



Shaping Futures Together

January
2024



From the Principal's Desk

Dear Families,

Happy New Year! I hope all of our Eastford Elementary School families are enjoying a happy and healthy beginning to 2024! It looks like the winter weather is now upon us in full force. For those that don't know, when there is inclement or unsafe weather forecast for our area, local Superintendents conference with a weather professional about the expected or current conditions and generally a joint decision is reached about how schools will respond. Many districts send students to The Woodstock Academy, so we try to make a decision that is in the best interests of both our high school students who are out waiting for the bus at 5:30 a.m., and our elementary students who don't head out for the bus until much later in the morning. In addition, we also consult with the First Selectman and the town road crew as needed to fully assess the conditions in Eastford specifically.

Please remember that we take children outside for recess unless the temperature and/or windchill make it too dangerous to do so. Students need to be dressed properly in order to participate in outdoor recess. Snow pants and snow boots are required for children to play in the snow. Please send these with your child when there is snow on the ground.

By now, most of you are familiar with our procedures for announcing **school closings, late openings, and any other unexpected changes to our school calendar**. Radio station WINY and television channels WFSB and WVIT will carry announcements about school delays, cancellations and early closings. You will also receive a text message, email and voicemail from our automated emergency alert system. Additionally, you may wish to sign up for free text alerts of closings, delays and cancellations from the local news stations by going to their respective websites. Please notify me or the school office if you are not receiving automated emergency alerts so that we can make any necessary changes to correct this.

The **PTO's Giving Tree** collection has once again been very successful! Thanks to all who were able to purchase a snowflake and make a donation this year. The money raised will support Eastford's Food Pantry and families in need in our

school community. The combined effort will bring some relief to Eastford families throughout the year.

I would also like to thank the many local organizations and groups that have generously worked to provide additional holiday cheer for many of our families and students. We have been able to assist families with food, clothing, school supplies, toys, gifts and other needs. Please don't hesitate to reach out to our school counselor, Ms. Murana, or to me, if you or someone you know is struggling and could use some support.

The Board of Education is beginning to prepare its **budget for the 2024-25** school year. Citizens who would like to be informed about our budget development may attend the budget meetings, all of which are public and are held in-person at the school, with a virtual option to join as well. Please contact the school office if you would like information to connect virtually to one or more of the meetings that are scheduled for:

January 11, 2024 at 6:00 PM – Regular BOE meeting;
January 18, 2024 at 6:00 PM – Finance Committee;
January 30, 2024 at 6:00 PM – Finance Committee; and
February 8, 2024 at 5:00 PM – Prior to Regular BOE meeting if needed

Registration is now open for our **2024-2025 preschool and kindergarten** classes. **To be eligible for kindergarten**, students must be Eastford residents and be 5 years old or turning 5 years old by **September 1, 2024**. This is a new eligibility requirement established by the State Department of Education and the Office of Early Childhood. Our **preschool program** is funded through School Readiness and the Office of Early Childhood and while it is housed in our public school, it is not a public-school program. **Enrollment is based on family financial needs and student developmental needs** and is not guaranteed for all Eastford students. A **needs assessment survey** will be sent out in February to all families with children under the age of 5. Please take a few minutes to fill out and return the survey if you have young children in your home. This information helps us to plan for the future educational needs of the Eastford community. Please contact the school office if you have any questions.

I also want to remind everyone about our Transportation Policy for students. Students in grades **PK and K** should be **met at the bus stop** by a parent/guardian or designated caregiver. Students in **grades 1-3** should have a parent/guardian or designated caregiver **visible** before the driver will let the child off the bus. If there are changes to your regular dismissal routine, **parents must notify the school in writing in advance of the change**. Additionally, students who plan to stay after school to watch sporting events should request permission prior to attending an event using the designated form for spectators. Students

who are signed up to participate in an after school activity or academic support will only be excused by a parent by advanced written notice, or by the school nurse if they are being sent home sick. Last minute phone requests are very difficult to manage and will not be honored.

Congratulations to **citizens of the trimester** for the first trimester: **Grace Moore in grade 2** and **David Budd in grade 7**. They were nominated by their teachers for demonstrating the qualities of good citizenship and were recognized at the Board of Education meeting on December 7, 2023. Congratulations to you both for this well deserved honor! I would also like to congratulate students who made the **Honor Roll** for the first trimester. This includes students in grades 6-8 who earned High Honors, Honors and Recognition. A listing of students in each category is included elsewhere in the Newsletter.

Families should be on the lookout for mid-term progress reports. These will go home with students on January 19, 2024 and indicate your child's progress at the midpoint of the second trimester.

There is no school on Monday, January 15, 2024 in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday.

As always, please check with the school office if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Carole McCombe



The EES PTO is excited to partner with the Eastford library for.....

Cookies & Crafts!

- Cookie Decorating station with cookies from Sugarz bakery. If your child has allergies, please reach out to us directly.
- Winter wonderland themed crafts
- A story read by our local librarians

Date: January 20, 2024
Time: 10:30-12:00



please sign up on the google doc provided in the January newsletter, so we can ensure we have enough supplies. You can also reach out to us via email-pto@eastfordct.org

Eastford Elementary School - Shaping Futures Together

**First Trimester Honor Roll
Middle Level - Grades 6-8
December 2023**

High Honors

Grades of A including A+ and A- in every academic and special subject allowing for one B+

Blake Gilbert

Ella Barlow
Allie Beausoleil
Wesley DePercio
Holly Dubina
Sofia Gillett
Abigail Haynes
A-ris Kuljancic
Mitchell Norman

Honors

Grades of A or B including B+ and B- in every academic and special subject

Ryan Collard	Cam Bibeault
Callum St. John	Vincent Boccacio
Chiara Stanger	David Budd
	Nora Miller
Marley Hutchings	Aaron Minor
Kyleigh Murphy	Aiden Mitchell
Miles Neely	Piper Moore
	Brooke Perry
	Jadyn Rathburn
	Leah Talaga

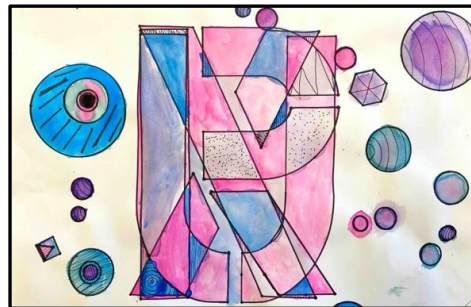
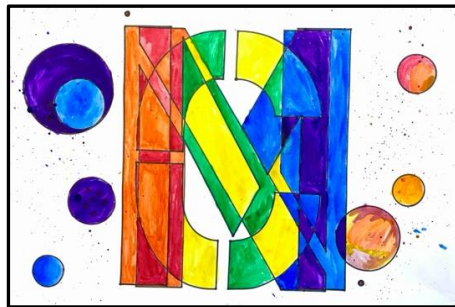
Recognition

Students must hand in homework, seek extra help, participate in class, and work to best of ability

Aiden Abbamonte	Mia Kernan
William Ellsworth	Rosemarie Taricani

Art News – Ms. Weinland

Happy New Year from the Art Room!!
Students have been creating amazing masterpieces in all grades.
A sampling of recent work is below.







Grade 5 and 6 Student Artwork is on Display at the Loos Gallery

The "This is Me!" exhibit is a celebration of our community through the artwork of local students. In art classes throughout the Quiet Corner, students discover and create work that represents what makes them unique and feel the most like themselves. This collection of vibrant work demonstrates the next generation's creativity, passion, and ingenuity as they learn who they are!

Exhibit Viewing Hours:

- January 11, 2024 – 3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. – Gallery Open Hours
- January 18, 2024 – 3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. – Gallery Open Hours
- January 25, 2024 – 3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. – Last chance to view! Gallery Open Hours

Student Artwork is Also on Display at the Eastford Public Library

Work is rotated monthly - be sure to stop by often!





Hello Families. I hope everyone had a happy and healthy holiday season. “FLU”, COVID and RSV are being referred to as the “triple threat” according to the Connecticut Department of Health this winter season. The state department of health is encouraging everyone to consider vaccinations to prevent illness.

We are doing our best here to help deter the spread of illness by practicing good hand washing and respiratory hygiene as well as continuing our cleaning and ventilation practices.

The best way you can help with keeping the spread of illness low is to be mindful when sending your student to school. If your student exhibits moderate to severe signs or symptoms of illness, keep them home. Not only symptoms of a cold but also gastrointestinal symptoms that would be difficult for your student to contain.

Any fever, or temperature over 100.5°F is considered a temperature that can be associated with an infectious illness. Please keep your student home for 24 hours after the fever resolves (without the use of fever reducing medicine).

If symptoms persist, or if symptoms are more severe than a common cold, seek medical attention. As I mentioned in earlier newsletters, bacterial infections such as ear and sinus infections can follow a respiratory illness.

Please dress your child appropriately for the weather. The weather is turning colder, and recess will be conducted outside as much as possible and as long as weather permits. Having your student dressed for the weather not only protects them from the elements but also aids in keeping their immune system strong and resilient.

Students have better success when they have enough food for lunch and snack. Water is always available to students so make sure they have bottles that can be refilled at the fountains at school.

We want all our students to be at their best and ready for learning while keeping their classroom community healthy as well.

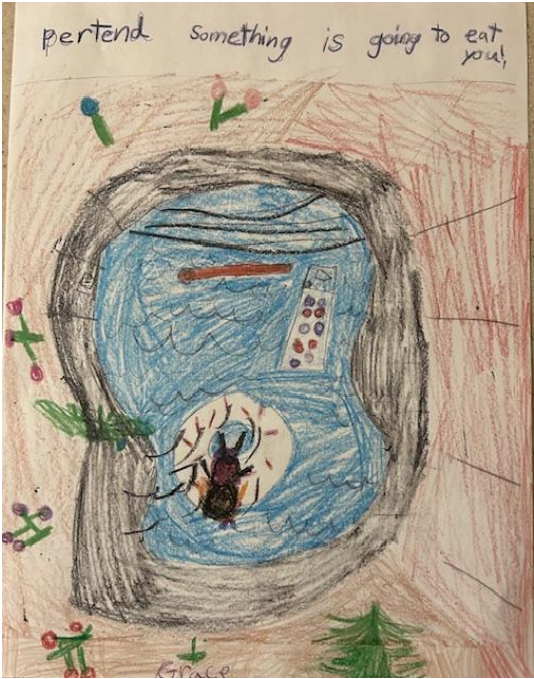
Please notify me if your student will be out of school. As always, feel free to reach out to me by phone or email if you have anything you need to discuss.

Cassie Roto R.N., B.S.N.

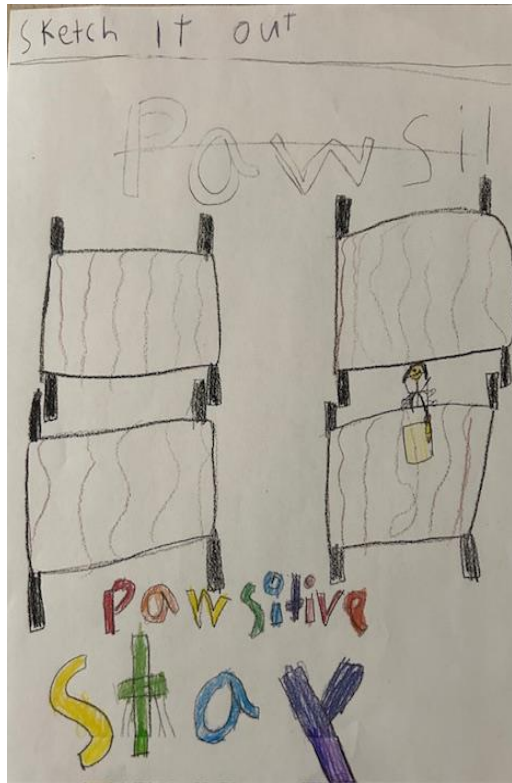
Enrichment News – Mrs. Lynch

Happy New Year!

During the month of December, Enrichment students continued to explore the concept of a Growth Mindset. Using the list of strategies they brainstormed to encourage persistence, perseverance, and grit (i.e., “Say positive things to yourself.” “Try a test run first or sketch it out before starting.” “Take a breath, a break, or a walk.” “Use humor.”), students each created a poster. We have shared them by displaying the posters on hallway walls.



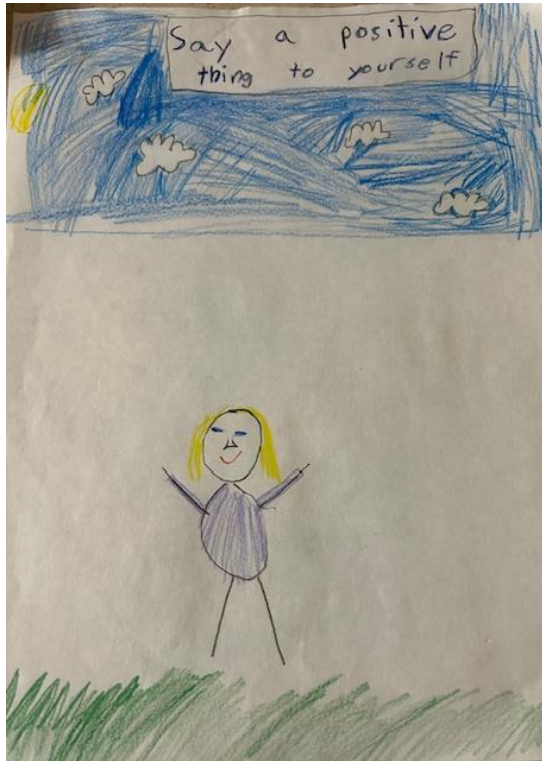
An aerial view of a swimming pool, using humor as a way of allowing yourself a break before facing a tough challenge!



An illustration of sketching out a plan for a difficult activity—with the bonus message to stay positive!

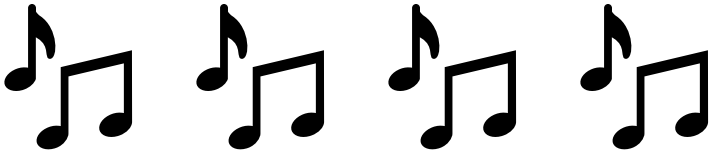


The “before” picture here on the right shows the frustration you might feel with a demanding task. The “after” picture on the left indicates that taking a breather can help you to begin again with determination!



A good reminder to say something positive to yourself before you begin working on a tough project!

Best wishes to everyone for a happy and healthy New Year!



You can do it, you can do it, you can surely, surely do it!

Grade K News – Ms. Garvie & Mrs. Boccacio

The kindergarten class had such a wonderful time in the month of December! Children have been working hard using their “word part power” to make words. We have also been learning new snap words including: can, to, do, went, was, got. Children also learned how to use all of their “super reading powers” to read books. During writing workshop, we started a new unit called Show and Tell writing. We will be writing about things that we really like and adding labels and detailed pictures to show our work.

During math time we did an entire unit based around identifying, comparing, and matching shapes. Next, we will begin a unit that will teach us about addition and subtraction!

Last month, we took a “trip” to various countries as we explored “Holidays Around the World”. We had fun using our passports to travel to places like Sweden, Italy, China, Germany and learning about each country’s holiday traditions. Please enjoy these pictures of some of our favorite projects and activities.





Grade 1 News – Mrs. Rhynhart

Happy New Year! We will begin the month learning about New Year's celebrations around the world and writing down a resolution for 2024. As we move forward in January, we will enjoy a Book Break with author Salina Yoon as she reminds us why friendship is important with her story, *Be A Friend*. Our science focus will keep our eyes to the skies as we use the patterns of the sun, moon, and stars to make predictions about when, and in which form, these will be visible in the day or night sky. Our social skills curriculum this month will help us focus on the internal changes in our bodies when we have different emotions. Identifying our own emotions is important so we can choose strategies to help manage these emotions in a positive way - such as "belly breathing" to calm uncomfortable feelings. Our first-grade mathematicians will expand their skills to add and subtract numbers through 20, and our first-grade writers will practice adding details to their "teaching" stories to draw in readers and share all they know about a topic. All this while anxiously awaiting the first snowflakes to fly – off we go!



Grade 2 News – Mrs. Crocker-Lincoln

Grade 2 Science

Second Graders are gearing up to begin the study of the work of water. In this unit, students will explore mapping water surfaces as well as the earth's surface features. We will use hand-on experiments to answer questions such as: Why is there sand at the beach? (rocks, sand, erosion), Where do floods happen? (severe weather), What is strong enough to form a canyon? (landforms), How can you stop a landslide? (engineering). Our scientists will stay curious and learn to draw conclusions from their experiments.

Grade 2 Integrated Research Project

Students will soon begin using what they have learned about nonfiction text features in reading and writing to begin a self-selected research project of their own! Technology will be integrated within the project to help locate sources as well as to present their findings. Stay tuned for more on this exciting work slated to begin toward the middle of the month!



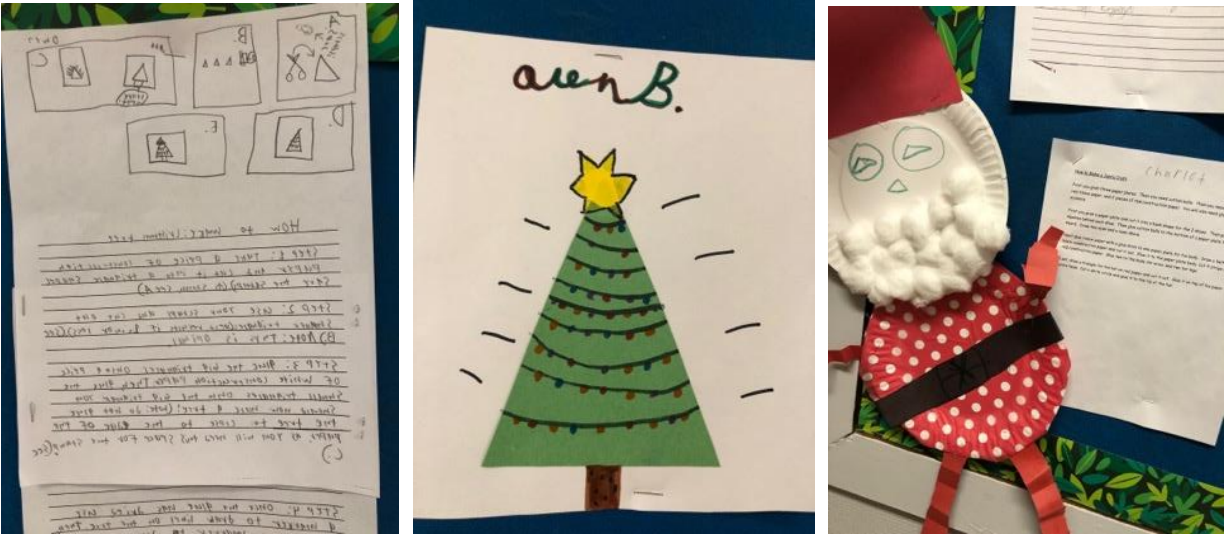
Grade 3 News – Mrs. Bisson

The month of December brought Acts of Kindness to 3rd Grade! Each day, we choose a different way to show kindness to those around us. For example, some days we did something kind for someone at home and other days we showed kindness to our classmates. Some other ways we showed kindness were writing notes to people we appreciate, holding the door for others, cleaning up our environment and complimenting others.

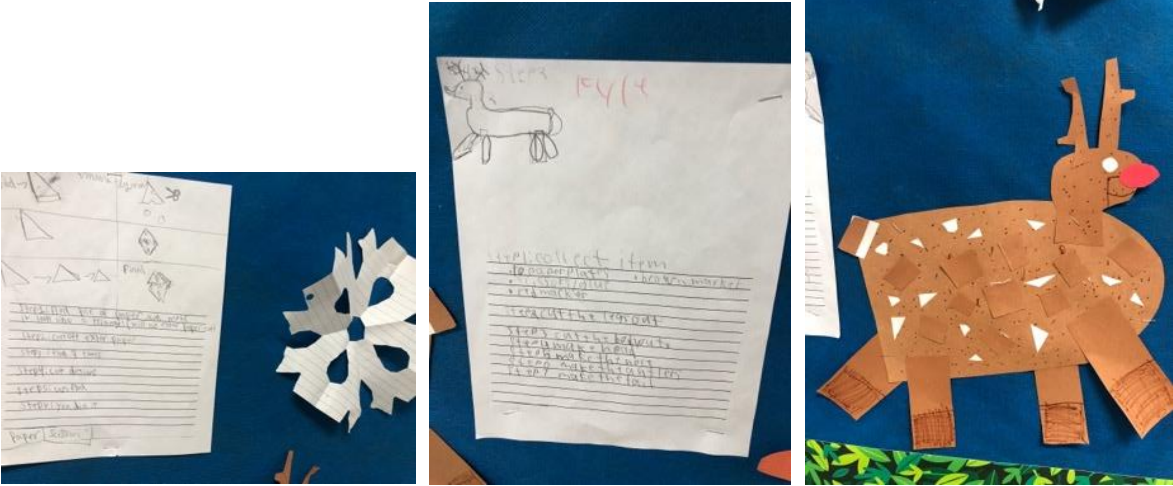
3rd Graders have also explored new and exciting things in their special classes. In music, 3rd Graders started learning how to play the recorder with Ms. Burns. There is lots of excitement around learning a new instrument and some students have even made playing the recorder and getting better at it, part of their New Year's goals! In art, students explored clay and worked to make some pottery with Mrs. Weinland.



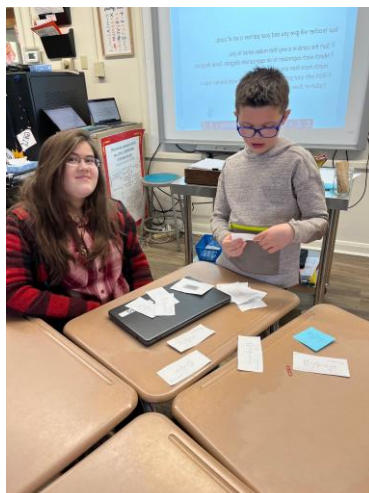
Grade 4 News – Ms. Dill



Winter has settled in, but that doesn't mean it can't be a "winter wonderland," as featured on the grade 4 bulletin board! Students visualized snowy landscapes and festive symbols that help them celebrate the season. Then students imagined a craft, used common classroom materials to create their vision, and wrote a how to guide that teaches others how to make it for themselves!



Math News – Mrs. Barlow



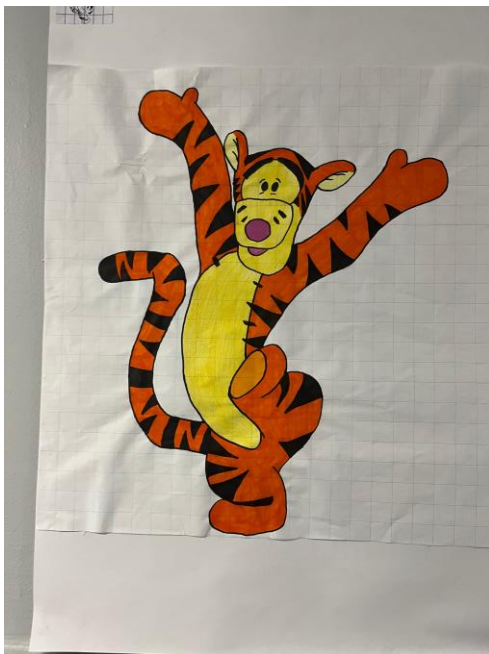
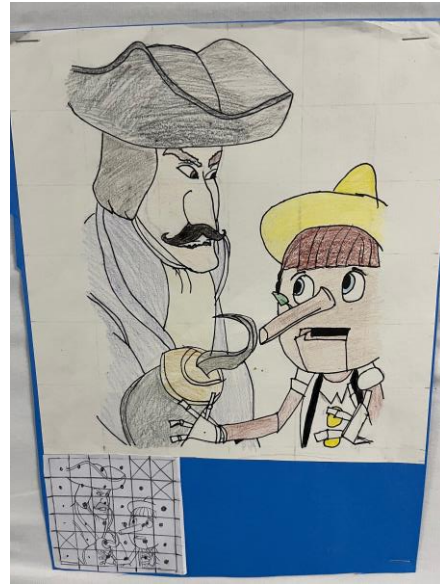
Grade 5: Above Grade 5 students work on matching diagrams with various expressions that represent the shaded area. In this unit, they will be multiplying mixed numbers and finding the area of rectangles with mixed number side lengths. We apply the order of operations by writing more complicated equations using parenthesis.

Grade 6: This group is starting their unit and continuing to develop the idea of unit rates and how they will help us solve more complex problems. We will also work on different units of measurement, estimating measures and converting from one measurement to another. This will lead us to percentages as we connect them to ratios.



Grade 7: Grade 7 will be reviewing what they learned last year about percentages and applying this to more complicated problems, finding the percent error, percent increase, and percent decrease. We will finish this unit by completing a state tax project. If anyone has store circulars, please send them in so we can use them for this project.

Grade 8 and Algebra: These two groups finished their units in early December, so we took some time to do the Scale Drawing project that the 7th graders did earlier this year. They found it was much more difficult to do than they thought it would be! Both groups are moving on to units where we will dive into linear equations.





Middle School ELA
News

BY MR. SALSICH

January, 2024

Joy in Teaching and Learning

By Mr. Salsich

I am going to try not to bore you all, but I'd like to share brief thoughts on my approach to education every month or so, along with news about what we are doing in ELA.

The joy derived from teaching is not just about imparting knowledge; it's about creating a fun and engaging learning environment. Middle schoolers, with their enthusiasm for exploration and creativity, make each day a vibrant and an interesting experience. For instance, their willingness to embrace challenges, design imaginative projects, or engage in interactive learning activities brings a contagious energy to the classroom. As much as possible, I practice a teaching method known as student-centered learning.

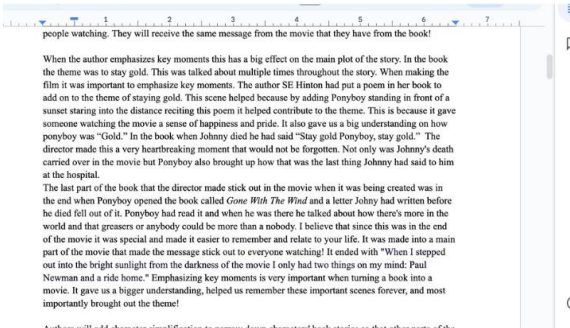


This simply means that I want to focus on their interests as much as possible and tailor the standards and learning targets around those. It's less chaotic than it sounds. This involves a lot of choice when we work on projects.



Projects After Our Whole Class Novels

Most classes are currently working on completing individual or group projects based on the theme or other literary aspects of their class novel. Some are making podcasts. Others chose from among a very long list of possible choices. 5A just finished *Wonder*. This is by far the longest book of any class, and they are blowing me away with their passion for reading and their insight!



Literary Essays

Most classes have finished and turned in their first drafts of an essay on three major reasons why a movie director decides to make changes from the book to their filmed version. After noting changes in the filmed version of our class novels, they must write about why those changes might have been made. With guidance and some good resources, they have done very well with this.



Personal Reading

We spend a lot of time in the library. Most classes go once every week. The kids also have access to my vast classroom library (thanks EES and the BOE!). I also work hard to acquire grants or funding for books. I recently did some work for a non-profit organization and they paid me with a \$200 gift card for books. On Friday, 5A and I picked \$60 dollars worth of books (12 books!) that they were interested in and I ordered them right there. Fun! 5B/6 did this with me on Monday, 12/18/23.



Making a Difference

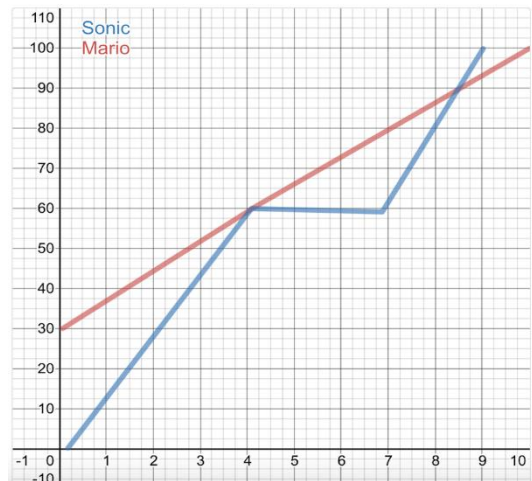
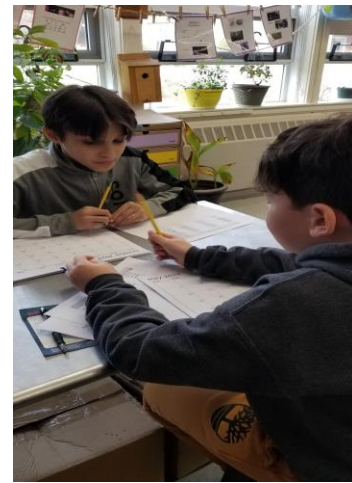
In March, every grade will begin a project that I developed and have refined over the many years. It has had many names in the past, but this year, thanks to a \$4,280 grant that I received from the NEA. We are calling it "Amplifying Student Voices." Part of the grant budget that I submitted gives us an additional \$800 for books about change-makers, and \$1,380 for new technology to support the kids in their projects. More details as we get closer!

Science News – Mrs. Mead



Middle school students continue to work and learn with KnowAtom materials in grades 6 through 8, and with Mystery Science in grade 5. Here, 8th grade students work to assemble a large work light that they'll use when modeling astronomical patterns made by the Earth, sun and moon. These predictable patterns include day and night, a year, the seasons, the moon phases, and eclipses. They've also learned about handling halogen bulbs with care, in this case gloves, to avoid getting oils from skin on the glass.

Here, 5th grade students work together to analyze data in order to draw conclusions and discover patterns. Grade 7 engineers have just finished a project that uses their chemistry knowledge to design a prototype of an ice pack that is as efficient and effective as possible, while grade 6 students have focused recently on fine-tuning their graphing skills.



Student Council – Mrs. Mead

Student Council members continue their partnership with PTO, serving as “elves” for the Giving Tree Project. On January 19, we will host a winter dance for middle school students, and in February we will conduct a drive to support animal rescue in our community. Watch for upcoming fliers and permission slips to come home. In the meantime, we are collecting old newspaper for a project. If you save newspapers for a trip to the transfer station, please consider sending them to school for Student Council instead through the end of February. Thank You!



Social Studies News – Mr. Kernan

Welcome back to school! Hopefully everyone was able to celebrate a little bit and enjoy some downtime. I am excited to see the calendar roll over from one year to another and to begin our work together once again.

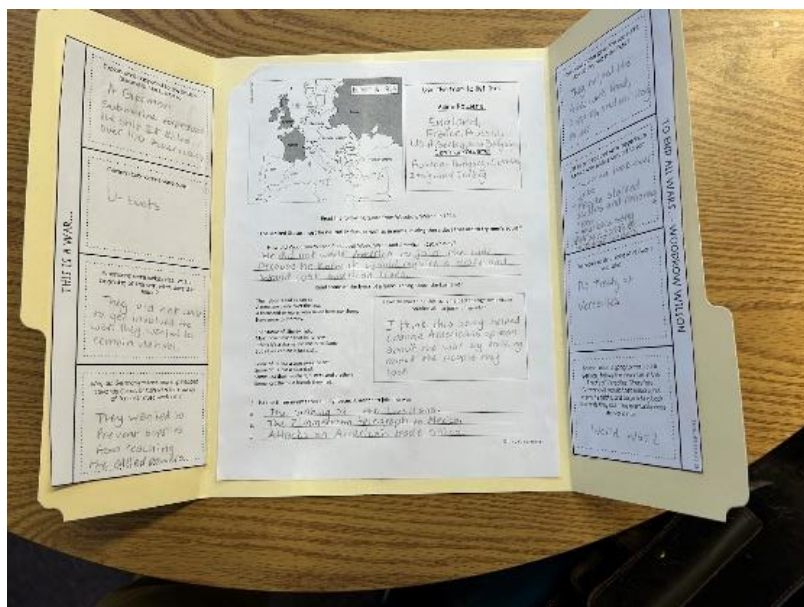
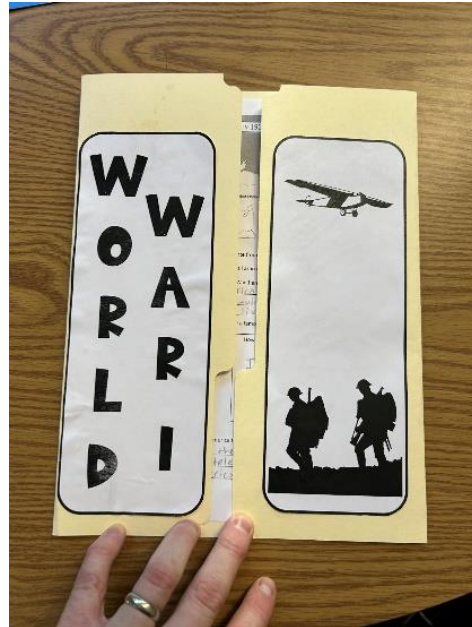
In grade five, students are beginning to explore the colonies in the 18th century. We will be examining the French and Indian War this month and how that conflict contributed to the American Revolution. Fifth grade can expect an uptick in writing this month as we look to improve our persuasive writing skills. Please reach out as always with anything I can do to assist you. I'm looking forward to an enriching month!

Grade six and seven students have been learning about World War I. We will conclude our study of this unit over the next week and a half. Below are pictures of a study guide we created. Students will be creating their own trenches and explaining the purpose of these trenches and ultimately how they contributed to the war effort from 1914-1918. Following this we will move in the 1920's and the

Great Depression. Since this is World History, we will examine this from a world perspective.

Grade eight students have moved from the end of the American Revolution to the beginnings of a new nation, our class looked into the role our constitution plays in our daily lives, the development of our government, and how different eras of our country's history were defined by the people who lived it. This work will carry us to the American Civil War. We will begin with the Andrew Jackson era this month. There is much to digest, and I am looking forward to seeing how our students develop thoughts and inferences about this era of American history.

Grades 6 and 7 work:





January 14
1-3pm

WINDHAM-TOLLAND

4-H

CAMP

326 Taft Pond Rd Pomfret, CT 06259
Ph. 860-974-3379

OPEN HOUSE

**Meet Staff
Take Tours**

**Register for camp
Snacks**

www.4hcampct.org



Licensed by the State of CT





WINDHAM-TOLLAND 4-H CAMP
326 Taft Pond Rd Pomfret, CT 06259
www.4hcampct.org



PUT SOME FUN IN YOUR 2024 SUMMER!
June 23 to August 16, 2024

Windham-Tolland 4-H Camp, located in Pomfret Center, Connecticut, has provided summer camp experiences for thousands of youngsters for over 69 years. The camp has both overnight and day camp programs for boys and girls 6-15 years of age. The camp is located on 270 acres containing woodlands, cabins, recreation areas and scenic lakes. The Windham-Tolland 4-H Camp maintains a state license and ACA accreditation. Campers need not be 4-H members.

Our caring, camper-centered, college-aged and trained staff is committed to providing a safe, educational, and fun experience for every child.

All campers have the opportunity to participate in a variety of programs each week including:

- Arts & Crafts
- Low and Mid High Ropes courses & Climbing wall
- Swimming
- Self-defense
- Fishing
- Sports
- Drama
- Dance
- Archery
- Outdoor Education
- Zip-line
- Canoeing & Kayaking
- Knitting

4-H Camp offers a variety of specialty programs also available on a weekly basis for an additional cost.

Wood Fiber Crafts Horseback Riding, farm camp and cow camp

CAMP PRICING 2024

- Day Camp (ages 6-15)\$375 per week (Lunch & Snacks Included)
- Resident Camp (ages 9-15)\$585 per week
- Teen Leadership Program (ages 15-17) Starts at \$350
- Overnight Clover Camp (ages 7-8)\$310 per session (3 -day, 2 Night Sessions)



THEME WEEKS FOR 2024

- **Week 1 – June 23-June 28- Medieval Week**
- **Week 2 – June 30-July 5 – Minecraft Week**
- **Week 3 – July 7-12 – Carnival Week**
- **Week 4 – July 14-19 –Winter Extravaganza Week**
- **Week 5 – July 21-26 Olympics Week**
- **Week 6 – July 28- Aug 2 –International Week**
- **Week 7 – August 4-9 – Tropical Paradise Week**
- **Week 8 – August 12-16 – Capture the Flag! (Day Camp Only)**

Visit our **website** at www.4hcampct.org for Online Registration

E-mail us at registrar@4hcampct.org for a camp brochure or additional information or

Call the Camp Registrar at (860) 974-3379



OPEN HOUSES

Sunday January 7 & Sunday, February 18
Sunday March 24 & Saturday April 20
 From 1:00 to 3:00 PM Each Day

OPEN HOUSE EXTRA – April 20

Please join us April 20 - 12:30 PM for an informational parent panel on the benefits of Windham-Tolland 4-H Camp for you and your child

An Equal Opportunity Program Provider and Employer