

Seventh and Eighth

Grade News

Friday, December 14, 2018

Winter Break: December 22 - January 6

Academics

Today is the final day of Cycle 2, although we do have next week as a testing, projects, and catch-up week before the break. The past three weeks have focused primarily on the Social World portion of our curriculum. Students have been studying different forms of government and the U.S. Constitution. They have completed group projects and presentations on the different branches of our government, how a bill becomes a law, amendments to the Constitution, and checks and balances between the three branches of government. Students have also completed and presented individual projects on different state constitutions. **The Social World test is next Thursday, December 20.**

Our 7th and 8th graders' final assignment for *Animal Farm*, the thematic novel for this cycle, was due earlier this week. Next week, students will have a final book discussion and an in-class writing activity for *Animal Farm*. Students are also completing their mentor author projects, in which they chose a more extensive passage by a favorite author to analyze and model.

In Geography and Current Events work, students have been researching and taking notes on their research paper topics about world water issues. In the research papers, students are examining causes and effects of, as well as possible solutions to, the problem they research. We had a lesson on thesis statements, including what makes a strong thesis statement and how it should fit together with the introduction to the topic. Students are now in the process of creating graphic organizers for their papers. They are also writing the introduction and thesis statement for the paper.

In Personal World, students have been working on their life map project, which is due today, December 14. As part of this project, students gather information, pictures, and artwork, and assembling it in a thoughtful map-like layout.

Level 3 (OPTIONAL) Holiday Gift Exchange

Each year Level 3 students can choose to participate in a holiday gift exchange. Level 3 students from long ago initiated this custom, and in order to be not tied to any particular religion, they gave it the unusual name of “Oompa-Loompa.” The Oompa-Loompa process goes like this: the name of everyone who wants to participate is put into a bowl. Students draw a name from the bowl, and reveal it only to Deana and Erica, who keep a secret master list. The Oompa-Loompa event runs for three days, and follows this protocol:

Day 1: Students anonymously give a **small gift** to the person whose name they’ve drawn (By small, we’re talking several pencils, a pack of gum, or something of that sort.) **Tuesday, December 18**

Day 2: Students anonymously give another **small gift** to the person whose name they’ve drawn. (This time, the gift is a little nicer: for example, a bag of Skittles and a pencil, or a \$4 fidget spinner, etc.) **Weds., December 19**

Day 3: On this day, the giver reveals his or her identity, and gives a final nice gift in the \$10-15 range. **Thursday, December 20**

Our Oompa-Loompa event this year will run next week on Tuesday, December 18, Wednesday, December 19, and Thursday, December 20. Participation is entirely optional, but we do ask that if a student chooses to participate, that they make sure they follow through on their commitment: it’s upsetting for a person expecting a gift not to get one. The students generally have lots of fun with this, and there is much intrigue during the first two days.

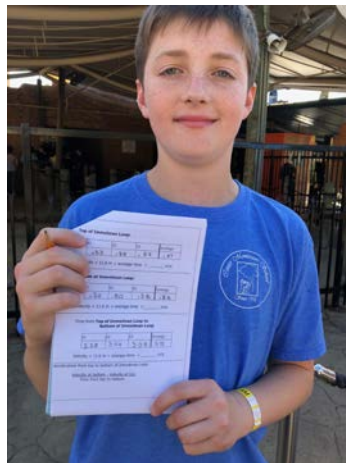
December 21: Day Before Winter Break

The day before winter break is a designated half day, and is generally a party day. In Level 3, students will come that morning for Pajama Day, and we will serve a breakfast of eggs, bacon, pancakes, orange juice, and hot chocolate. We’ll have movies, games, and crafts. Dismissal is at 12:30.

Physics Day Never Disappoints

What a GREAT time we had at Physics Day last Friday! Busch Gardens Physics Day is a perfect complement to our physical science curriculum, and it’s a fun way to see how physics can be applied to something many of us love: roller coasters. Students practiced taking velocity measurements and doing acceleration calculations the week beforehand, so when it came time to apply their skills and knowledge to measurements and calculations for the real coasters, the 7th and 8th graders were on top of it! That’s figuratively speaking, since all measurements must be done *off* the rides. However, we did go over the G-force

graph for the Montu roller coaster in class, and learned that the greatest G-force in the entire park was at an unexpected place: the bottom of a smallish tight loop near the end of the Montu coaster. After our Montu measurements, the students were able to directly experience that surprising 4.2 Gs felt on that loop. Everyone enjoyed the lively physics show, and our own Rachael J. got chosen to be one of the volunteers on stage, to demonstrate centripetal force and inertia. In addition, we also had enough free time to break into small groups to ride different attractions. A special thanks goes to our intrepid, adventurous, and tireless chaperone/drivers: Adan Caycho, Greg McLemore, and Louis Najmy!



Questions?

PARENTS AND STUDENTS: We encourage you to contact us with any questions and concerns. The best time to call us is in the evening; alternatively, you can email or text us any time:

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Thank You to...

•Adan Caycho, Greg McLemore, and Louis Najmy, for driving students to and from, and chaperoning, the Busch Gardens Physics Day trip.

Level 3 Families, we are always grateful for all that you do!

Mark Your Calendars

Winter Break.....December 22-January 6
Students Return to School.....Monday, January 7

Immersion Week.....January 7-11

Land Lab.....Wednesday, January 9

Cycle 3 Begins.....Monday, January 14

Martin Luther King Day: No School.....Monday, January 21

Regularly Scheduled: Tuesday Tutorials.....3:15 - 4:30 PM

MATHCOUNTS: Wednesdays ..3:15 - 4 PM

OUTREACH 360 Trip to the Dominican Republic: May 4-May 11

-The Level 3 Team (Robin, Deana, Erica, and Beronica)

Please send any email address changes and updates to redidin@gmail.com
