

MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

MOC-Floyd Valley

March

2023

Special points of Interest:

- Renew, Refresh, Revive
- Leader In Me
- Scholastic Book Fair



Renew, Refresh, Revive

Those living in the Midwest are aware of the potential for snowstorms to continue to happen in March (and April). Yet, March also houses the first day of spring and gives us hope for warmer temps, spring growth, and an overall revival in many ways. With this sense of renewal tied to spring, I want to refresh my existing AND growing appreciation for all those that contribute to providing our middle school students with a great experience. We have teachers and staff that embrace their roles and add value to what our students get to experience while also adding value to one another! With a March-like spirit, I express my appreciation for our staff at the middle school. If you get a chance, feel free to infuse your own spring-like refresh through a quick note, call, or email! In the same spirit, I take this opportunity to celebrate our appreciation for all of you, our partnering parents! My hope is that you all feel a refreshing and renewing spirit with spring just around the corner. Your role in the student experience is of great value and you are greatly appreciated! THANK YOU!!

Middle School Staff:

Teachers:

Tracy Jacobsma	Diane TeGrotenhuis	Tom Rupp	Preston Hoebelheinrich
Joel Boersma	Amanda Van Kley	Brady Baker	Linda Van Regenmorter
Blake Wieking	Amy Sharar	Jon Mouw	Lisa Purdy-Ciesielski
Amber Vermeer	Drew Lemke	Beth Oolman	Drew Nonnemacher
Abby Vande Kieft	Laura Haverdink	Caprice Buchholtz	Beau Koerselman
Amanda Lemke	Alex Van Der Wilt	Ruth Hoogeveen	Kelly Van Wyk
Heather Warntjes	Pam Anderson	Sarah Wrathar	Matt Honken

Instructional Coach – Adam Boone

Librarian – Marlene DeZeeuw

Nurse – Ashley Van Voorst

School Counselors: Scott Starkweather Liz Koenig

Para-Educators:

Susanne Janssen	Kathy Russ	Salvador Vega Jr.	Ben O’Ram
Kelly Hamblin	Brenda Recker	Jen Lalk	Erin Miller
Amanda Kramer	Cheryl Kugler	Rachel Van Klompenburg	

Administrative Assistants:

Tamie Van Es Allison Adams

Library/Technology Assistant:

Margie Goergen

Kitchen Staff:

Lori Van Gorp	Amy Koob	Tami Peterson	Carol Hofmeyer
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Custodians:

Eric Gober	Julie Pottebaum	Ryan Dau	Tami Peterson
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8th Exploratory – HS Staff:

Adam Bonnema	Beth Raymond	Jade Niemyer	Molly Cleveringa
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MS Parent -Teacher Conferences
Thursday, March 16 ~ 4:00 pm - 8:00pm
Tuesday, March 21 ~ 4:00pm – 8:00pm

No School
Friday, March 24
(Teacher Comp. Day)

6th Grade World History

By: Mr. Nonnemacher

Thank you for taking the time to read through our happenings in the 6th grade social studies classroom! We are halfway through our Ancient India Unit in class. Ancient India is a fascinating unit for a lot of the kids, complete with discussions about karma, reincarnation, and one of our most interesting class activities to date, the Caste System Simulation. With this activity, the kids were split into 5 different “social levels” that are reflective of how Ancient Indians used to be separated. We will have priests, warriors, merchants, servants, and untouchables. We will also talk about the significance and the difference in us only doing it for one class period compared to people in India living their entire lives in a certain caste. It is my hope that after this activity is complete, your child will want you to hear all about what their experience was like! The school year continues to go so fast, and 6th grade continues to be a very enjoyable experience for both me and the kids! I cherish the opportunities to connect with over 100 kids daily, and I look forward to this next month!



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. We have collaborated and conferenced; we have edited and revised. The results show LOTS of growth in thinking, brain power, and writing skills!

Then we did a short, interim unit on interviewing and poetry before we dug 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!



Read All About It . . . 6th Grade Literature

By: Mrs. TeGrotenhuis

After completing a lengthy hero research unit, the sixth graders are now 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 randomly 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 incorporating facts about their character. Once again, students have an 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.

St. Patrick's Day ~ March 17



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 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!



Wieking's World

By: Mr. Wieking

The 7th graders are finishing up 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 Mahatma Gandhi and Iowa native 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 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 Regenmorter)

During February in English class, seventh graders did a short unit about some punctuation marks and how to use them correctly in written language. They did some practice assignments and then took a test over the unit.

After the short punctuation unit, we began learning about application letters. The application letter is real-life writing that seventh graders will need to know for the future. Most jobs now require an application letter in addition to an application form or resume when applying for a job. Students chose a summer job to apply for, brainstormed qualities and skills that they possess to do the job well, did prewrites for the letter, and then completed a rough draft of an application letter. After peer revising and editing, students produced their final letters.

In April our school will complete the ISASP state testing. For the ISASP, students are required to write various kinds of writing. Therefore, during March, we will complete two more kinds of writing: an argumentative essay and a compare/contrast essay. Consequently, at the end of March after learning about, practicing, and reviewing all these kinds of writing, students will be prepared for what they will be expected to write during the IASAP in April.

I always like 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 children 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

Third quarter is almost over, and we have spent the whole time working on understanding complex text, dystopian literature, and reading our class novel, *The City of Ember*. 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 City of Ember* by Jeanne DuPrau. 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. 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. After we finishing reading this book we will watch the movie and analyze how the cinematic features impact our understanding of the movie.

As quarter 3 wraps up we will continue to have students create a book project over a book they read in the third quarter to share with the class. We will spend some time interviewing classmates about the book they have read and asking them various questions. Reminder of our goal for the quarter remained the same as last quarter of 600 pages or 4-6 books.

Looking ahead to *The City of Ember* ending we will be completing just a few more units before the end of the year. We will spend some time analyzing poems, identifying elements in fiction and nonfiction text, and completing a readers theater.

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



8th Grade English

By: Mrs. Oolman

Students have been working hard to learn the story of Anne Frank by taking notes during the background information Google Slide Show. Next on our agenda is reading the play version of Anne's Story. Following the reading of the play, we will be viewing the movie version.

This version of the movie offers a look into Anne's life before and AFTER her hiding in the Secret Annex for over two years. The story does include some hard things to view, given that they depict some of the cruelty inflicted by the Nazi Regime and the end of Anne's life at Bergen Belson camp. The viewing of this is scheduled for March 10.

Some of you may wonder why we look at three different forms of Anne Frank's story. Here are the Common Core State Standards we meet:

1. Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using different mediums (print or digital text, video, play, or multi-media) to present a topic or idea.
2. Analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script (or, in this case, the TRUTH), evaluating the choices made by the director.

These two standards are designed to help our students become critical thinkers when exposed to media.

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.

To this end, students will be looking at another "movie based on a true story" of their choice to find out the "truth"!



Our Corner of History

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.

March 12

Daylight Saving Time Begins



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. Students 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 adventures, we will be creating 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 Literature

By: Mrs. Van Der Wilt

The 8th grade class is nearing the end of the preparation for their Holocaust presentations. This unit has 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, showing no concern, and having no sympathy for others when they are mistreated by others?
2. What are the roles and responsibilities of individuals, organizations, and nations when confronted with civil rights violations? What is the role of the government in protecting the natural rights of its citizens?
3. Why does democracy need to be appreciated, nurtured, and protected?
4. Where is the beginning of prejudice (bias), racism, and stereotyping in any society? What are the consequences?

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.



“Paws for Reading” Book Fair!

You're invited to the Middle School Scholastic Book Fair:

When: Thursday, March 16 through Wednesday, March 22, 2023

Time: Open during the school day and P-T Conference nights

Where: Middle School Library

Included in the book fair will be . . .

Award winning titles

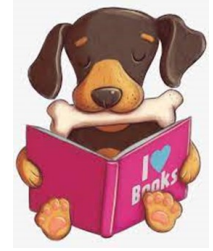
Popular teen and young adult fiction

Reference, science, and nature books

Extra value books

Cookbooks

Posters, erasers, and bookmarks



You can preview the fair online at <https://www.scholastic.com/bf/mocfloydvalleymidsch>.

The online shopping option begins Monday, March 13.

We look forward to seeing you! Thanks in advance for supporting our book fair!



Leader in Me

In January and February the Middle School moved into Habit 3: Putting First Things First centered on “Prioritize, and do the Most Important Things First.” The lessons in Habit 3 encouraged students to recognize the importance of planning ahead, focus on their priorities, and strive for organization. Students worked to hone life skills such as time-management, accountability, work ethic, and flexibility. The Key Concepts discussed in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade during the lessons for Habit 3 included:

6th Grade Lessons	7th Grade Lessons	8th Grade Lessons
Plan Ahead ~ <i>“Clock or Compass?”</i>	Focus on Priorities ~ <i>“Your Top 10”</i>	Organization ~ <i>“Controlling Chaos”</i>
Urgent vs. Important <i>~ “What’s so Important”</i>	Time Quadrants ~ <i>“The 25-Hour Day”</i>	Big Rocks ~ <i>“Success Breeds Success”</i>
Big Rocks ~ <i>“All the Time in the World”</i>	Plan Ahead ~ <i>“The Waiting Game”</i>	Urgent vs. Important ~ <i>“Stop Stalling”</i>
Organization ~ <i>“Everything in Its Place”</i>	Integrity to Say No ~ <i>“Saying No”</i>	Prioritizing ~ <i>“Your Choice”</i>
Saying No ~ <i>“The Snooze Button”</i>	Organization ~ <i>“Don’t Waste My Time”</i>	Saying No ~ <i>“Who’s the Boss?”</i>

In March, we move into **Habit 4: Think Win-Win**. Habit 4 is based on the idea that we must “Have an Everyone-Can-Win Attitude.” The various lessons during Habit 4 concentrate on recognizing that everyone has unique talents and abilities, and that we must be open-minded when working collaboratively with others.



March 27
Spring



March 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 My Choice	3 1:15pm Early Dismissal	4
5	6	7 HS & MS Jazz Concert @HS Auditorium	8 MS Track Practice Starts	9 My Choice MOC-FV MS Jazz Festival @ MS	10	11
12 Daylight Saving Time Begins	13	14 End 3 rd Qtr. 7:00pm MS Concert-Choir, Band, Orchestra	15 Start 4 th Qtr. End Exploratory Cycle 5	16 My Choice Begin Exploratory Cycle 6 4:00pm-8:00pm Parent-Teacher Conferences	17 St. Patrick's Day 8 th Gr. Morningside Jazz Festival	18
Book Fair						
19	20 Spring Begins	21 4:00pm-8:00pm Parent-Teacher Conferences	22	23 My Choice	24 No School - Teacher Comp Day	25
Book Fair						
26	27 FFA Banquet	28	29	30 My Choice	31	
DC/NYC Trip						

April 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin-left: auto;">DC/NYC Trip</div>
2	3	4	5	6 My Choice	7 No School	8
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #d3d3d3; padding: 5px; width: 80%; margin: 0 auto;">Makerspace</div>					
	<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #add8e6; padding: 5px; width: 60%; margin: 0 auto;">DC/NYC Trip</div>				<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #ff00ff; padding: 5px; width: 60%; margin: 0 auto;">Spring Break</div>	
9 Easter	10 Snow Make-up Day	11	12 8:30pm-1:30pm Book Bash Competition @ Sioux City	13 My Choice	14	15
<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #ff00ff; padding: 2px;">Spring Break</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #d3d3d3; padding: 5px; width: 90%; margin: 0 auto;">ISASP Testing</div>					
16	17	18 5 th - 7 th Honor Choir @Sioux Center 4:15pm MS Track @Moc-fv	19	20 My Choice End Exploratory Cycle 6	21 Start Exploratory Cycle 7	22 Earth Day
23	24	25 4:15pm MS Track@Sheldon	26	27 My Choice 4:15pm MS Track@Sioux Center	28 Arbor Day	29 Jr-Sr Prom
30						