



Saint Michael Parish School Middle School Matters

October 8, 2009

Important Matters

Please consider attending the Pope John Paul II High School Information Night on November 17th at 7:00 pm in the Worthington Center at St. Martin's University. Representatives of the school will be making a presentation and answering any and all questions about this exciting new educational opportunity.

Please remember to sign in and get a volunteer badge before spending time in the classroom. THANKS!

Mrs. Rafferty

Our note-taking on the Bible (for the introduction the kids write) is taking longer than I thought – good things always do! Consequently the upcoming Bible stories [Creation (Genesis 1:1-31;2:1-4), the Fall of Adam (Genesis 3:1-24), and the story of Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:1-6)] are not due until October 15th. This will enable us to spend the appropriate amount of quality time setting up our Bibles and appreciating the holy task we're about.

We're finishing out narratives in 8th language arts and beginning the verbs chapter in earnest. Next week we'll “test” on the multi-paragraph essay through the vehicle of the VFW essay. 7th grade language arts is also finishing up their short stories and is also working on the verbs chapter. Both grades had the unit 3 vocabulary test today.

One of the very contradictory experiences of our colonial heritage was slavery. The roots of the Civil War and even the Civil Rights Movement date back to pre-revolutionary times. We are going to step outside our history book for a few days and take a look at this through a study of primary sources and video. This mini-unit comes from the Historic Williamsburg Foundation and is particularly well done. It meets many national history standards and does a good job of encouraging critical thinking, synthesis of material and analysis of findings.

Mrs. Getchman

In religion we continue to discuss God revealing Himself to us in Sacred Scripture. Who is the Great I Am, Yahweh? Why did God send the prophets to His people in the Old Testament? These are the questions we addressed. Many students took the prophet's stoop to speak of hope and trust in God's promises.

We took our second quiz in science on levers. The students are now identifying class 1, 2, and 3 levers.

They know how to use scientific standards to diagram levers. Today we looked at levers we use every day in the real world.

Language arts continues to be a very busy time of the day. Monday the students will test on the review unit in vocabulary. I am so impressed with their application of many of these words in their daily conversations and writing. Students are using their Step Up to Writing skills in the literature response paragraphs as they continue to look at the story element of conflict. Nouns are our focus in grammar now. Sara has determined that the antagonist in a story is a “bad noun”, meaning the opposing force in a story line.

We tested on our first history chapter on the Neolithic Age. Next, we will take on the role of ancient Mesopotamians to experience the changes that occurred as a result of several problems they faced. These changes resulted in the transformation of Neolithic farming villages to complex Sumerian city-states.

The seventh graders are working in small groups to create dramas depicting life in Medieval Europe. These skits will portray guilds, trade and commerce, homes and households, disease and medical treatment, crime and punishment, and leisure and entertainment. Don't be surprised if your student asks for items to help with props such as leeches, cardboard homes, or stocks.

Our Spartan News groups are finishing up productions this week. News of the day - new kindergartners, September birthdays, and a public service announcement on the correct way in which to cover a cough. The students have been experiencing “just in time” learning as they work with iMovie to create these dvds.

Mrs. Evoy

The 8th graders have been solving equations using addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. They had a take-home quiz over this material yesterday. We retested on Chapter 2 today for those students who wanted to improve their score. Next week they will be using several transformations to solve equations and using equations to set up and solve story problems.

The 7th graders have been adding, subtracting, and multiplying decimals. Next week they will continue to multiply as they review how to place the decimal point in the product. They will also learn about decimal point placement when dividing decimals. During religion we continue to work on our saint or Bible story “Treat in a Trunk” project for the auction.

The 6th graders have been learning to change word expressions into addition and subtraction expressions using numbers and variables. They also have been evaluating these expressions. Next week they will solve word problems using equations and will have the Chapter 1 Test.

Mr. Hart

The 7th grade class has turned in their Science Fair applications. We are working to refine their ideas and if, then, because statements. We have very interesting experiments this year. The class is also beginning to study Day and Night.

The 8th grade class continues to work hard. They turned in their maps on Monday. They too are studying Day and Night. When this investigation is complete we journey to the moon.

The football team continues to work hard. On Tuesday the Varsity played Community Christian. Today both teams have a home game against Hood Canal. Monday the J.V. Team travels to McCleary. Next Thursday the Varsity team is at Community Christian.

Mr. Herness

The sixth grade Spanish class is currently learning the geographical regions of the world in which Spanish is the primary language. In addition, students will begin reviewing for the upcoming test.

Seventh graders have just completed a two week refresher of last year's curriculum. We are now beginning to work on the conjugation of regular verbs ending in "ar" and utilizing these verbs in sentences with an emphasis on proper conjugation.

In eighth grade Spanish, we have also finished year one review and are beginning review of year two.

This week in middle school computers, the class will be working primarily with audio and video effects in the program i-movie. Students will also be working with video transition sequences, and the usage of chapters within their movie production.

Ms Berning

The Keith Haring-style painted action art is completed and on display! Several of the prints are in or near the school office, and the rest are adding color to the lunchroom walls. It was a great project to teach some of the principles of the color wheel. The third "action art" project is due to be completed by the end of the period on Thursday. It uses a rather non-traditional method to apply color (small, torn pieces of magazine color), but is very effective in an impressionist sort of way, and just needs to be seen to be appreciated! Next on the art agenda is watercolor painting techniques!