



NEWSLETTER

January 23, 2026

Principal: Barbara Gerard
<http://matsuk12.us/acc>

Phone: 907-746-2358
Fax: 907-746-2368

Dear Academy Families,

The beginning of 2026 has certainly kept us on our toes, with the weather continuing to cause unexpected challenges.

Late Start and Missed School Day Causes Challenges and Scheduling Difficulties

Missing a full day last Friday and a late start on Thursday created scheduling challenges for our Spalding Trainer, which disrupted the planned observations of K-5 Language Arts teachers delivering lessons. The *Writing Road to Reading*—the Spalding International Education curriculum and method—is a cornerstone of our charter. Teaching the Spalding Method with fidelity is a non-negotiable expectation, and when we are unified and anchored in this work, we grow stronger.

Morning Drop-Off Helpers Are Volunteers—Please Treat Them with Kindness

We are incredibly grateful for our morning volunteers who help ensure that your children—and all Academy students—are able to exit vehicles safely and enter the building each morning. It was disappointing to learn that a few impatient parents have made unkind comments or ignored requests to slow down. Please... please be kind to our wonderful helpers! They are generously donating their time to keep our students safe. We also ask that all families drive carefully and model the respectful behavior expected of an Academy parent during drop-off.

Grateful for the Incredible Help Restoring the Back Two-Story Building

It has now been well over a month of generous, hardworking, and dedicated efforts to restore the back two-story building following the significant windstorm damage in early December. Thank you so very much to everyone who has contributed their time and talents to the many projects that needed to be completed. It has truly been a joy to work alongside each of you in partnership.

Grateful For Staff, Academy Families, and Community Support!

I am deeply thankful for our wonderful staff, for Academy's fantastic families, and for the amazing support we receive from our broader community.

Questions, Needs, Concerns?

If you ever have questions, needs, or concerns, please do not hesitate to call, email, text, or stop by. WE CARE! I CARE!

With Warm Regards,
Barbara Gerard, Principal
907-841-5704
Barbara.Gerard@matsuk12.us



Date:	Event:
1/26-30	Middle School Intensive Week
1/26-30	Staff Appreciation Week
2/9	K-5 Valentine's Parties
2/10	Early Release 12:40pm
2/11-13	Professional Learning No School for Students



- 2nd Semester Friday lunch sign-up sheets are up in the front office! **If you are available between 11:45 and 12:25pm on Fridays, please sign up!**
- Fix wheel on rolling dry-erase board.
- We are on the hunt for used plastic animals-fist sized or larger to be re-purposed for a cultural project-any animals will do!

Kindergarten



Winnie The Pooh was the star of the show this week in kindergarten. AA Milne wrote the original stories for his son based on the son's stuffed toys. After students were introduced to the Pooh stories, they enjoyed a short documentary on

how Disney made those stories into movies after having shared them with his own children. We have two wonky weeks of new phonograms. The new ones are CK, WH, OR, ED, EW and UI. We also added twenty words to our spelling notebooks during that time. Most are working very hard and earning the benefits from it.

During our math time we continued to practice the coin name and values. We have also begun the countdown to our 100th day of school. We will celebrate our 100 days of learning when it arrives.

Today, Friday, January 23 was room change day. At the end of the day, students moved their inside shoes from their current room to their new one. Ask your student which room they are in now. (We are happy to assist if you need to reach out to us to find out if you need to.) Have a great weekend!

Mrs. Berg Verona.Berg@matsuk12.us



hello FIRST GRADE

- We love having short weeks to do reviews, reteaching and introductions in Spalding. The 1-1-1 Rule was taught and practiced. If the word has one syllable, one vowel, followed by one consonant then you double the last consonant when adding a vowel suffix. They actually LOVED working on this!
- The Core Knowledge stories this week were from our "Different Lands, Similar Stories" unit. We worked on vocabulary, comprehension, and contrasting/comparing with *Little Red Riding Hood* from Germany, *Hu Gu Po* from China, and *Tselane* from Botswana.
- Fact Families was the theme in math, and students worked hard finding the missing fact as well as a wrong fact in the family, then fixing it.

BACK TO NORMAL NEXT WEEK WITH SPELLING HOMEWORK!

Mrs. Mayer & Mrs. Drummond
Betsy.Mayer@matsuk12.us
Jessica.Drummond@matsuk12.us



2ND GRADE

We've had a great week of learning in our classroom! In language arts, students have been learning how to use a dictionary and practicing identifying pronouns in their reading and writing. It's been fun watching them build confidence with these important skills.

In math, we have officially mastered three-digit subtraction—way to go, second graders! Their hard work and perseverance are really paying off.

We also have something special to celebrate: our class earned a Puppy Party on Friday through excellent behavior and teamwork. We are so proud of the positive choices they continue to make each day!

Mrs. Saunders and Mrs. Kramer
Erin.Saunders@matsuk12.us Kimberly.Kramer@matsuk12.us



Grimes Gambit

Language Arts: This week in Language Arts, your student learned about the properties of sound, including how sound travels in waves (similar to light) and how it can be manipulated and used in various devices. Students were introduced to how sound is produced, how sounds can change, the similarities and differences between light and sound, and the parts of the human body that allow us to speak.

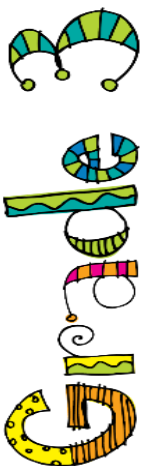


Next week, we will begin writing about different inventors and their inventions, continuing to build strong reading and writing skills.

Math: This week in Math, we finished our multiplication facts through 12! Students are continuing to build automaticity with their multiplication and division facts.

Next week, we will begin learning about perimeter and area. Please continue encouraging your student to work on their ALEKS topics at home.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, feel free to email me at austin.grimes@matsuk12.us.



The Glanville Weekly

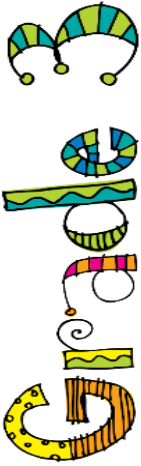
Language Arts: We finished up Unit 5 this week, exploring sound. We learned how sound differs from light. Ask your student if sound can be heard in the vacuum of space! Next week, we will wrap up this unit with students writing an informative newspaper article about an inventor of their choice.



We took our first spelling test of the semester. Students practiced phonograms that hadn't been reviewed in a while and learned a new spelling rule. There will be no spelling list coming home next week, as we will be taking our monthly spelling assessment.

Math: We are wrapping up our fact practice with 7s. Students are enjoying working toward mastery of their facts by taking daily five-minute tests covering multiplication and division. Next week, we will begin lessons on area and perimeter. Students are looking forward to exploring geometry! Many students also completed knowledge checks on ALEKS and mastered multiple topics—great progress!

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out! Mrs. Glanville Megan.Glanville@matsuk12.us



FOURTH GRADE

Benbow's Buzz



Nielsen's News:

ELA-American Revolution: We had a wonderful virtual field trip on Tuesday to the Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia. We got an inside view of Washington's camp quarters and learned about his "camp family" (Marie Washington, Marquis de Lafayette, and Alexander Hamilton). We wrote cause and effect essays about events near the beginning of the war, as well as read about early influencers like Thomas Paine, Benjamin Franklin, and the Marquis de Lafayette.

In Spalding we finished up last week's test, as well as a 50-word test. They have been learning so much!

Grammar this week was the prefixes that mean "not": im, il, in, ir, non; suffixes that form adjectives: -able/-ible, -ish, -ic, -ive, -ous, and -ly.

****Our class met their reading goal of 31,500 minutes of reading!! We had a pizza party on Thursday, Jan. 22! Our next reading goal for the end of the year is 63,000 minutes. Keep up the good work, kids!**

Math- This week in fractions, students continued practicing equivalent fractions and simplified fractions a bit more, as well as, learned mixed numbers and improper fractions. In ALEKS, they are working hard on their quick tables and completing more of their pies! Great job, students!

Mrs. Nielsen Laurie.Nielsen@matsuk12.us



Please read!!

We are running low on glue sticks and fine point dry erase markers! Please grab a pack on your next shopping trip and send them in with your kiddo. Thank you so much!

Please make sure that your student is coming to school each and every day with a water bottle and full outdoor gear. Remember that we have two days a week, Tuesday and Thursday, when fourth grade is outside for a full hour. I would also like to suggest that a second pair of gloves is in backpacks just in case the first pair gets wet during short recess between language arts and math.

Language Arts - We are getting so excited about the American Revolution! This week we learned about the Committees of Correspondence, Samuel Adams, the Boston Port Act and how that act failed in its purpose. While reading Johnny Tremain, we are discussing character traits and making predictions about how certain characters may evolve throughout the story! Because these chapters are longer and include higher level vocabulary, we will be taking two nights per chapter as we read and prepare for discussions. Students are expected to complete the assigned reading and be prepared for discussions the next day. This should help with the minimum daily requirement of reading for at least 30 minutes every day for all fourth graders! We will continue to practice sentence writing every morning, which consists of identifying and correcting fragments and run-on sentences, as well as unscrambling sentences and writing all four sentence types. Additionally, we added Daily Language Review, which focuses on grammar and parts of speech.

Math - We continued our fractions unit this week! We continued working toward an understanding of simplifying fractions. Automatic recall is vital to success in fourth grade math, even as we work through fractions! Although we will continue to practice them every day in class, I do ask you to make sure that your child finds time at home to practice as well. Just a few minutes a day can make such a difference.

Please reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns!
cherie.benbow@matsuk12.us



The Manley Minute:

Language Arts: Earlier in our novel, Mary thought she heard a crying sound, but everyone disputed her claim. This week she discovered that the source of the crying was none other than Mr. Craven's sickly son, Colin! The students have thoughtfully compared the two characters and made predictions about their future together. Will Colin be able to go out to the garden, or will he be too weak? What will come of her secret garden? These questions have students buzzing with predictions and reasoning each and every day.

For our Spalding lessons, we took our monthly 50-word spelling test as well as our test from last week.

Math: Students have been using their operations and math logic skills to determine patterns and sequences of larger numbers. Students are learning how to identify, extend, and create numerical patterns while explaining the rules that make each pattern work. We've focused on recognizing how numbers change. Specifically, whether they increase, decrease, repeat, or follow a specific operation. These skills help build strong problem-solving habits and set the foundation for more advanced math concepts.

Mrs. Manley
Patsy.Manley@matsuk12.us

Sturgis Super Students!

Language Arts--We have had a fabulous short week reviewing Spalding phonograms and working on a new list of words. Due to the interruptions last week, I will not be giving a test on List #11. Students should have brought home List #12 this week. The test for this list will be on Wednesday, January 28th.

Our study of the Renaissance continues. This week the students took a look at the works of Leonardo da Vinci and created a paragraph explaining how what he thought and did embodied the spirit of the Renaissance.

Math--This has been a great week of some review, and some new concepts. Students built on their knowledge of fractions and regrouping to tackle subtracting mixed numbers with regrouping. It is wonderful to watch students as they begin to develop and explain their own understanding of this difficult concept.

Mrs. Sturgis
Sabra.Sturgis@matsuk12.us



The Churros



Here's the ultimate recipe to make your own churros at home, just like they were at the churrería stands. Of course, the difference here is price. Here you can make a whole batch for what is cost for a few. Once you make the churros, you can make the authentic chocolate dip to dunk them in.

Ingredients: (Makes one plateful)

- Vegetable or Olive Oil
- 1 cup water
- 1/2 cup margarine or butter
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 3 eggs
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon (optional)



Prepare to fry the churros by heating oil in a pan (1 to 1&1/2 inches) to 360 degrees F.

To make churro dough, heat water, margarine and salt to rolling boil in 3-quart saucepan; stir in flour. Stir vigorously over low heat until mixture forms a ball, about 1 minute; remove from heat. Beat eggs all at once; continue beating until smooth and then add to saucepan while stirring mixture.

Spoon mixture into cake decorators' tube with large star tip (like the kind use to decorate cakes). Squeeze 4-inch strips of dough into hot oil. Fry 3 or 4 strips at a time until golden brown, turning once, about 2 minutes on each side. Drain on paper towels. (Mix Sugar and the optional cinnamon); roll churros in sugar or dump the sugar on the pile of churros, like the pros. That churro taste will take you right back to your favorite summer days walking the paseos of Spain.

Note: REAL churros in Spain are made without cinnamon mixed with the sugar, but the cinnamon adds an extra nice flavor.



SCHUMACHER MATH

My math students worked on fractions or percents this week. The most advanced students will be conducting, analyzing, and reporting on a survey while continuing percent or fraction work with the rest of the class. Students will be assessing their percent and fraction skills next week.

Mr. Schumacher Jared.Schumacher@matsuk12.us

K-5 Lab Classes



Third and fourth grade have officially kicked off our ceramics unit, and the excitement is high! Third graders are creating ceramic tic-tac-toe games, learning how clay works while making something fun and interactive. Fourth graders are forming heart-shaped clay pieces, which introduce coil techniques and help prepare them for making a full coil bowl in fifth grade. While half of each class is working with clay, the other half is busy creating cardboard relief self-portraits—and they are so fun and full of personality. The groups will switch places, so every student gets a chance to try both ceramics and sculpture, making this a rich, hands-on art experience for everyone.

Mrs. Glanville and Mrs. Saunders



3rd grade - Exploration of North America - Christopher Columbus and Juan Ponce de Leon

4th grade - Alaska Maps unit, starting with Native Alaskan regions and landforms.

5th grade - Civil War - causes and major events

Mrs. Mayer & Mrs. Drummond



Español with Señorita Catarina

Our youngest Spanish learners had a joyful week in the lab.

Kindergarten students read along with their favorite explorer Dora la Exploradora and are learning about opposites in both Spanish and English. They loved chiming in and showing off what they know.



First and second graders enjoyed the story "El Diente Flojo de Carlitos" which speaks to the very real rite of passage of losing teeth at this age. Along with the story, students are continuing to learn about jobs and have been especially fascinated by el dentista.

It is always fun to see how personal connections make language come alive.



Kindergarten is finishing up their Alphabet books and should be read to share them with you next week!

First grade is working in code.org, learning about repeating patterns using the repeat block in the drawing lessons.

Second grade is working in code.org, learning a new block "collector" and continuing working with the repeat block.

Mrs. Nielsen



3rd Grade Science: This week in science we looked into what specific animals need to survive in their environments!

4th Science: This week in science we shed some light on the subject of energy conversions and electrical systems!

5th Grade Science: This week in science we looked into what our science fair will look like as well as started looking into the earth system. As we grow ever closer to the science fair and project proposals roll in it gets more and more exciting!

Ms. Heppner & Mr. Farring
Natalie.Heppner@matsuk12.us
Timothy.Farring@matsuk12.us



We are pleased to welcome K-2nd grade back to writing lab for this rotation. Students have improved their fine motor skills through cutting, tracing, and coloring. Grammar instruction has focused on the parts of speech.

Kindergarten worked on coming up with "describing words" (adjectives.)

First and second grade are learning how nouns, verbs, adjective, and adverbs fit together. Finally, each grade is working on their own composition skills, including opinions, and descriptions.

Mrs. Sturgis & Mrs. Kile



Middle School Spanish

Sixth graders are working with the days of the week and the months of the year. They wrote, spoke, and drew about their favorite days and shared their ideas with the class. We are also working toward a class goal of everyone remembering to complete their Spanish homework. I know they can do it and I am cheering them on.

Seventh graders are learning about possession (the non-zombie) kind. They are practicing how to talk about things that belong to others and how to modify possessive adjectives so they agree with the nouns they possess. These concepts are helping students sound more precise and confident in their Spanish.

The eighth-grade class demonstrated mastery in using and memorizing IR verbs which is something to be very proud of. They are now working on developing rapid automaticity with all regular verbs before moving on to irregular verbs. Their current vocabulary focus is body parts.

Spanish 1 students are working with the irregular verb *gustar* and pastimes vocabulary. They have been practicing through speaking activities and by playing Pesca in Spanish which always adds a bit of fun and friendly competition to learning.

Both eighth grade groups are also working toward more spontaneity in conversation and greater facility with numbers vocabulary.

Señorita Cady.Agoff@matsuk12.us



4th-8th Grade Outdoor Fitness

We hiked, biked, did sled pulls, and played games on the ice and snow for outdoor fitness.

Your middle schooler has been encouraged to bring or borrow the school's gear for the cold. Safety is our key concern, so students who lack appropriate gear will have it available in our fitness closet.

Mr. Schumacher
Jared.Schumacher@matsuk12.us

Mrs. Molly
Molly.Nichols@matsuk12.us



We are continuing our exciting journey into the **American Revolutionary War** across all subject areas. In **Language Arts**, both classes began a new novel study, *Sophia's War* by Avi. Students are working in small groups to simulate colonial life, including forming their own "colonies" and writing declarations of independence. This unit will continue after Spring Intensives as we prepare for our **Government Spotlight trip to Juneau** at the end of March.

In **Math**, both classes are deep into our geometry unit. Students have drafted blueprints for birdhouses using geometric concepts and precise measurements. We look forward to beginning the building phase of this project once we return from the Intensive break.

In **Social Studies**, students are wrapping up their study of the American Revolution, tying together key events, perspectives, and outcomes.

Looking ahead: Next week is **Intensive Week!** Students should arrive at school wearing fitness clothes, but must bring their school uniforms to change into.

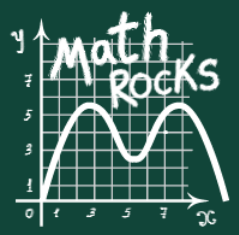
As always, please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you for your continued support!
Warmly,

Mr. Chadwell and Mrs. Zerkel Jordan.Chadwell@matsuk12.us Katherine.Zerkel@matsuk12.us



Students wrapped up observing phase changes in action by making a small batch of ice cream in class! We discussed how salt interacts with ice to lower its freezing point, making this process possible, and what happens to ice cream particles as they change from a liquid to a solid. Students also spent time rotating through states of matter practice question stations as needed to review and strengthen their understanding. We will finish up our unit on states of matter and phase changes after intensives week.

Mrs. Strohmeyer Cynthia.Strohmeyer@matsuk12.us



Greetings again, Academy families! This morning we assessed our chapter on integers and the coordinate plane, and I'm looking forward to seeing how students did. Next week the middle schoolers have intensives again, but after the break from math, we will pick up with expressions and equations. I have seen hard work and good progress throughout this chapter. Keep up the good work!

Mrs. Heppner Natalie.Heppner@matsuk12.us

Middle School Art-Ventures

with Ms. Christensen

We are rolling into 2026 with new art projects! Sixth graders are developing their proportional drawing skills with "Snow Bear" art inspired by illustrator Sandra Dieckmann. They will be creating a polar bear portrait on black paper and learning how to apply white paint to resemble the texture of fur. Students will also use oil pastels to give the bear a bold, patterned scarf.

Seventh graders have started their reverse acetate painting for their "Seventh Grade Selfie" by painting an abstract watercolor background, using layering and subtractive painting techniques. The students have also taken "selfies" to use for the self-portrait stage of this project.

7TH GRADE

Wrights Winners!

Wright 7th LA: Students worked hard on their short story adaptations and finished up their scripts Friday. They'll begin recording their radio plays when we return to regular classes. They also read and discussed "The Friday Everything Changed" by Ann Hart and Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery". Both stories spurred analysis of the impact of cultural expectations on behavior.

Wright 7th math: The class is deep into Chapter 8's algebraic equations concepts. This is one of the most important chapters as it introduces algebra concepts necessary for next year. Ten ALEKS topics are due each Monday, including before and after intensive weeks.

Wright 7th history: Students took notes on the causes of the Great Migration, including the impact of Jim Crow laws and the Tulsa Massacre on African Americans during this time period. They had time to revise the rough draft of their women's suffrage script, to be ready to record when we return to regular classes.

All hand-outs and homework are on Google Classroom or ConnectEd. Have a great weekend!

Mrs. Wright Melodie.Wright@matsuk12.us

"January is the threshold to new possibilities; dare to step forward and embrace the unknown." – A.D. Posey

This week in English, students continued practice with our daily English skills in language, editing, and reading comprehension, which focused on nonfiction text features and visual information. On Wednesday, they demonstrated knowledge of the correct spelling and use of vocabulary with the roots "flect, flex" and were assigned 10 more words with the roots "frail, fract, frag." For this week's writing, students reflected on and wrote about doing the right thing and their own moral compass. Students finished Chapter 7 of All Quiet on the Western Front, locating textual evidence for targeted questions and learned more about comic relief in literature – what it is, why it's used, its effect, and examples.

In Math, students continued to improve both accuracy and time with their fluency of multiplication and division, and continued working in Chapter 5 on Expressions. They were assessed on Lesson 1: Algebraic Expressions and learned more about, practiced, and demonstrated the skill of identifying arithmetic sequences in Lesson 2: Sequences. As a reminder, students have been given time in class to record targeted vocabulary in their notebooks for the future vocabulary test. It's up to them to set themselves up for success. Again, students are required to complete ten topics or more each week in ALEKS. Please encourage them to work on these at home, as class time is not sufficient. Students should engage in the "**Equations and Inequalities**" pie to support concepts introduced and practiced in the new chapter of learning.

Students in History continued building geography skills, using atlases to identify answers to a variety of questions. Students were assessed on their knowledge of WWI and began learning about the Russian Revolution, beginning with an overview and followed by taking guided notes using a slideshow presentation. Students had a short week due to the holiday and the Bake Sale. Thank you for supporting the 7th-grade community service project. It was a great success!

Together, this will be a great 7th-grade year!

Ms. Twohy Tuesday.Twohy@matsuk12.us



SCIENCE RULES

In Science this week we defined the physical properties of matter. The kids took notes from the textbook, and then as a class, we went over the definitions. On Thursday, each student brought in an object to perform a series of tests. Some of the items kids brought in were small toys, Legos, and cough drops. They then tested the object for solubility, is it ductile, or malleable as well as a list of other physical properties. They learned to use triple beam balance scales to measure mass, and water displacement to find the volume, and then found the density of their objects. All in all, it was a good week to learn the vocabulary by doing the experiments.

A few kids have not yet learned the first 36 elements on the periodic table. Please check with your child if they have mastered the elements and their symbols.

Mrs. Dunham Susan.Dunham@matsuk12.us



Happy Friday! Although it was a short week, it was an incredibly busy & productive one!

My 8th grade Math class has continued in our unit focusing on linear equations specifically the concept of slope. Again, mastery of these skills will help ensure future math success. Furthermore, my group has been ROCKING their ALEKS progress, and I have no doubt several of the students will be completing their ALEKS pie within the month.

In Honors English I, the students have begun reading Homer's *Odyssey* which is already leading to fantastic discussions. Furthermore, the students have begun working on elements of their Hero's Journey narrative and their excitement is palatable.



History continues to focus on our China unit, which includes an overview of the dynastically structure, Chinese culture and traditions, and learning about the infamous Chinese dictator, Mao Zedong. This week we specifically discussed the Silk Road, it's complexities and the myriad of ways it impacted the world, both positively & negatively.

Please also remind your child to come to school prepared for fitness every more next Monday through Thursday, as it is intensives week!

Have a fantastic weekend,

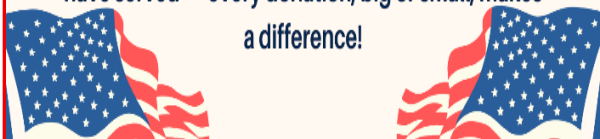
Mrs. Molina
Stacy.Molina@matsuk12.us

LAST FRONTIER HONOR FLIGHT COIN DRIVE

The Academy Charter eighth grade class is raising money to support Last Frontier Honor Flight, a nonprofit organization that gives veterans the opportunity to visit Washington, D.C., and see the memorials dedicated to their service and sacrifice.

You can help by donating your spare change! Coin jars will be located at local businesses and at the front desk of Academy Charter. Every penny collected helps send a veteran on the trip of a lifetime. If your business or organization is willing to "host" a jar, please reach out to Mrs. Molina at stacy.molina@matsuk12.us

Thank you for joining us in honoring those who have served — every donation, big or small, makes a difference!



Manley's Minute: English 1

We have reached a powerful turning point in *The Good Earth* by Pearl S. Buck. As Wang Lung and his family return to the north, students are noticing a drastic change in their feelings toward him. Until now, students viewed as hardworking and admirable, even though he was sometimes harsh. Now, Wang Lung begins to show troubling signs of greed, entitlement, and pride as his wealth grows.

In class, students are analyzing character development, discussing moral choices, and citing textual evidence to support how and why their perspectives on Wang Lung have shifted. These conversations are helping students think deeply about human nature, empathy, and the cost of ambition. Our Harkness discussion centered on how power and wealth can change a person and noting O-lan's quiet loyalty and strength despite Wang Lung's hurtful words and actions.

Mrs. Manley Patsy.Manley@matsuk12.us



This week we finished up our look into factoring trinomials with our test on chapter 8 and next week we will begin chapter 9 on quadratics and the quadratic formula!



This week in science we looked into cellular respiration in animals and looked at how we could measure that process with detecting CO₂ which is a natural result of cellular respiration in animals.

Mr. Farring Timothy.Farring@matsuk12.us