

JUNIOR HIGH DEPARTMENT

DATES TO REMEMBER

2/9 – Valentine Day Dance
2/12 – 2/16 Trimester 2 Exams
2/13 – 8 th Grade Portraits
2/21 – End of Term
2/22 & 2/23 – Rodeo Break
2/28 – Report Cards
3/12 – 3/15 – Science Fair
3/30 – 4/6 – Easter Break

RELIGION – MS. CRABLE

7th grade - they are busy studying about the early history of the church and they will be making time lines in class the next couple of weeks. They are also working on a home project, floats for Lent that will tell what they are adding to the lives for Lent. We are enriching our spiritual lives.

8th graders are busy working on songs for Lent. They are choosing a Lenten song, singing it for the class, in groups, and then explaining the meaning of the song to the class. They will also be busy working on peace rocks for Lent. They will bring a stone from home, sand it smooth, paint it, design it, and then write on it how they will enhance their spiritual lives for Lent.

LANGUAGE ARTS – MRS. GOWING

Every year, when I walk through the gem and mineral show, I am struck by the obvious beauty of the gems but more so by the process it took to get them to their beautiful state. We all have different views of beauty; however, certain characteristics must still be in place for a mineral to be considered a gem. I cannot help but equate it to the writing process. It takes a lot of work to turn a rough piece of writing into a more polished piece. Every student is at a different place but there are still certain standards that must be met on a piece of writing. We will continue to work on those characteristics of good writing as we look at how to write a literary analysis. It is an arduous process that must be met with rigor. This will also be a great chance to look at figurative language in more depth. In addition, we will continue our work on identifying different types of verbals and how they enhance writing.

MATH – MRS. LANSEY

Saxon's math program focuses heavily on building mathematical skills and concepts through practice. As to application of the skills and concepts, there are Performance Tasks. Performance tasks occur after each cumulative assessment. They are designed to help students build problem solving skills and answer the age old-questions, "When am I ever going to use this?" These tasks help students to see how the current learning can be applied to real-life situations.

My student needs help with homework! What can I do? Please consider asking your student the following questions when they are doing homework to help them build strategies to tackle tougher problems and develop the important skill of independent thinking. Ask your student:

- "Did you try reading it aloud?"
- "Did you refer back to the lesson and look at similar problems?"
- "What do you know about the problem?"
- "What is the problem asking you to find?"

If your student is still perplexed, have them write down what they know about the problem and notate the problem with a question mark or highlighter so that they can bring their question to class or to Tuesday's after school support with the teacher.

SCIENCE – MRS. COLEMAN

February arrived in the blink of an eye while the students were actively engaged in their science fair projects. They completed the data collection process and have begun to analyze it carefully. All have become proficient in creating graphs in Google Sheets and resourceful in using other forms of analysis appropriate to the data collected. 8th graders even learned how to apply standard deviation and standard error to data collected on cutie oranges as a challenge to use higher level statistical analysis. Understanding the story that data tells is a vital science and engineering practice. Great job students!

Science fair reports (hard copies) will be submitted February 14th in class and applied as the science trimester assessment score. This MLA formatted report, will contain all project work since its inception back in late November and should be edited carefully. It is awesome the integration of skills learned in all classes for this project.

Students will be communicating the results of science fair projects beginning the last week of February 26th through March 2nd. These will be the first grades of the 3rd trimester. Students are reminded to prepare their display boards at home and bring them to school on the day they present. Since the St. Cyril Science Fair will be the week of March 12th, students will have time for revisions to the display board based on feedback from presentations before the fair. Excitement continues to mount!

This is going to be a great learning experience for the students. Thank you for your support. Please do not hesitate to let me know if you have any questions.

SOCIAL STUDIES – MR. SCHMIT

It is hard to believe that we are almost down to our last trimester of the school year. The year flies by.

For 8th graders, in this past trimester we looked at the costs of industrialization as immigrant workers struggled for decent pay and working conditions. Then we tracked the emergence of a populist and progressive response to the abuses of the era. Finally, with the rise of Theodore Roosevelt, the progressive era matured as a national reform movement. In this new trimester, we will examine the United States' role as a world and imperialist power; then, we'll look at the costs of imperialism as World War I explodes in Sarajevo. From there, we study the causes of the stock market crash in 1929 and examine Roosevelt's response to the misery of the Depression. America is then forced from its isolation and storms Normandy Beach; we will look at the battle to defeat Nazi Germany in World War II. Part of our discussion of WWI will include reading Elie Weisel's *Night*, a first-hand account of a Holocaust survivor's experience in Auschwitz.

Seventh graders are completing their examination of the Constitution and the structure of our federal government. In addition, students have just started reading William Golding's classic novel, *Lord of the Flies*, which looks at power and savagery and the importance of civilizing forces in society. These topics are as important today in our society as they were in the Cold War. After this, we study the 1st American industrial revolution. We will learn about the principles of capitalism and then apply those bases to the Lowell textile factory system. We will then compare this capitalist setup with present-day global production of a t-shirt. We then follow America's "Manifest Destiny" as the country expands to the Pacific coast. This destiny exacerbates sectional divisions in the nation, which then explodes into full secession and the country is torn apart by the Civil War.

These next few months promise to be both thoughtful and exciting.