

**Sweet Gum Upper Elementary Community  
Distance Learning Plan & Digital Resources  
Week of April 6, 2020**

Dear Sweet Gum Community,

For week two, enjoy the fresh inspiration and a *food* theme under the Writing, Science, History, and Geography tabs on the Upper Elementary webpage. And this week, Mr. Kendall introduces a Cooking component to keep the spirit of our Learning Kitchen alive!

Reading, Spelling, and Math tabs remain consistent this week, with the same expectations and daily habits in practice. There are also new enticing curiosities to be found under the Resources tab at the bottom of the webpage for children (and parents) hungry for new ideas to ponder. And don't forget to visit the Specials page for new afternoon activities in the areas of P.E., Art, Music, Foreign Language, and Learning Support.

It is our pleasure to provide a variety of recommendations and ideas, but we certainly don't expect every area to be covered each day, or even each week. Some of our clever children have already expressed interests in extending various projects beyond week one; I am more than happy to collaborate and support these plans.

Week one was joyful work for me. It was particularly comforting to start the day as a community, listening to everyone chirping like the birds outside my window! The individual student conferences have also been valuable, meant for keeping our relationships strong and our outlook positive. Children are showing up, advocating for their interests, asking questions, and practicing grace and courtesy. Many thanks to all our parents for all that you do to support the children's work at home.

In service,

Ms. Isaza and Mr. Kendall

**Daily Reading and Response Journal:**

- Read a fiction book for a minimum of 1 hour per day.
- Keep a response journal: summarize in paragraph form the main events in your fiction book each day. Explain your story to a reader who has not yet read the book and is not familiar with the setting or the characters. Introduce characters and use descriptive language to make the story come alive (and maybe convince me, or a friend, to read your story).

## Writing Exercise via 826 Digital: Making a Recipe “Zine” (pronounced “Zeen”)



Forget recipes for baking. Write a recipe that captures who you are and what you value. What are the “ingredients” in your life that make you *you*? What are the “ingredients” that make something amazing or special?

Read the recipe poems below and think about the cooking verbs that are used. Notice where the directions are precise with strong verbs. What sentence do you like most and why?

### Recipe for Basketball Bliss

#### Ingredients:

Basketball signed by Stephen Curry  
Teammates with heads that can turn 360 degrees  
Lightning-laced sneakers  
Velvet springs inside that help you dunk  
Basketball jerseys that smell like rotten eggs  
Nose plugs for just your team  
Crowd of super-fans  
Half-time show with Beyoncé and Jay-Z

#### Directions:

For a game of pure basketball bliss, do the following steps. First, sauté a basketball signed by Stephen Curry and sprinkle in teammates with heads that turn 360 degrees. This way, your teammates will always see you're open. Next, fold in lightning-laced sneakers. On a fast break, you'll sprint down the court so quickly that the audience will get whiplash from watching you. Toss in velvet springs inside your sneakers. How else will you dunk even though you're only 5'7"? Stir in basketball jerseys that smell like rotten eggs. Your opponents will never dare to get close enough you to guard you. Blend in nose plugs for your team. Sprinkle in a crowd of

super-fans. They will roar like lions each time you score. Mix in a half-time show with Beyonce and Jay-Z and bake everything at 350 degrees.

## **Recipe for Friendship**

### **Ingredients:**

1 quart of kindness  
1 cup of patience  
3 teaspoons of jokes about your evil older brother  
4 cups of adventure  
½ cup of silliness  
2 cups of honesty

### **Directions:**

For the ultimate friendship, boil one quart of kindness. This will be helpful when you lose in the student government election, you fail your math test, or you fall off your hover board and break your ankle and you need someone to cheer you up. Second, pour in one cup of patience. This will be needed when you need someone to tutor you in math because it's as confusing to you as Egyptian hieroglyphs. Third, toss in three teaspoons of jokes about your evil older brother. Who else could notice that his gelled hair looks like a porcupine after a hard night's sleep? Fourth, mix in four cups of adventure. Trips to Raging Waters and Great America, sneaking into your evil brother's room, and plunging into the cold Pacific Ocean are just the beginning. Finally, blend in two cups of honesty. This friend will tell you their secrets and their fears, and you'll trust them with your personal worries and dreams. Let everything simmer for two hours, and a lifetime of friendship will be ready to serve.

## **Begin Drafting**

You might want to write a recipe for peace, for happiness, for a fantastic year, for the best day ever, for the perfect birthday, for the most wonderful school trip, most amazing brother, or something completely different.

## **Now it's time to create your own zine (pronounced "zeen")!**

Read: [How to Make a Zine](#)

Watch: [How to Fold an 8-Page Zine](#)

Gather Materials:

- 1 piece of printer paper (8.5"x11")
- scissors
- something to write with

Once your mini-zine is folded and cut, unfold your paper and create your zine! Write, draw, and sketch out a recipe of your chosen topic. Zines are highly personal and highly visual! When your zine is complete, snap a picture of your work so we can see each other's zines. Zines are made to be given away.

See the PDF file attached with a Recipe Zine Template you may choose to use instead of printer paper.

### **Writing Conferences:**

Please reach out to Ms. Navarro by email at [e.navarro@aidanschool.org](mailto:e.navarro@aidanschool.org) if you would like to schedule a writing conference with her. She would love to hear what you are writing about these days and support your creative work!

### **Weekly Spelling List and Activity:**

Parents, the lists attached are suggestions for the children. An old fashioned dictionary or independent reading books work fine to scout for new and interesting words instead of using the PDF lists.

Children, choose ten words to learn this week. Ideally these are words you use often but notice that you don't feel comfortable spelling in your own writing, or they can be words that trip you up while reading. As a backup, you can choose words from one of the high frequency lists, or new vocabulary you encounter through your own research.

Remember, new words will only stick if you use them, so practice multiple times and make sure they are going to be applicable in your work.

Once you have chosen words, practice spelling them correctly. Options for this include:

- **Word Wall Card**
- **Tiles:** spell with bananagrams tiles
- **Shaving Cream:** write in shaving cream using a silpat or tray
- **Skin/Air Writing:** trace the letters on your skin with a finger, tap each letter down your arm and then say the whole word, or write them in the sky using your whole arm
- **Stamp:** use an alphabet box to stamp the words with ink or into dough
- **Sand:** trace the words with your finger in a sand tray
- **Word Hunt:** search a book or the environment around you for each word and then record
- **Cirque du Soleil:** form each letter on the rug with your body
- **Chant:** chant each letters in a rhythmic pattern
- **Rainbow:** choose 3-5 colors and write the word in each
- **Story:** write a story/poem that includes all of the words
- **Teach:** teach someone else how to spell the word

Each time, make sure you:

1. Read the word aloud (while looking at it in written form).
2. Spell the word aloud, one letter at a time.
3. Attempt to spell without looking at the word (using one of the above methods).
4. Check that you spelled the word correctly.
5. Create a sentence that uses the word (aloud).

High Frequency Word Lists (see PDF)

Grade 4 List (see PDF)

Grade 5 List (see PDF)

**Math and Geometry Topics** (via Khan Academy):

Parents, you are encouraged to create an account on Khan Academy for your child. The accounts are FREE. You may click the grade level links below to subscribe your child to a course under my teacher account page, where they can access learning content (video tutorials and activities) and I can view their progress through course content. Content is not lock-step, and it is self-paced. If you do not subscribe your child to the “courses” via the links below, I will not be able to view their progress or work, but the children will still be able to access the various tutorials and content.

Each day, your child should choose an appropriate topic to review/learn and practice. If this is their first experience on the Khan Academy platform, they may need some guidance finding an appropriate topic of study. In general, grade level topics should be familiar territory (e.g. a 4th Year should look through the 4th Grade content and select a topic).

If for any reason your child does not have access to a computer or you prefer to support their work differently, there are plenty of alternative ways to build math appreciation, number flexibility and to practice building skills. Please see the links below with further ideas (I recommend “Numbers Talks” at this [link](#) - once a parent knows how to have a number talk, these can make for fun, spontaneous conversations).

If you have simple tools at home (e.g. geometry compass, ruler, measuring cups, graph paper, protractor, thermometers, etc.) your child is encouraged to put those tools to good use! If you have workbooks at home (e.g. Kumon, Spectrum, Common Core Math) please feel free to use those instead of Khan Academy for skill practice.

Because each child’s math and geometry work is individualized at school, I understand that supporting this work can be a challenge outside of school. Please feel free to drop me a note for some guidance or assistance identifying the best fit for your child.

Khan Academy information letter to parents: [link](#)

Grade 4 Math Essentials Course [link](#)

Grade 5 Math Essentials Course [link](#)

Grade 6 Math Essentials Course [link](#)

If you are nostalgic (as I am) for our Montessori Math Materials, have a try at [extracting the square root or finding common multiples on the pegboard](#) VIRTUALLY, a new resource coded

by a Montessori teacher's husband! This resource might be most fun for parents, to get a glimpse at how our materials work. A little tutorial can be provided if you request :)

**Science:**

Observe Nature Like John Muir

*"I'd sit for hours watching the birds or squirrels, or looking into the faces of flowers. When I discovered a new plant, I sat beside it for a minute or a day, to make its acquaintance and try to hear what it had to tell me." —John Muir: My Life with Nature\**

Most people look but don't see. This activity helps you discover and remember the physical characteristics and special quality of an animal.

Choose an animal that is easy to observe, such as a bird, frog, or insect. To see your animal well, use binoculars or a magnifying glass if you have them. If you can't find an animal to observe, choose a tree, flower, or even a rock or river.

As you study your special animal (or plant, etc.), look for characteristics you've never noticed before—the color of its eyes, how it moves, or the texture or pattern of its leaves or feathers.

A.) List seven things you've discovered about your animal or plant.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_

B.) Choose a word that describes how your animal moves (or stands, if it is a plant):

C.) Write a word or phrase that expresses the unique spirit of your animal or plant:

D.) If you were to give your animal or plant a name, what would it be, and why?

E.) Write a simple poem or story about your animal or plant. Tell what you admire about it. Before you start, read John Muir's account of western junipers. Muir saw everything as alive with its own unique beauty.

*Western Juniper by John Muir\**

*The Sierra juniper is one of the hardiest of all mountaineers. Growing mostly on ridges and rocks, these brave highlanders live for over twenty centuries on sunshine and snow. Thick and sturdy, junipers easily survive mountain storms. A truly wonderful fellow, he seems to last about as long as the granite he stands on. Surely he is the most enduring of all tree mountaineers—never seeming to die a natural death. If protected from accidents, he would perhaps be immortal. I wish I could live like these junipers, on sunshine and snow, and stand beside them for a thousand years. How much I should see, and how delightful it would be!*

\* John Muir paraphrased by Joseph Cornell, John Muir: My Life with Nature (Nevada City, CA: Dawn Publications, 2000)

If you enjoyed the science project options from last week, here is the information to try a different project this week:

Select a science project from this [link](#). Make sure you have the materials at home that are needed for your project of choice. Follow the instructions, collect data and observations, and write down your conclusions. Send photos of your process, or share your conclusions with me by Friday at [j.isaza@aidanschool.org](mailto:j.isaza@aidanschool.org)

[Scientific American's Bring Science Home Collection](#)

### **Geography Activity from Home Science Tools**

Use the sun's energy to heat up a tasty treat with this simple solar oven! Have you ever heard the expression that it's so hot out you could fry an egg on the sidewalk? Have you ever wondered if it's true? Find out with this easy, fun, and delicious solar oven science project that uses only household items and a cardboard box. Plus, learn about absorption, insulation, and the sun's energy.

#### **What You Need:**

- Cardboard box (ideally a pizza delivery box)
- Box knife or scissors
- Aluminum foil
- Clear tape
- Plastic wrap (a heavy-duty or freezer ziplock bag will also work)
- Black construction paper
- Newspapers
- Ruler or wooden spoon
- Thermometer
- An adult to help with cutting

#### **What You Do:**

Use a box knife or sharp scissors to cut a flap in the lid of the pizza box or rectangular cardboard box. Cut along three sides, leaving about an inch between the sides of the flap and the edges of the lid. Fold this flap out so that it stands up when the box lid is closed.

2. Cover the inner side of the flap with aluminum foil so that it will reflect rays from the sun. To do this, tightly wrap foil around the flap, then tape it to the back, or outer side of the flap.



3. Use clear plastic wrap to create an airtight window for sunlight to enter into the box. Do this by opening the box and taping a double layer of plastic wrap over the opening you made when you cut the flap in the lid. Leave about an inch of plastic overlap around the sides and tape each side down securely, sealing out air. If you use a plastic bag, cut out a square big enough to cover the opening, and tape one layer over the opening.



4. Line the bottom of the box with black construction paper—black absorbs heat. The black surface is where your food will be set to cook. How much you need will depend on the size of the pizza box you're using to make your solar oven.



5. To insulate your oven so it holds in more heat, roll up sheets of newspaper and place them on the bottom of the box. Tape them down so that they form a border around the cooking area. It may be helpful to also tape the rolls closed first. The newspaper rolls should make it so that the lid can still close, but there is a seal inside of the box, so air cannot escape.

6. The best hours to set up your solar oven are when the sun is high overhead—from 11 am to 3 pm. Take it outside to a sunny spot and adjust the flap until the most sunlight possible is reflecting off the aluminum foil and onto the plastic-covered window. Use a ruler to prop the flap at the right angle. You may want to angle the entire box by using a rolled up towel.

7. You can make toast by buttering a slice of bread then letting the sun do the rest. Making nachos with chips and cheese are also fun treats to make in your solar oven! It would also work great to heat up leftovers. So the paper at the bottom doesn't get dirty, put what you would like to cook on a clear plastic or glass plate. A pie plate would work well. Place the thermometer inside your oven before you close it, so you can check the temperature.

8. To take food out of the oven, open up the lid of the pizza box, and using oven mitts or potholders, lift the glass dish out of the oven.

### **What Happened?!**

The heat from the sun is trapped inside of your pizza box solar oven, and it starts getting very hot. Ovens like this one are called collector boxes, because they collect the sunlight inside. As it sits out in the sun, your oven eventually heats up enough to melt cheese!

How does it happen? Rays of light are coming to the earth at an angle. The foil reflects the ray, and bounces it directly into the opening of the box. Once it has gone through the plastic wrap, it heats up the air that is trapped inside. The black paper absorbs the heat at the bottom of the oven, and the newspaper make sure that the heat stays where it is, instead of escaping out the sides of the oven.

Your solar oven can reach about 200° F on a sunny day and will take longer to heat things than a conventional oven. Although this method will take longer, it is very easy to use, and it is safe to leave alone while the energy from the sun cooks your food.

We made a cheese roll up by melting cheese on a corn tortilla. It took about 45 minutes for our cheese to melt and the tortilla to become soft. The internal temperature of our pizza box solar oven was 125° F.

If you do not want to wait long to have a solar-cooked dish, try heating up something that has already been cooked, like leftovers, or a can of soup. Putting solid food in a glass dish and liquids in a heavy plastic zip lock bag works well. You can also pre-heat your oven by setting it in direct sun for up to an hour.

Other recipes you may want to try are making baked potatoes, rice with vegetables, chocolate fondue, s'mores, and roasted apples with cinnamon and sugar.

Even on partly cloudy days there may be enough heat and light from the sun to slow cook a special dish. Here are a few tips for having success with your solar oven:

- Stir liquids (if you're cooking something like fondue, rice, or soup) every 10 minutes. You can rotate solid food every 10-15 minutes as well, so it cooks evenly.
- Reposition your solar oven when needed, so that it faces direct sunlight. You should be checking periodically on your oven, to make sure it is in the sun.
- Make sure that the foil-covered flap is reflecting light into the pizza box, through the plastic-covered window.

### **History Studies via Big History Project (BHP):**

During times of uncertainty and unpredictability, we humans have been known to make technological advancements and to increase social connections through symbolic communication (think of the invention of letters or numerals!). This is true today, during the COVID-19 pandemic, and it seems it was true 320,000 years ago, during the Middle Stone Age in modern Kenya. During this time, human forager groups are believed to have traded obsidian tools across vast terrain. They even used red and black stones to dye and stain material, perhaps to leave messages behind for distant groups.

This week, in keeping with the kitchen theme (see the writing prompt and Mr. Kendall's new cooking ideas!), you'll do some research on foraging diets and how our foraging ancestors might have used a variety of tools to hunt and gather.

You have to choose menu items that a typical forager might have hunted and gathered in the location you specify (think of *History Time!*). You'll learn about the variety of different food items available in certain areas and how early foragers would have procured these items.

Begin by choosing a name and location for your imaginary restaurant, along with a date to correspond to when people would have been foraging in this location. Then research what a typical forager might have hunted and gathered in your geographical region in order to put together your menu. You must include information on the tools used to forage that particular food item as well as information about where the food item was located.

Use the PDF file included to record your research findings, or make your own “menu” and bring it to share at our community meeting this Friday.

Remember, you have access to Encyclopedia Britannica Online for research. Go to <https://school.eb.com/> and then use **aidanmont** as the access i.d. and **27school** as the passcode. Note the “**Web’s Best Sites**” link on the left-hand side in Britannica’s search results page - it links to other quality resources on the web on the topic you searched. You can also contact Ms. Stewart for help with your research queries: [n.stewart@aidanschool.org](mailto:n.stewart@aidanschool.org).

Ms. Stewart has also set up a Google Group at which students and teachers can send research questions: [library@aidanschool.org](mailto:library@aidanschool.org)

Big History Project PDF  
[Big History Project Research Site](#)

### **Cooking:**

Miss the Learning Kitchen? Here's how you can keep sharpening your cooking skills at home, even with limited ingredients:

1. Inventory your kitchen! Ask your parents which ingredients in your kitchen you're allowed to use for your project, write a list of everything you have access to, and email it to Mr. Kendall ([a.kendall@aidanschool.org](mailto:a.kendall@aidanschool.org)).
2. Get your recipe! Mr. Kendall will use your list to find a personalized recipe for you to try out at home (or find your own by entering your ingredients into [SuperCook](#)).
3. Cook! Be sure to ask for parental support with anything difficult or dangerous.
4. Record your results! Write down your observations about the process, noting things you enjoyed doing, things that were difficult (and why), things that went well for you, and things with which you struggled. If you'd like, take pictures!
5. Share your results with others! Share the finished project with your family, and share your notes with Mr. Kendall and the class.
6. Be sure to clean and sanitize any kitchen tools or surfaces after use.

Each week you'll be able to get another personalized recipe, so be sure to let Mr. Kendall know if there's something you're particularly interested to try.

### **Care for the Home and Others:**

- Plan a meal to cook or a recipe to bake. Be sure to clean the kitchen thoroughly upon completion, and return any tools and utensils to their proper home.

- Offer to care for any houseplants or family pets.
- If you have your own bookshelf, organize it by genre (e.g. fantasy, literary fiction, nonfiction, science fiction, poetry, etc.) or by author last name, or help a sibling organize their shelf.
- Wash and fold your own laundry.
- Offer to set the table for a family meal.
- Fix something broken (e.g. darning a sock).
- Ask an adult how you can help with a task (carrying groceries, taking out trash, etc.)
- Write a list of questions on paper slips and have the family draw questions from a bowl or hat to make for some interesting dinner conversation.
- Call someone lonely.
- Play with a sibling.

### **Care for Self:**

- Take a mindfulness break
- Do something creative (e.g. paint, draw, write a poem, build something, play music, make a booklet and decorate the cover)
- Prepare a healthy snack or smoothie
- Get some exercise (e.g. practice yoga)
- If you have the resources nearby, try some handwork (kumihimo, knitting, crochet, embroidery, origami, sewing)
- Learn something new from YouTube (see links below)
- Learn something new from someone else!
- Wash your hands often :)

### **Enrichment Websites and Videos:**

Please check back here as we plan to add to the content as we scout for new resources!

### **Current Events:**

\*[Newsela](#) (customizable, child-friendly current events articles. An account is free to access content. Parents can even customize reading level. Quizzes and writing prompts are also an option.)

[IndyKids](#) (a free paper for kids, by kids)

### **History/Geography:**

[NativLang](#) (history of written and spoken languages)

[Primitive Technology](#) (be sure to turn on captions!)

[Native Land](#) (explore an interactive world map to learn more about Indigenous territories, languages, and treaties)

[MetKids](#) (need adult to help child subscribe and access interactive art history site)

[Jas. Townsend and Son](#) (18th century cooking and culture)

[Fashioning a Nation Art History Gallery](#)



1619 Project (includes link to the podcast from NYT which examines the legacy of slavery in the U.S. - the children have listened to episode 1 of the podcast together and we have discussed it as a class. Any new content should be previewed before sharing with your child, and discussions are encouraged throughout the episodes - recommended for trips in the car!).

Big History Project (a framework for history exploration - beginning with the origin of the universe - a great complement to our Montessori history studies and full of timelines and videos for inspiration)

CIA World Factbook (great resource for collecting data and statistics about countries, can use data to make maps, charts, graphs)

Teaching Tolerance Student Texts (searchable library of short texts offers a diverse mix of stories and perspectives)

### **Science:**

\*Scientific American's Bring Science Home Collection (science experiments and demos, many easy to replicate at home)

Kurzgesagt - In a Nutshell (well-sourced animations exploring a wide range of scientific ideas)

SmarterEveryDay (charismatic engineer "explores the world using science")

Domain of Science YouTube Channel (scientist and children's book author has a channel that some might also enjoy)

Deep Sea (scroll down and discover the animals living in different zones of the oceans, some you might never see with your own eyes!)

Super Charged Science (free online science classes at specific times, e.g astronomy)

Wall of Birds from Cornell Lab of Ornithology (a beautiful mural of all known families of birds and it is to scale. You can explore the mural by zooming in or you can click on the name of a specific bird and it will zoom in on the illustration along with information about the bird)

National Geographic Kids Science Lab (in case you need more ideas for easy experiments at home)

### **Math and Geometry:**

\*Number Talks (Parents should watch the video tutorial and can implement quite easily at home for some great logical reasoning and number flexibility work.)

Codecademy (learn to code for free)

TEDEd "The Infinite Life of Pi" Video - Enjoy a Belated Celebration of Pi Day (3.14)

Mathigon (a treasure trove of math and geometry activities and resources. Use class code **U3MW-LECH** to access content)

### **Writing:**

The Learning Network NYT (adults should preview content first and can access additional writing prompts, current events, contests, and more curated content)

Mentor Texts NYT (explore a new writing technique from this collection by the NYT - parents should preview content first)

### **Cooking:**

Bon Appetit (many different voices and opinions about cooking and food)

**Art:**

Instructables (a maker and crafter gold mine full of project ideas!)

Museums with Virtual Gallery Tours can be found through this link

Join Artist Mo Willems at 1PM daily for his "Lunch Doodles" tutorial videos

**Mindfulness:**

Mindful School Free Mindfulness Practice for Kids Online (1PM on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday)

**Digital Citizenship:**

Be Internet Awesome