



7th & 8th Grade Friday Letter - March 30th, 2018

Announcements

- ★ Outward Bound 8th Grade Camping Trip
 - April 16 - 20
 - Optional Parent Meeting on Thursday April 5 @ 6 PM in Room 28
 - Details on the hiking route, campsites, and what to bring and what OB can provide (which is almost everything).
 - If you can not attend, all lists provide will be available in the office or via email.
 - Rosters have been set and OB is preparing the equipment and vetting the paperwork. You may receive a call from Chelsea at Outward Bound if they have any question regarding the medical release forms.
- ★ Civil Rights Film and Lecture Series: The History of Women's Rights in America
 - This Friday, March 31st, the WCA middle school hosted guest speaker Dr. Amy Kittelstrom. Amy Kittelstrom is a scholar of modern thought and culture who lives and works in the North Bay Area of California. Her first book, *The Religion of Democracy: Seven Liberals and the American Moral Tradition*, was published by Penguin Press in 2015. She is a professor of history at Sonoma State University and currently serves on the editorial board of the *Journal of American History*. Her research has been supported by fellowships from the Center for Religion and American Life at Yale, the Charles Warren Center for the Study of American History at Harvard, and the Center for the Study of Religion at Princeton. Her next book will put the twentieth-century writer James Baldwin in deep historical context.
 - Before the presentation, 8th grade girls will have a chance to meet with Dr. Kittelstrom to talk about ways they can empower themselves in academics as they move forward into high school and college.
- ★ 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:
 - 8th Grade - Angie Padilla
 - 8th Grade - Sedric Reynolds

English Language Arts with Ms. Powers

7th Grade: In our final unit, students have been building background knowledge about the Japanese - American relations during World War II. They will consider the causes of both Japanese and American involvement in the war. This week we have been concentrating on the war in the Pacific (Pearl Harbor). Students have been considering the conflicting perspectives that surround the same event.

We also began reading the central text connected to this unit, *Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption* by Laura Hillenbrand. As we read through Part One of this novel, students have been concentrating on American Louis Zamperini, as well as studying Hillenbrand's crafts and techniques that pull the readers into this compelling piece of literary nonfiction.

Dear Parents,

Students are beginning a new unit about Japanese-American relations during World War II, and will be reading the compelling story of Louie Zamperini in the book *Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption*, by Laura Hillenbrand, and an account of Miné Okubo, a Japanese-American interned during World War II. Students have the option to read either the original or young adult version of *Unbroken*. Most students are already engaged in the story and up for the reading challenge. Students who need simplified text for independent reading or are more sensitive to violence may chose to read the YA version. We'll use the original in class for deeper analysis, exploration of author's craft, and as a mentor text for their upcoming writing unit. Great care has been taken to create this unit, and any time we read about violence in the world, we need to be extra thoughtful to make sure that everyone feels safe. We welcome your feedback and questions about the important work that we are doing to support your child's growth as a reader, writer, and citizen.

Sincerely,
Joann Powers

8th Grade: Students continue to develop their ability to closely read text while studying the theme of taking a stand as it is revealed in the novel, *To Kill A Mockingbird*. Students have engaged in a character study of Atticus by analyzing his actions and words, and what others say about him, to better understand him as a character. This analysis will provide the details and evidence students will use in their end of unit, argument essay.

Mathematics with Mr. St. Denny

7th Grade/ 8th The week was focused around work with fractions and percents, so I thought it would be an appropriate time to examine the wage gap by gender, ethnicity, and education. We had some enlightening conversation while dissecting various graphs, and

answered the question “is college worth it?” by doing math with hard data. We also completed MAP testing.

8th Grade - We will be doing the second round of high school practice placement exams next week in order to find specific practice opportunities for each student to reach their goals.

Algebra 1- 8th graders did great on MAP testing in general, but I want to send a special shout out to the Algebra kids who posted huge gains; several students scored above the previous records for the past three years!

As always, don't hesitate to email me at [sst.denny@willowcreekacademy.org](mailto:ssst.denny@willowcreekacademy.org)

SCIENCE with Mr. Devol

7th Grade: Zygotes are alive and well and DRAGON ADOPTION has begun! We will work next week as well on our little bundles to determine what ALLELES they will have as well as the PHENOTYPES.

8th Grade: This week, we began our TEST PREP. INTENSIVE. 8th graders continue ramping up for their test in few weeks. Topics covered were MOTION and FORCE.

Next Week: More **Test PREP! STRUCTURE OF MATTER**

Social Studies with Mr. Baker

7th Grade: MAP Testing, Chinese Invention Presentations, Introduction into Feudal Japan!!! There was so much going on this week that every student should get plenty of rest to prepare for our final quest before the Spring Break. Cultural Diffusion will be the central focus of our study before resuming after the Break with Japanese Feudalism, Bushido and the Samurai!

8th Grade: MAP Testing, and preparing for our debates has been keeping us extremely busy! We just found out, after our first round of debates, that it was a LOT harder than we thought. Six teams created academic arguments around six stances that allowed for a diverse multifaceted debate that helped all students better understand the complexity of the issues surrounding the 2nd Amendment and how it manifests in our society. We will practice all week to prepare our 8th grade volunteers to dazzle and inform the 7th graders in our Debate on Stage next Friday in the MPR at 2 pm. 7th and 8th grade parents are welcome to join the audience!

As always, if you need to reach a teacher for any reason, email is best.

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