



## 7th & 8th Grade Friday Letter - November 16, 2018

Dear Willow Creek families,

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

### English Language Arts with Ms. Powers

**Seventh Grade:** As we near the end of Bend II of our Realistic Fiction Essay, students have been concentrating on writing endings that make readers swoon. The Common Core Standards expect students to “provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.” This requires that students truly follow and understand the concept of their story arc, ensuring that the ending is where the the story has been heading all along. To make this happen, students have been internalizing cause and effect as they concentrate on the ending of their fictional stories, following a logical and satisfying path. Students' rough drafts are due Friday, November 16th. When we return from break on Monday, November 26th, they will be focusing on revising and editing their stories.

**Eighth Grade:** Students have been learning that essayists sometimes write entire essays in which they focus on the way an author uses particular craft moves to create an effect or accentuate a theme. Their author's craft essay is centered around analyzing a specific craft move they have noticed the author using throughout their text. Then, students write a claim that identifies some of the craft moves the author makes and build their argument proving these craft moves are significant. This is important work for students to embrace, as high-stakes assessments and high school classes often ask students to do this work. My goal is to give students the time to practice and grow these important academic skills.

As always, feel free to contact me with any questions: [jpowers@willowcreekacademy.org](mailto:jpowers@willowcreekacademy.org)

### Mathematics with Mr. St. Denny

#### 7th Grade Announcements:

7th graders are finishing their second unit and have been working on graphing fluency. They are choosing consistent scales, evaluating graphs, and making predictions.

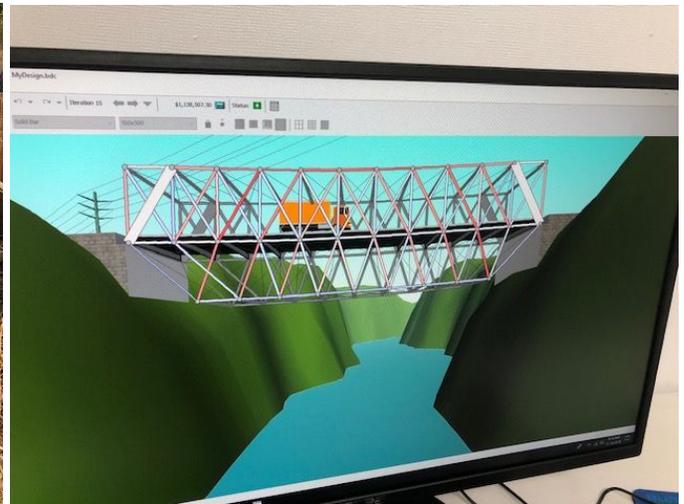
#### 8th Grade announcements:

8th graders just finished up a unit, and moved on to creating posters that show the growth of a pattern with diagrams, functions, tables, and graphs. This culminated in a presentation in which each group member explained and defended their work.

It is my sincere wish that we work together to encourage students and get ahead of any issues that may arise, so don't hesitate to email me at

[sst.denny@willowcreekacademy.org](mailto:sst.denny@willowcreekacademy.org)

## SCIENCE with Mr. MacDonald



### 7th Grade:

This final week of the semester students designed, built, tested and presented their desalination device. To test the desalinator we took some salt water out of the Sausalito Bay. The smoke blocked enough of the sunlight to make the testing phase less successful, but the majority of students were able to collect some fresh water.

### 8th Grade:

This week 8th graders started a new lesson on bridges to explore compression and tension in a structure. Students used a computer simulation to test and reduce the cost of their bridge designs. After Thanksgiving break students will be building physical bridges.

## Social Studies with Mr. Baker

### WHAT WE DID THIS WEEK

**7th Grade:** We have spent the last two weeks learning about the history of the Middle East and the development of Islam. We have learned about the polytheistic culture of the nomadic tribes on the Arabian peninsula and how the religious teachings of Islam united the different cultures and helped create one of the largest empires the world has ever seen.

Next week, we will begin our final essay of the 1st trimester.

**8th Grade:** Our focus for the last two weeks has been the Great Debates between de Las Casas and Sepulveda and how that influenced the creation of the Mission System (of conquest) and changed the views that Europeans had regarding the Natives of the Americas.

Next week, we will begin our final essay of the 1st trimester.

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

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