

6th Grade News

April 17, 2020

It's hard to believe that it's been over a month since we've seen our students. While the "hang outs" are enjoyed by all who attend, it's just not the same thing! Like everyone else, we are working hard to make the best of it.

Time is a funny thing – while it feels like it's been *forever*, it also feels like we're still trying to establish routines and "troubleshoot the technology issues." While our original mantra



was, "We're all in this together." Our new mantra seems to be, "It's all good; we'll figure it out!" We

continue to work on overcoming technical glitches and improve the way students can submit their work. We hope that the new subject-specific classroom folders are helping students with organization. We will maintain open communication regarding any other updates or changes to the way work is delivered, and the way students should be turning work back in!

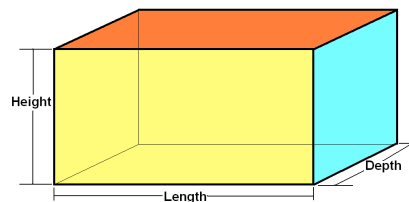
With our newly announced closure date (May 15th), we want to remind students that despite the Pass/Fail grading system, teacher expectations have not changed. We still expect students to do their best on all assignments. Additionally, in order to PASS the fourth quarter, students are required to *do the work*. Presently, we are comparing results – compiling a list of students that have not been consistent with work submission. Next week, parents of these students will be receiving emails and/or phone calls from a member of our (teaching) team.

Just as we have varying skill levels and experience with Google Classroom, we are

aware that some students are more comfortable with that platform than others. We are trying not to overwhelm with too many assignments. We also offer "hang out" times and office hours for academic support. Our weekly homeroom meetings also provide an opportunity for all of us to talk through the challenges of the week.

In **Math**, Mr.

LaMonda is presenting lessons on calculating area and net, 3D shapes, and background fluency – addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Mr. LaMonda consistently encourages students to "try." He reminds them to ask questions regarding any strategies or concepts with which they struggle. He will use this feedback to formulate reviews and future lessons. In some cases, he will provide a written explanation or short video that addresses the challenging topic.



In

Science,

Mr. Downs continues to tell the students to "look up to the stars..." through self-



Science



Technology



Engineering

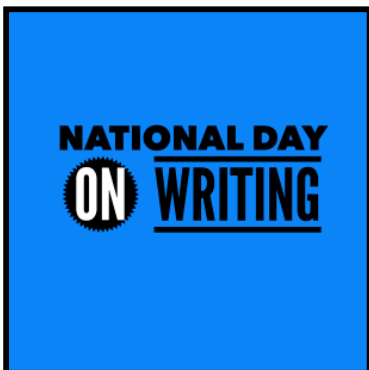


Mathematics

exploration. He wants them all to take advantage of the time at home, going outdoors and experiencing that with which they can, safely! While students are required to complete *one* assignment, each week, for grading, he also gives students a STEM challenge each week, in which they can perform small experiments using household items. Mr. Downs has also suggested that students keep a Science journal in which they can record their thinking-about-Science (an optional option!).

In **Writing**, Ms. Bruck provides students with daily prompts as a potential focus for their writing. At the present time, students are

completing weekly journals. While Ms. Bruck offers daily prompts, students only need to turn in one per week (prompts are given on Mondays; due on Fridays). Her formal prompts include examples, samples and mentor texts to support students' writing.



In addition to her "formal" prompts, Ms. Bruck also celebrates the *National Days* because "every day, there's a reason to celebrate!" In addition to

announcing the day, she provides written text, background information and/or a video that further explains the *national day*. "At our last hangout, we discussed criteria for the journal entries," Ms. Bruck explained, "use the Google docs form to type on, keep font to 12 points, and fill the remainder of the page." Students have a wide variety of ways to complete the entry, but should also remember to edit and revise work prior to turning it in. While there are plans for a more formal unit of study, Ms. Bruck's goal at the present time is to keep students enthused and engaged, and it is working, as many students are choosing to write *every day*!

In **Reading**, Mrs. Countryman and Ms. Mayone-Allison have been collaborating on lessons for the Social Issues unit of study. Mrs. Countryman has been recording video lessons, which are discussed during the weekly Reading Circle "Hang Outs" (Tuesdays at 1:00 & 1:30). Since students were expected to keep their reading binders at school, we know that students do not have access to the many texts that are housed in these binders. At the present time, copies of the those texts, as well



as new text sets, are being put in the *Reading Workshop* Classroom folder.

Students continue to be reminded to *write about reading*, regularly.

The ELA teachers continue to search for the best online format in which students can respond to texts. Students are also reminded that they should have their "eyes on text" every day – texts can include reading for pleasure, Social Issues texts, and passages that are assigned in both Science and Social Studies. Please be reminded that in our last newsletter (04/10/2020), websites were provided that are free and require no membership – these wonderful sites offer a plethora of texts!

Ms. Mastrangelo, the consultant teacher supporting the ELA program, offers a daily read aloud for students to access through the *Reading Workshop* classroom folder. The book



she is reading is *The Diary of Ann Frank*. This novel will be a featured piece of literature in Jr. High. Students should use this opportunity to be entertained, as well as to establish familiarity with the text.

Mrs. Kuhne is the consultant teacher who supports students in all subject areas, with a focus on Science, Math and Social Studies. In addition to supporting her students, she has taken on the role of lead teacher for Social Studies instruction. The current "location" is



Ancient Egypt. Mrs. Kuhne posts assignments on Wednesday, due the following Wednesday. Along with the tasks that students are required to complete, fun activities are also offered – many that can be shared with family members! These activities are optional, but they also provide students with additional information

about Ancient Egypt – geographically, historically, and culturally.

NOTE: Please be reminded that all previously published newsletters can be found on the 6th Grade Team's Bennett Elementary School webpage.