



7th & 8th Grade Friday Letter - Oct. 6th, 2017

Announcements

- ★ If you've already donated to the SMART campaign...THANK YOU!
We rely on your contribution to fund classroom supplies, classroom field trips, the art program, music, reading and language, computers and new this year...the 5th grade week-long overnight and the Middle School Outward Bound program. So, please donate if you haven't already...
www.WillowCreekAcademy.org/donate
Every dollar makes a difference!
- ★ Congratulations to our **ACADEMIC ALL STARS** of the week for their leadership both academically and in our WCA community! Your all stars this week are:
 - 7th Grade - Zebah Mamoon
 - 8th Grade - Mohamed Mamoon
- ★ A message from the foundation: “Did you know that Willow Creek Foundation is now funding the Outward Bound program? Their generous donation covers 150 students backpacking! If you are able to, please increase your donation to SMART by \$350 per child you have in these grades.”
- ★ Did you know that WCF is now funding the Outward Bound program? If you are able to, please increase your donation to SMART by \$350 per child you have in these grades.
- ★ Please make sure to sign up for a Parent Teacher Conference with your child’s homeroom teacher.

English Language Arts with Ms. Powers

7th Grade: We finished up all of our monologues on Friday and Tuesday with Marin Theater Company. They were spot on! We have begun our introduction to our Realistic Fiction Essay. I started the students out with a pre-assessment writing activity. This is where they wrote for 45 minutes straight with a pencil and paper (how archaic, I know!). This will determine where they place prior to our essay writing unit with their writing skills. We will do another one after our Realistic Writing Essay unit, and see how much they have grown (post-assessment).

This week we have been working on plot ideas for the Realistic Fiction Essay, concentrating on the big idea, as well as, developing believable characters through different scenes. They are working on making their characters come alive by generating traits, attitudes, challenges, relationships, movements, style, quirks, etc. Please don't forget to sign up for your teacher/parent conferences with me (7A is my homeroom). I sent instructions home with them on Friday. Please feel free to contact me via email or cell phone to arrange a different times/dates if need be.

8th Grade: This week we have been studying the theme of their independent books and delving deeper in expanding their thoughts in concern to their themes. On Monday we did a pre-assessment writing assignment where each student wrote for 45 minutes straight on a prompt that I gave to them in class. I had them write with a pencil and paper, which they all thought was quite archaic! At the end of this writing unit on Thematic Essays we will write again, and see how much they have improved with their 'on command' writing.

The student's concentration this week has been on themes in their text, naming the central problem the character faces in the story. I have had them reflect on parts of their story that pertain to this problem, and what the story is teaching them about this issue. We also began studying each author's craft and different literary and narrative devices they use to move the story along (i.e. flashbacks, settings, foreshadowing, conflict, point of view, characterization, etc).

Mathematics with Mr. St. Denny

7th Grade - This week we were introduced to Cecil the tightrope walker who has the skill of doing moves forward and backward as he traverses the tightrope. Cecil acts as a model to help students understand operations with negative numbers.

8th Grade - This week we continued with algebra tiles as we work toward transitioning to symbolic manipulation. Students had been simplifying expressions, but now we up the ante by first having them compare expressions to see which might be bigger, and finally solving for the unknown variable.

Algebra 1- This week's algebra 1 work supports the work that they are doing in the 8th grade class. The focus has been on solving one and two-step linear equations symbolically.

As always, don't hesitate to email me at sst.denny@willowcreekacademy.org if you have any questions or concerns.

Science with Mr. Devol

7th Grade Driving Question of the Week: How did we get to where we are as a planet / human species?
In 7th grade, we continued our look at the six major Eons which make up the History of Earth. Students chose an Era or an Eon which they will focus on, present a slide show to the class and create a poster to be used around the class to portray the history of earth.

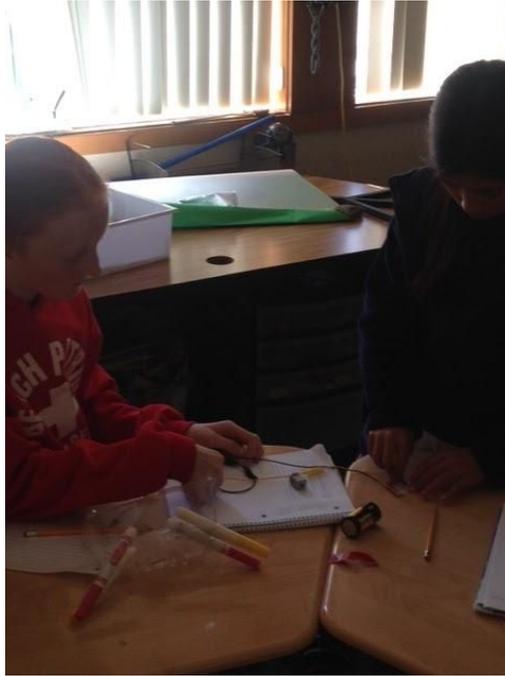
Next Week: *Make a Power Point presentation with a partner on an Era or Eon of Earth (presentations are NEXT THURSDAY in lieu of a quiz).*

8th Grade Driving Question of the Week: How is energy transferred on earth?

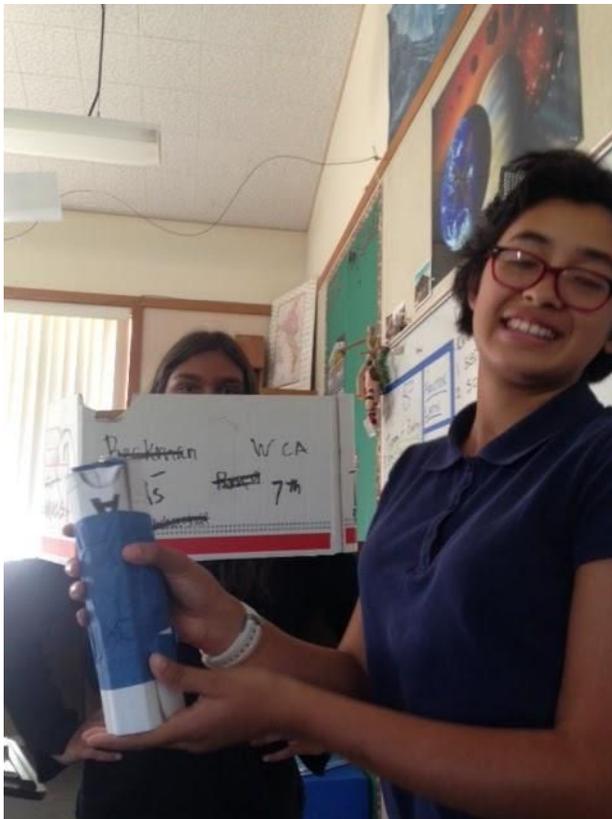
This week in 8th grade we looked at energy. Students learned what it is, the different types of energy how it is transferred and the fact that it isn't created or destroyed (The Law of Conservation of Energy).

Next Week: LAB: MAKE SIMPLE MACHINES

Reminder: *EACH THURSDAY we will have a science quiz (usually) or end of the unit test.



Students used batteries, motors and wires to create “magic” electronic art machines.



Making Flashlights - completing the circuits!



When it's hot, make a fan!



Making Electric Art Machines

Social Studies with Mr. Baker

***The Google Classroom for all Social Studies classes are up and running, and you can see what we are working on in class there. Your 7th or 8th grader student can provide access for you, or you can contact me and I will provide you your own log in.*

7th Grade: We are beginning to learn about European Feudalism and how this economic and social system affected the development of Western Europe during the early part of the Middle Ages. We also learned about Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs to identify what people needed after the collapse of the Western Roman Empire.

8th Grade: This week, we learned more about the Age of Discovery/Exploration and how European explorers and conquerors found new resources in the New World. We also are learning more about the people who already lived in North and South America and how sophisticated their societies were and what knowledge has been lost about these complex cultures. We also introduced ourselves to the Columbian Exchange, which we will be exploring more and presenting our research to each other next week!