prewriting, the seventh graders will then write the rough draft of their argumentative essay. Of course, they will revise and edit their rough drafts and produce a final draft. In April our school will complete the ISASP state testing. For the ISASP, students are required to write various kinds of writing, so during March, we will spend time reviewing and writing these kinds of writing in preparation. The argumentative essay is one of those kinds of writing.

I always seem to end my newsletter articles in the same way by saying thank you for reading the middle school newsletter and staying informed. When you are informed, you can more easily communicate with your son or daughter about what's happening in school. And when you communicate with your child about what they are doing in school, it sends a message to them that what they do in school is important. Therefore, I truly do thank you for taking the time to read what's happening in the middle school. Until next month.....

7th Grade Literature

By: Mrs. Vermeer

3rd quarter is almost over, and we have spent the whole time working on understanding complex text, dystopian literature, and reading our class novel, *The Giver*. I am so impressed with everything the students are learning from this unit and it is truly helping them grow as readers. We have also had quite a few students find a new love for reading thanks to the dystopian genre.

Our class novel is *The Giver* by Lois Lowry. It is a Newbery Medal book meaning it has distinguished honors that its writing has contributed to American literature for children. The book falls under the genre of dystopian literature or science fiction. This book is chosen based on its complexity and ability to challenge the readers thinking. In order to make the most sense of this book we have been studying reading characteristics that specifically apply to dystopian literature. One area we have spent a great deal of time studying is how the book connects to our personal lives, our community, and our world. The students are discovering that authors of these novels have a purpose behind their text, something inspired them to write. The students continued to be amazed at how authors weave the real world into a fictional story.

As quarter 3 wraps up we will continue to have students create a book project over a book they read in the 3rd quarter to share with the class. This unit we are going to run differently. First off, we are going to look at what makes a slideshow great and learn about what to do and what not to do. Afterwards students will create a slideshow given these new criteria in hopes of getting their audience to read their book. Students will get class time to work on this and calibrate with others to see if their slideshow follows the criteria but is still eye catching. Reminder of our goal for the quarter remained the same as last quarter of 600 pages or 4-6 books.

Looking ahead to *The Giver* ending we will be completing various short units on identifying text structures in fiction and nonfiction text. This will be completed with different notes, videos, and short stories.

I am so impressed with this groups willingness to challenge themselves and their reading. I know this is never an easy task, but they have done it and have had amazing success. Keep up the great work 7th graders!



7th Grade Science

By: Mrs. Vande Kieft

In March the 7th graders will be focusing their energy on the thrills and excitement of various slides, roller coasters, and other amusement park rides. The 7th graders will begin examining our new Big Question: "How does energy effect the thrill of an amusement park ride?" This question will lead us to investigating what really causes the speed, adrenaline rush, and exhilaration that we feel while on the tallest water slide or fastest roller coaster. During this unit, the 7th graders will be presented with a problem that they are responsible for solving. This problem will require small groups to plan, design, create, and test a roller coaster prototype for the most thrilling new coaster to (hypothetically) be presented at the Tulip Festival. Each group will use what we have learned about forms of energy, energy transfers, forces, motion, and types of interactions to design their own roller coaster. Each group's roller coaster design will undergo multiple tests and potential redesigns to construct a new roller coaster with the greatest amount of Kinetic Energy. It will be a wild ride with ups, downs, twists, and turns to understand the importance of energy and energy transfers!

At the end of March and start of spring, the 7th graders will begin the Plants vs. Animals unit where we will explore the various similarities and differences between these two organisms. We will even test out our green thumbs to see how well we can grow two different variations of corn plants in the window ledge. Hopefully, the sunny days of spring will be here by then to help us out!

Our Corner of History: 8th Grade American History Class

By: Ms. van Wyk

In 8th grade American History, students just wrapped up their unit on the Constitution and did a great job digging into the principles of our government, the rights we enjoy as U.S. citizens, and the roles all three branches of government play in our country. We are going to take those civil discourse skills we practiced last unit with us as we move on to some of the challenges and problems facing the young United States: the emergence of the first political parties. Students will be analyzing the beliefs of political parties through issues such as “Should the United States have a stronger national or state government? Should the average citizen weigh in on national decision-making or should those decisions rest in the hands of the nation’s best and brightest?” We will also look at how political parties have developed into the bipartisan system that we have today and upon what platforms existing parties are built. These themes and more will be explored as we continue to examine the early politics of American history.



8th Grade Science

By: Mrs. Hoogeveen

We just finished investigating how the visible light portion of the electromagnetic spectrum is reflected, transmitted, or refracted through different media. Our labs consist of refracting light through water, convex lenses, telescopes, a fiber optic strand, rainbow glasses, different shaped lenses, and much more. We then applied our knowledge to the Hubble Telescope, the new James Webb telescope, plus how our eyes work. We formulated a hypothesis as to which lens would solve either near-sightedness or far-sightedness. The students are doing a fantastic job of increasing their awareness of their attention to detail and asking great, thought-provoking questions!

Anyone who works in electronics or signal processing should be familiar with the two main categories of devices: analog and digital. But what makes something analog? How does it differ from digital? For that matter, what makes something digital? We spent just a few days exploring the type of waves that carry analog and digital signals and some of their basic similarities / differences. Student had a great time learning about some of the older technologies. (For some of us these are not old .) These included cassette tapes, 8 track tapes, laser discs, filmstrips, the movie reels, VHS tapes, the “real” floppy discs, the smaller hard disc, and more. The students were intrigued by how some of these older forms worked and how they were used in the classroom. Our goal was to evaluate which is better— analog or digital.

In our most recent adventure, we created synthetic gel worms from an algae product and limestone. We are comparing how our gel worms would compare to a natural fruit source. This is leading up to our research project where the students compare a synthetic product in their life to a natural alternative then evaluate which one is better and why. It will be interesting to see what the students discover about our synthetic world.



8th Grade English

By: Mrs. Dolman

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Students have been working hard to learn the story of Anne Frank by taking notes during the background information Google Slide Shows, view the movie, and read the play. Next, students will use a form called the “Writing Recipe” to construct a compare / contrast essay on Anne Frank ---the play and movie versions. This skill is an important one where I ask students to use their knowledge of a subject and to critically view a similar plot line / story. Specifically, students analyzed the purposes of telling Anne’s story in a play or movie format, what motives a director may have in making changes to her true story, and which one, the play or the movie, was most like the true story of *Anne Frank*. This was a great chance to share with students how media forms of all kinds tend to distort the truth to share what sells or to share whatever “platform” that media is promoting. Critical thinking and viewing and taking in information is a huge skill to take into the “real world” and adulthood.

Our next unit is one of my favorites... POETRY! We will be reading and “comprehending” what the authors are trying to tell us. We’ll be studying figurative language and vocabulary. We’ll be reading the works of several famous poets (Robert Frost is my favorite!) And, students will be WRITING some poetry, too. The goals of the poetry unit are as follows:

1. Read and comprehend this type of literature
2. Write creatively



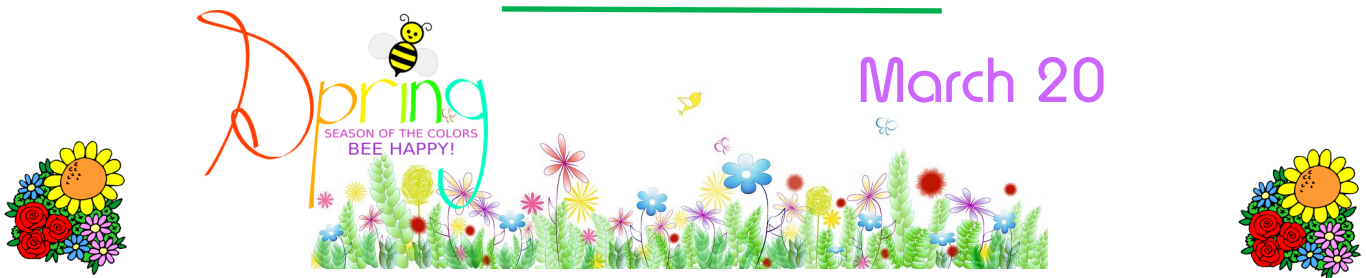
8th Grade Literature

By: Mr. Boone

The 8th grade class is wrapping up their final Holocaust presentations. This unit challenged our students in the research process – identifying credible and accurate sources, note-taking, citing, preparing an oral presentation within a time limit, and creating engaging visuals. Not only did this unit equip our students with valuable skills, but this unit also challenged our students to answer four difficult big idea questions.

1. What are the dangers of remaining silent, apathetic, and indifferent when others are oppressed?
2. What are the roles and responsibilities of individuals, organizations, and nations when confronted with civil rights violations? What is the role of government in protecting the natural rights of its citizens?
3. Why does democracy need to be appreciated, nurtured, and protected?
4. What are the origins and consequences of prejudice, racism, and stereotyping?

While students present their Holocaust topics, they will have selected from a variety of quality literary texts on the Holocaust. As students read their chosen novel, they will engage in conversations about their book. At the conclusion of their novel, they will answer the essential question, “How does the use of story affect your understanding of the Holocaust? Compare and contrast what you read in your novel to what you learned in your research about the Holocaust.” Finally, I look forward to listening to the student presentations. I enjoy watching each student grow as writers and speakers.



March 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Ash Wednesday		3 4 1:15pm Early Dismissal	5
6	7	8 Exploratory Cycle 5 Ends 7:00pm Grade 7-12 Jazz Band Night @ HS Auditorium	9 MS Track Practice Begins Exploratory Cycle 6 Begins	10	11 End 3 rd Quarter 1:15pm Early Dismissal	12
Makerspace						
13 Daylight Savings Time Begins	14 Begin 4 th Quarter 7:00pm MS Choir, Band, Orchestra Concert @ MS 5:00pm School Board Meeting	15 QRT. 3 Grades due in Office	16	17 St. Patrick's Day	18 Report Cards Go Home 1:15pm Early Dismissal MS Jazz Band @ Morningside	19
20 Spring Begins	21 4:00pm-8:00pm Parent-Teacher Conferences	22 4:00pm-8:00pm Parent-Teacher Conferences	23 AEA Hearing Checks	24	25 No School Teacher Comp Day	26
27	28 6:30pm FFA Banquet	29	30	31 March PBIS Assembly		

April 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 1:15pm Early Dismissal Qrt. 4 3 Week Check	2
3	4	5	6 8:30am - 1:30pm Book Bash Competition at Sioux City	7	8 8 th Gr. Career Day 1:15pm Early Dismissal	9
IASAP TESTING WEEK						DC Trip
10 Palm Sunday	11 5:00pm School Board Meeting	12	13	14 End Exploratory Cycle 6	15 Good Friday No School	16
DC Trip						
17 Easter	18 No School	19 5th - 7th Honor Choir--Sioux Center Begin Exploratory Cycle 7 4:30pm MS Track @ NWC	20	21	22 Earth Day 1:15pm Early Dismissal MS Party Night	23
24	25	26 4:30pm MS Track @ Sheldon	27	28 April PBIS Assembly 4:30pm MS Track @ Sioux Center	29 Arbor Day Jr-Sr Prom 1:15pm Early Dismissal Qrt. 4 6 Week Check	30