

MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

MOC-Floyd Valley

March

2025

Special points of Interest:

- Power of Assumptions
- PBIS Update
- Leader in Me



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Power of Assumptions

Happy March to all of you! The late February temperatures make it feel like spring is here! Whether it is a trick or not, we will celebrate the sunshine and warm temps!

March brings the start of our spring sports season. We also have some other items on the calendar for you to be aware of:

- March 11 – Middle School music concert
- March 18th and 20th – Parent – Teacher Conferences
- March 31 – April 3 – ISASP Testing for Students

As I mentioned above, we have been blessed with some unseasonably warm weather. It has been a topic of conversation that usually ends with something like, “It just means we will probably get buried with snow in March or April.” Past winter seasons have taught us that there is likely some truth to this. However, it made me reflect on the power of assumptions. It is human nature to assume, yet we do have the choice to assume the best or assume the worst. Particularly when it comes to making assumptions about others or what they might be thinking. One of the more powerful mental decisions in a place where the culture is positive and thriving is to assume (or presume) the best in others.

As we seek to work together as colleagues at the middle school, we can and do accomplish great things by presuming the best and then working to achieve it. The same is true as we work with students. We choose to believe in our students and encourage them to believe in themselves. We feel the same about the parents of our students as we partner with you to believe in the best in our students.

I encourage you to assume the best in others in your professional and personal relationships. Assume the best as you ponder what others might be thinking or feeling. Thank you for positively partnering with us and believing that together we will make a great difference in our students!

We appreciate you!

Mr. Yaw

MS Parent—Teacher Conferences

Tuesday, March 18 ~ 4:00 pm—8:00pm
 Thursday, March 20 ~ 4:00 pm—8:00pm

No School

Friday, March 21
 (Teacher Comp. Day)

March 17



Read All About It . . . 6th Grade Literature

By: Mrs. Te Grotenhuis

The sixth graders have been studying legends and what makes them a very distinct genre. We specifically focused on *The Legend of Robin Hood* which takes place in the Middle Ages. To continue practicing our research skills, each student was randomly assigned a character from the Middle Ages and then gathered information about what life might have been like for that person (peasant, noble, knight, etc.). Students then created a poem incorporating facts about their character. This gave the students a creative opportunity to develop their paraphrasing skills and organize the facts they found.

For individual reading this third quarter, students have been instructed to read an award-winning book. Students will soon begin working on their third quarter book projects and will once again go through the research process while researching 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 this time.

After completion of the book project, we will delve into figurative language. Students will learn different types of figurative language (personification, onomatopoeia, etc.), identify it within literature, and create short pieces of writing while using figurative language.

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



Lots of Writing in Sixth Grade English

By: Tracy Jacobsma

The sixth graders are spending the next few weeks crafting their Choose Your Own Adventure stories. This is the turning point for most all of my students. Though they still may not love writing or plan to be a professional author as an adult, the completion of these stories instills the confidence and skills necessary to manage their own writing. It is a fantastic and amazing change. Please ask to see these masterpieces; your children are producing incredible work!

We will close out March and kick off the final writing unit of the year (how can that be possible?). This unit takes us nearly a full two months! The persuasive research unit will be the most extensive research project the kids have undertaken as students yet! We will focus on contemporary social issues, finding information to help us understand the issues and what's being done to help solve the problems. We will present this information in both a written paper and oral presentation to the class.

That will bring us crashing in to the end of the year where we end with a self-evaluation of each student's progress



6th Grade Science

By: Mr. H (Hoebelheinrich)

We are excited to share with you what your child has been exploring in our Science Class the last couple of weeks. We have been discussing Earth Science. Specifically, How has Earth changed, and what factors are causing these changes to occur. We just finished plate tectonics. In this unit, students learned about the structure of the Earth's crust and how its plates move and interact. We've discussed concepts like the different types of plate boundaries (divergent, convergent, and transform), and how these movements lead to the formation of mountains, earthquakes, and volcanoes. Students have also been investigating the theory of continental drift and how it explains the changing positions of continents over millions of years. Following our exploration of plate tectonics, we are examining the natural disasters that occur as a result of these geological processes. Students are learning about earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, and other natural phenomena, studying their causes, effects, and safety measures. This unit is an opportunity to understand how these events shape our planet and how we can prepare and respond to them.

7th Grade Science

By: Mrs. Vande Kieft

In March the seventh graders will be focusing their energy on the thrills and excitement of various slides, roller coasters, and other amusement park rides. The seventh 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 seventh 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 seventh 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!



7th Grade English

By: Mrs. VR (Van Regenmorter)

During the months of January and February, the seventh grade English students have been practicing three kinds of writing to prepare for what they will be expected to write during the ISASP state testing. We have written application letters, argumentative essays, and currently we are working on compare/contrast essays. Earlier in the year, we wrote personal narratives, so we also practiced narrative writing. I am very pleased with how well students have used time provided in class to complete prewrites, write the pieces of writing, and do revising and editing. They have been working hard! Knowing how to write these 4 kinds of writing will be beneficial during the upcoming ISASP.

Looking ahead to the next two months of March and April, we have a new face in seventh grade English classes. I'm excited about having Mr. Jackson Laven join us. He is a senior at Northwestern College and is doing his student teaching experience with me.

I always like to end my newsletter articles by saying thank you for reading the middle school newsletter and staying informed. When you are informed, you can more easily communicate with your child 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 Math

By: Mr. Baker

We just finished up our fifth unit of the year. This curriculum continues to call for us to communicate "the why" behind the math. Being able to communicate the reason for your solution is being asked of each student every day. As we look ahead to unit six we will dive into equations, expressions, and inequalities. It is the longest chapter of the year, so we will not be taking our next test until late March or early April. This can be the time of year when students can wear out a bit, so any encouragement to keep persevering would be great!

7th Grade Literature

By: Mrs. Vermeer

Most of the third quarter has been spent reading our class novel, *The City of Ember*. This novel is dystopian which is considered complex text, so we have spent time learning different reading skills to help build our understanding of complex text. The students have done a great job working to understand and build their reading skills. Some of the skills we have learned are how characters are made and are different archetypes. Characters can also be multiple archetypes as they are complex just like humans. Students learned about power in dystopian novels by what it is, who has it, and how people respond to power. Another skill students learned was connecting stories to their own lives whether on a personal level, local or global level our text is meant to connect to our lives.

To wrap up this unit we will be watching the movie and looking at how the use of cinematic features changes how we view the movie and how it changes the images we created when we read the book ourselves. The movie will take us about a week to watch and then we will conclude by writing about the cinematic features and how they impact the way we view movies.

Quarter three vocabulary is focused on root words and how root words need additional parts added to them to make them a word. Quarter four vocabulary we will dive into Greek Combining parts of words.

ISASP testing is coming so to help students prepare we are taking part in a March Madness activity. In this activity students will read different passages and answer questions like the questions that will be on ISASP. To keep things interesting each class will be competing against the other classes for the highest average score.

With only one quarter to go for the school year we will wrap up the year with our poetry unit, writing a children's book, and completing a reader's theater based off a TV series.

Continue to keep working hard seventh graders!



7th Grade Global Studies

By: Mr. Wieking

The seventh 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 seventh 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 recognizing the consequences of a globalized world.

Looking forward to warmer weather!



8th Grade English

By: Mrs. Oolman

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Next on our agenda following our in-depth study of Anne Frank will be a review of parts of speech and punctuation. The parts of speech include the following: nouns, verbs, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunction, interjection, and articles (the silliest one of them all ~ a, an, the are the articles!). The punctuation marks include these: period, question mark, exclamation mark, comma, quotation marks, apostrophe, colon, semi-colon, parentheses, and hyphen.

Knowing the “title” of each of these is base knowledge. Knowing how to USE each one in our writing is practical knowledge. As we enter the last week of March and our ISASP testing, both base knowledge and practical knowledge will be put to use.



8th Grade Literature

By: Mrs. Hoppe

The eighth grade class is continuing their Holocaust unit. We will begin presentations in the next couple of weeks. This unit is testing 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 is this unit equipping students with valuable skills, but it is also challenging them 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 be reading one of a variety of quality literary texts on the Holocaust. As they read their chosen novel, they will engage in conversations about the 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. It has been a blessing to watch each student grow as writers and speakers.



Our Corner of History 8th Grade American History

By Mrs. Phelan

In eight 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. To put our Constitutional awareness to the test, we ended the unit by participating in a Supreme Court simulation, where students served in the role of petitioners, respondents, or even justices in a fictional case surrounding the First Amendment. We even got a brief Iowa history lesson by studying the precedent case of *Tinker v. Des Moines*!

Our plan is 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. Beginning first with George Washington’s Farewell Address, we will examine the question of “If Washington warned us about political parties, then why did the U.S. create them? What are the risks of strong political parties and what are the benefits?” Students will ponder these themes and more as we continue to examine the early politics of American history.

8th Grade Science

By: Mrs. Hughes

In eighth grade science, we just wrapped up our Genetic Technology unit. Traditionally, humans have influenced traits through selective breeding, but modern science has introduced powerful tools like genetic engineering and CRISPR gene editing. While genetic advancements have many benefits, they also raise ethical questions, like whether it's right to edit human genes. Students were assigned a research topic and then synthesized their findings into benefits and consequences. After finishing their research, students completed an opinion writing where they could carefully weigh each of the pros and cons before forming their own opinion.

During the month of March, we will be studying waves! Throughout the next few weeks, we will be learning about what makes a wave, the different types of waves, wave properties, wave behavior, and sound versus light. Students will be participating in a variety of labs and hands-on activities to see these behaviors and properties in action!



Leader in Me

During the month of March, the Middle School has ventured into **Habit 5: Seek First to Understand, Then to be Understood** based on the idea that we must "Listen to People Sincerely." The lessons in Habit 5 are a great opportunity for the Middle School students to practice using attentive listening while building good social and communication skills in attempts to appreciate and work effectively with others. Students worked to hone life skills such as the use of body language in communication, how to be an empathetic listener, and the importance of providing appropriate and effective feedback in their interactions with others. **Habit 5: Seek First to Understand, Then to be Understood** focused on key concepts and listening skills such as:

- Genuine Listening
- Listening Attentively
- Being an Empathetic Listener
- Speaking with Confidence
- Using Honesty when Conveying Ideas



Ahoy, Ye Bookaneers

The Spring Scholastic Book Fair is Setting Sail for Our School

When: March 17 through March 20

Where: Middle School Library

The book fair will be open during the school day and during P-T Conferences.

Included in the book fair will be . . .

- Award winning titles
- Reference, science, and nature books
- Great Books, Great Value, Last Chance Books
- Posters, erasers, pens, pencils, bookmarks and much more
- Popular teen and young adult fiction
- Books for younger readers
- Cookbooks

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

Homepage: <https://www.scholastic.com/bf/mocfloydvalleymidsch>



PBIS Update

PBIS has partnered with Leader in Me for the past month as STAR groups and grade levels have been practicing Habit 4 – Think Win-Win with two different PBIS Ticket Challenges. The grade level and STAR group at each grade level with the most PBIS tickets will win a special prize to be awarded in the month of March. During the challenge, students may choose to turn their PBIS tickets into boxes for the reward of their choice in front of the Office.

The PBIS Team provided another group of students with a volunteer opportunity to serve at Hope Haven and help to assemble wheelchair parts to be distributed all over the world. In January eight students and volunteer staff had the opportunity to work for 2.5 hours during the school day. Students cut vinyl for the wheelchair pads, stuffed wheelchair pads with foam padding, stapled the vinyl to finish the pad, drilled holes for the parts to be attached to the wheelchair, and packed the wheelchair pads to be shipped for final assembly. MOC-FV Middle School looks forward to continually partnering with Hope Haven!



March 20

March 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3 7:00-9:00pm 7-12 All Jazz Band @ HS	4	5 Ash Wednesday	6	7 8 th Gr. Dordt Field Trip 1:15pm Early Dismissal	8
9 Daylight Savings Time Begins	10	11 7:00-8:30pm Middle School Concert	12	13	14 6 th Gr. Bowling 1:15pm Early Dismissal	15
16	17 St. Patrick's Day	18 4:00-8:00pm Parent/Teacher Conferences	19	20 Spring Begins 4:00-8:00pm Parent/Teacher Conferences	21 No School ~ Teacher Comp Day End 3 rd Qrt.	22 Morningside Middle School Jazz Festival
Scholastic Book Fair						
23	24 Begin 4 th Qrt.	25	26	27	28 1:15pm Early Dismissal	29
30	31 <div style="background-color: #90ee90; padding: 2px; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block;">ISASP Testing</div> <div style="background-color: #d3d3d3; padding: 2px; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block;">Makerspace</div>					

April 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4 1:15pm Early Dismissal	5
		ISASP Testing				
		Makerspace				
6	7	8	9	10	11 1:15pm Early Dismissal	12
13	14	15 4:15pm MS B/G Soccer @ Sheldon	16	17 No School	18 No School	19
				Spring Break		
20 Easter	21 No School	22 Earth Day 8:00am-4:00pm NWI 5 th – 7 th Honor Choir @ MOCFV HS	23 8:00am-4:00pm Book Bash @ Sioux City	24 4:15pm MS Soccer G @ Sioux Cetner B @ MOCFV Elem.	25 Arbor Day 1:15pm Early Dismissal	26 Jr./Sr. Prom
Spring Break						
27	28 5:15pm Boys Soccer vs Sheldon @ MOCFV Elem.	29 4:15pm MS Track @ Sheldon	30			