



7th & 8th Grade Friday Letter - February 1, 2019

Dear Willow Creek families,

We hope you had a good week! Here's the news from our middle school team:

- ★ Outward Bound forms will be going home next week for the March 4, 2019 camping trip for the 8th grade! Please see the link on the Friday Post webpage for an electronic version.
- ★ Sean Altman from Outward Bound will hold a family information session for 8th grade families on Monday, February 11 at 5:30 in the library. This meeting is not mandatory, but it will be very informative!
- ★ Outward Bound forms need to be completed by February 15, 2019.

Congratulations to our Middle School All-Stars!
Velvet Lopez and Seth Wollenburg

Class Meetings and Film and Lecture Series

Each week, we include a description of our middle school class meeting topics for the preceding and upcoming weeks. Middle schoolers meet with their homeroom teachers for class meeting on Monday and Friday afternoons to talk about important social-emotional learning topics and build community. On the last Friday of each month, our 7th and 8th graders come together for a college lecture-style series focused on civil rights, current events, and social issues.

Last week's class meeting topic was **empathy**. Next week's class meeting topic is **preventing rumors and bullying**. Please check in with your students about their class meetings and assemblies. We want to keep these conversations going!

If you have questions about class meetings or social-emotional learning in grades 7 and 8, please reach out to Mr. Baker: rbaker@willowcreekacademy.org.

English Language Arts with Ms. Powers

Seventh Grade:

This week students continued bringing a critical perspective to their research. My aim is to help students become better readers and thinkers, so they can become better writers of research-based arguments. This unit does some larger work as well. It rallies students to recommit themselves to the continued effort of persevering to understand and explain a complex topic, resulting in tangible improvements in their overall academic writing skills.

Eighth Grade:

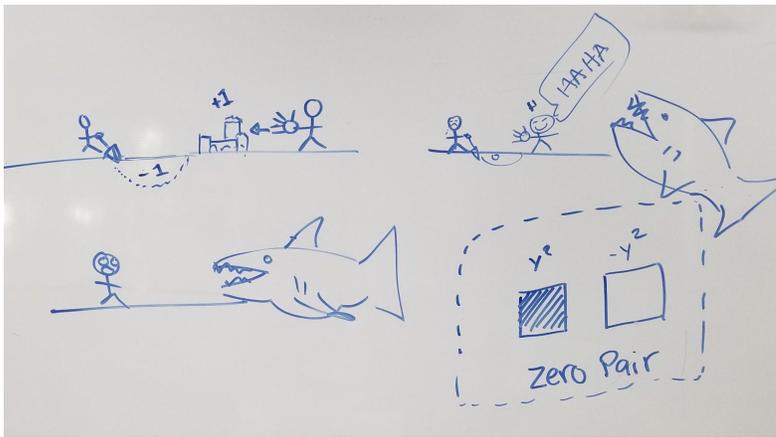
As you know, students are embarking on a study of argumentation. This unit began with an examination of video games and role-playing games with simulated violence. At a debate on Tuesday, students presented their claims and evidence, and they heard other perspectives that continually tested their logic and reasoning.

On Wednesday, we moved our investigation into a troubling, real-life issue on the study of the experience of child soldiers - in particular, the question of whether child soldiers should be given amnesty. This sets students up to tackle an even more complex issue, with aspects of injustice, tragedy, and violence as well as courage, hope, and resiliency. The goal of this unit is for students to come to new understandings, deeper realizations, and a newfound confidence that they can write about complicated issues.

As always, feel free to contact me with any questions: jpowers@willowcreekacademy.org

Mathematics with Mr. St. Denny**7th Grade Announcements:**

7th graders extended their use of algebra tiles to combining like terms, and finished the week working with percentages. The picture below illustrated the idea of “zero pairs”.



Area = $4x + x^2 + y + y^2 + 2$
 $x^2 + y^2 + 4x + y + 2$

$6x + (x-1) + 3y + (y-1) + (y-2) + 10$

$7x - x + 6y + 10 - 2 - 1 - 1$

$6x + 6y + 6$

Using the perimeter of an algebra tile dog to combine like terms in an algebraic expression.

8th grade worked on slope and equations of lines in the form $y=mx + b$ (slope-intercept form), we measured and calculated slopes of several roofs from a ski video, and used proportion to estimate the sizes of large waves.

Algebra students worked on properties of exponents and scientific notation. Pretty intense stuff:

PRACTICE PROBLEM #3

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{16pq^2r^9}{8p^3q^4} &= \frac{16}{8} \cdot \frac{p}{p^3} \cdot \frac{q^2}{q^4} \cdot r^9 \\ &= 2 \cdot p^{1-3} \cdot q^{2-4} \cdot r^9 \\ &= 2 \cdot p^{-2} \cdot q^{-2} \cdot r^9 \\ &= 2 \cdot \frac{1}{p^2} \cdot \frac{1}{q^2} \cdot r^9 \\ &= \frac{2r^9}{p^2q^2}\end{aligned}$$

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sst.denny@willowcreekacademy.org

SCIENCE with Mr. MacDonald

7th Grade:

This week 7th graders split water molecules into hydrogen and oxygen. Students used a battery with wire terminals in the water to explore electrolysis. The bubbles coming off of the battery terminals were the hydrogen and oxygen. Next week students will start a project on molecules.

8th Grade:

The 8th graders worked on their presentations on Space and Gravity. Students are preparing to teach a 10-15 minute lesson to the class. Students are exploring a variety of different ways to teach their lessons. Students began teaching their lessons this week and will continue through February 12th.

Social Studies with Mr. Baker

WHAT WE DID THIS WEEK

7th Grade: We spent this week working on our Chinese Inventions Project and Presentations. These presentations will begin on Feb. 4. Hopefully, we can all find time this weekend to practice our 3-5 minute presentations using some of the practice techniques we discussed in class. We will video record these presentations and review them to assess our efforts.

8th Grade: This week we unpacked some of the reasons the Articles of Confederation failed as a government for the United States. We also began our study of the United States Constitution. Students will be memorizing the Preamble of the Constitution. You can find a fun video of a 3-year-old reciting the Preamble to some patriotic music! We will also be unpacking the Bill of Rights and diving deep into what these Rights represent to our society in modern times.

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

Roy Baker - Social Studies - rbaker@willowcreekacademy.org

Sean St. Denny - Math - sst.denny@willowcreekacademy.org

Joann Powers - ELA - jpowers@willowcreekacademy.org

Nate MacDonald - Science - nmacdonald@willowcreekacademy.org

Belinda Ingraham - Spanish - bingraham@willowcreekacademy.org

Lauren Haberly - Art - lhaverly@willowcreekacademy.org

Dave Singleton - PE - dsingleton@willowcreekacademy.org

Lynnette Egenlauf - PE - legenlauf@willowcreekacademy.org

Phil Logan - Music - plogan@willowcreekacademy.org