

# St. Eugene School

## Middle School News

### From Mrs. Webster

#### **Learning Through Exploration**

In most of our algebra lessons, we begin by having students construct information through exploration. Over the last week, we experimented with creating linear functions in Geometer's Sketchpad. Students were asked to graph various functions and observe the relationship between the graphs and their equations. They discovered how to change the slope or the y intercept using equations. Of course, I could have simply told them how to do this. However, students will have a deeper and longer lasting understanding through this experience based learning.

#### **Sixth Grade**

Sixth graders have created a database of family members. In Spanish class, they will be filling out the information for various family members with Señora's help. Sixth graders will be spending quite a bit of time this year learning about how to be good digital citizens. They have an iBook on their iPads called *Digital Citizenship* that will serve as our main reference. This book is published by Common Sense which also has great family resources. I would encourage you to take a look at their website: [www.commonsense.org](http://www.commonsense.org).

#### **Science Fair Graphs**

Seventh and eighth graders are planning and creating appropriate graphs for their science fair project using spreadsheets. The planning of these graphs is quite challenging for many of them. They must understand what their variables are, how to label their graphs and what type of graph best represents their data. When doing these tasks on the computer they must be convinced that they are in charge of the outcome, rather than just accepting whatever defaults the program gives them. This also gave them the opportunity to ask questions about graph options. We will be working on the graphs during technology classes and students will have the option to take them home if needed to complete them for their science fair display.

### From Mrs. Sewall

***Math Joke: What do you call a number that can't keep still? A roamin' numeral!***

#### **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Math**

The 6<sup>th</sup> graders wrapped up their blue belt training on long division and decimal operations earlier this week. Now, we are trying to earn our black

belts on fraction operations. With this knowledge, we'll be able to know how much of our ingredients we'll need next time we want to make a cake for 50 of our closest friends!

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Math**

The 7<sup>th</sup> graders wrapped up their chapter on rates and decimal operations and have become Level 1 black belts! Now, we will take a final cumulative test on fractions, decimals, rates, and mean/median/mode/range. After that, we will try to earn our first green belt on factors and exponents.

### **Intro to Algebra**

The 8<sup>th</sup> graders started their new look into functions recently. Within this discipline, we will learn the fundamentals of functions, how to calculate slope, and how to graph functions to name a few things. We've started basic by learning how to distinguish between, write, and graph functions. This will provide a good foundation for the future!

***Science Joke: Why couldn't the plants escape prison? Because their cells were surrounded by walls!***

### **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Science (Earth Science)**

The 6<sup>th</sup> graders started their chapter on Extreme Weather earlier this week. In it, we'll explore ideas about tornadoes, thunderstorms, hurricanes, droughts, and floods and how they form. Additionally, we will try to track a hurricane in the coming days, and the students will be able to share their computer project that deals with a type of Extreme Weather.

### **7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Science Fair – TWO WEEKS!**

Two more weeks until the annual Science Fair! Students have hopefully started conducting their experiments and are busy gathering data. The tri-fold boards are available in my room for students to take when they're ready. In class, we discussed what is needed in the report, so students should know what is expected as they start to write – which is hopefully soon!

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Science (Life Science)**

The 7<sup>th</sup> graders tested on their cells and cell parts earlier this week. Next, we will get into cellular respiration where we'll look at the equation behind cellular respiration, connect it to different systems in our bodies, and will run a lab involving respiration without oxygen (using yeast)!

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Science (Physical Science)**

The 8<sup>th</sup> graders are busy looking into atomic theory. We've learned the main players (Dalton, Thomson, Rutherford, Bohr) who helped create our modern model of an atom and how each contributed. We'll wrap this up next week and then get into the Periodic Table!

### **[From Mrs. Tulley](#)**

### **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies**

In the next few weeks the class will be looking at ancient Mesopotamia and then move on to ancient Egypt. One of the aspects of ancient Mesopotamia that we will look at carefully is the code of Hammurabi. We'll discover why it is considered such an important discovery and then compare it to our rules/laws today.

### **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Religion**

The class has finished their overview of the Bible. Next they will begin their look at the 2 creation stories and discuss the difference between the 2 and what were the writers of these stories trying to tell us about God. They are finishing their “Endangered Animal” project and we will begin presenting them next week. I can’t wait to see their finish presentations!

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Literature**

Because of the oral book report interviews (which are going along very well – the presentation level is excellent so far) 7<sup>th</sup> grade is just finishing up the story “Rikkii-Tikki-Tavi. Their first written book report (it can be either the choice or mystery) has been started in class and will be due on Monday.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies**

We have finished our study of the Middle Ages with a look at the 100’s year war. Now we will look at the Renaissance. We will study where it originated and why it began in Italy. We’ll also look at how ideas from regions outside of Europe influence the Renaissance and how the Renaissance spread throughout Europe.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade Religion**

We are moving on to the idea that Jesus is the answer to a promise, where we’ll discuss the ministry of John the Baptist and how both the Old and New Testaments tell a single story about God’s love for us and the message of Jesus’ life, death, resurrection, and ascension is told in the gospels.

**Their two first trimester service projects are due Nov. 16th.**

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies**

The class is doing a mini project on 9 of the bloodiest battles of the war. They have been divided up into groups of 2 or 3 and each group is researching a specific battle and putting together a power point presentation for the class. After the Civil War we will take a “jump” in history and look at the Civil Rights movement.

### **From Mrs. Prendergast**

#### **6<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Tomorrow this class will be finishing the Hyperstudio presentations on survival skills. We will share these in class, and we’ll all be wiser! Our next book is *Witness* – short on words (it’s written in poetry form) but long on character traits and history. It’s about the KKK moving into a small town and how the different residents react. We keep a character log during this novel while discussing the different plots. Students will start off by researching the beginning of the KKK and its impact on our country. As a class there will be much discussion. The students have finished their personal narratives in writing, and now we are back in the textbook working on nouns.

#### **7<sup>th</sup> Grade**

These students are in the middle of writing an “I wonder...” research essay. This is done in conjunction with evaluating websites with Mrs. Webster. Each student chose an idea that they are wondering about, and their research should lead them to ask additional questions about their topic. Technology makes “wondering” more fun when you can get answers quickly!

#### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade**

The 8<sup>th</sup> grade has finished writing their pumpkin stories for Halloween, and now

we have moved on to work with pronouns. In religion we are finishing chapter 5 in the first unit and then will start looking at some modern day saints during this month of November. We also have a Memory Book on the prayer table, and I encourage students to write in names of friends and family members who we will remember in prayer this month. In lit we started the novel *Our Town*. It's a quick read in play form, so we will read it in class, but the theme is all-important. There will be essay questions after each of the 3 acts, which will require higher level thinking skills, but the students will hear the answers in all our discussion at the end of each act – if they are listening.

**As we are getting to the end of the first trimester, I want to remind parents that all students need to do independent reading during the year. Page totals are kept track of and need to be signed by you, signifying that your child has read them. It is the student's responsibility to give this to you as they finish reading a book. Please encourage your child to read and remind them now and again that you should be looking at their reading log.**