



MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

11/21/08

NEWS OF NOTE:

Grab your boogie shoes: the Middle School dance is TONIGHT from 7:00- 9:00. The cost of admission is \$3.00 or an additional donation of your choice (additional donations will count for advisory points). Proceeds from the dance will go to our current Middle School Service Project: a safe water program.

The **Middle School Service Project** is underway! Students will be sponsoring a shallow water well for the Marion Medical Mission. We will be able to watch our well come to life in photographs and communicate with those the well will serve. Donations may be given to homeroom teachers. Checks may be made out to *Countryside School* with a note in the memo line that reads “Middle School Service Project.”

Congratulations to our illustrious ladies of the 7th grade, victors of the first trimester advisory team competition! Yellow Team: You Go Girls!

COURSE NEWS

Science:

Let there be light! This week students began their physics unit on light and sound. We will be doing lots of experiments and activities to learn about these common yet interesting energy phenomena. This unit will take us right up to Winter Break. This week, we specifically focused on the Electromagnetic Spectrum and how visible light is only a very small portion of it.

Stop by and see our Design-An-Insect Project drawings. As always, students were creative, thoughtful, and brilliant with their designs and descriptions. The insect drawings are hanging in the hall next to the science room. Students will bring home the evaluation sheet and written description for a parent signature. Signatures are due Wednesday, November.26.

LWW:

This week **7th and 8th graders** have continued their study of grammar, sentence patterns, and the *Outsiders*. This week we learned sentence pattern 8: close with an adverb clause. For the *Outsiders* this week, students created “Tuff” posters. In the book the word “tuff” means cool and sharp, so the 7th and 8th graders made posters that showed what they think is tuff. The 7th and 8th graders also learned a major literary term this week: the foil. Ask your 7th or 8th grader to explain to you what a foil in literature is and how and why both Cherry and Dally act as a foil to Ponyboy in chapter 2. We also spent a large part of two days in class having a silent discussion about major themes, characters, events and issues

in chapter 2 of the Outsiders. While the words “silent discussion” may seem to be an oxymoron, it is a fun and useful way to explore a novel; make sure to ask your 7th or 8th grader to explain to you just what a silent discussion is. On Wednesday, students received the new vocabulary lists for chapter two in the Outsiders. On Thursday they got the definitions for their word lists and their word assignments. The vocabulary test for chapter 2 is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday next week.

The 6th graders learned 5 new stems in *Caesar's English* (Chapter 9) that they were tested on today (Friday). We spent part of two class periods practicing using these words. The 6th graders also received their *Pearl* chapter 2 vocabulary packets, the definitions for the words, and their word assignments. They have been given time to work on the vocabulary packets in two class periods this week. The vocabulary test for chapter 2 in *The Pearl* is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday next week. We also discussed chapter 2 in *The Pearl* and pondered big questions about chapter 2 such as “are the old ways of doing things as valid as new ways?” and “why does god/or do the gods/ or does fate or luck allow Kino to find the pearl if Coyotito would survive without the doctor’s care?”. We also had a breath holding competition, to see if we could hold our breath as long as Kino the pearl diver (2 minutes). The record in Core 3 was a tie of 1 minute 20 seconds by Peter Ivanov and Masashi Azuma., the record in Core 4 was 1 minute 18 seconds by Kyle Knox, and both records dwarfed Mr. Meyer’s measly record of 1 minute and 13 seconds.

Level G Math:

After completing our study of the Metric System last week, our class has started a new unit on variables, formulas, and graphs. We have explored how variables can be used to write general patterns. We examined formulas as general patterns and how to use formulas as special cases. When we return from our break, we will finish this unit by discussing spreadsheets and mystery graphs.

Ms. Z’s Math students:

The AMC 8 was a huge success! Congratulations to all our participants! Results will be mailed to school no later than Jan. 18, and our winners will be announced at that time. Individual scores will be given to students as soon as possible. Those who make the Honor Roll (score of 15 or higher) will be invited to take the AMC 10 in February. Students' booklets will be passed back to them on Nov. 25, and solutions to the AMC 8 may be viewed at that time.

In **Pre-Algebra**, we are finishing our unit on addition and subtraction. This week we modeled subtraction of numbers using tiles and found that subtraction does not always mean simply taking away an object. We also solidified subtraction of fractions and decimals, and our understanding of integers. We will have a short test on the material next Tuesday.

We had a multi-sport event in **Algebra** to learn about rates. Events included: who could recite the alphabet the fastest, who could do the most squats in 30 seconds, who could doodle a stick figure on the whiteboard the fastest, and who could speed walk across the classroom the fastest. After that, we used ratios to mix different portions of lemonade (and of course drank our product). Next week we learn about relative frequency and probability.

In **Advanced Math** we wrapped up our unit of quadratic equations. Students truly went above and beyond -- we took a few extensions this week, including solving rational and radical expressions, and problem-solving with quadratic equations. This weekend students received a review problem set, and the test will be next Tuesday. After that, we learn about functions!

Social Studies:

Students in all classes have received a practice map and Geo. Quiz list for trimester two- Hello, Europe! The first quiz of this term is December 17.

Our **Ancient Civilizations** class spent the week reviewing a few pieces of Indian history and preparing notes for our first major research project of the year. From Ganesha to Gandhi, from the *Jataka Tales* to Bollywood movies, students are scouring online and print sources to produce some fabulous research notes. The Countryside Comet's Museum of Indian History and Culture will include a wide variety of fascinating exhibits to entertain and educate visitors.

Students in **Empires and Nations** spent the early part of the week examining the revolutionary philosophies of Martin Luther and other key figures from the Protestant Reformation. The latter part of the week saw our "Renaissance men" assembling notes for our upcoming competition. Students will have no further in-class time to prepare for this project.



See you at the dance tonight!

- The Middle School Team

