Academic Newsletter

7th grade 2026 - 2027

Art:

Seventh-grade artists have just wrapped up their Identity Mask projects and presented them to their peers. Each mask are unique and creative expressions of students' identities, inside and out. Mark your calendars now for the art show where all masks will be on display, Thursday, May 20th. Next week we will begin our next project - block printed textiles. Please ask your student to see their Digital Art Portfolio (DAP) for the most recent images of their artwork and reflections on their artmaking practice.











Español:

This week, estudiantes are taking a test about the verb "ser," adjectives, and the noun-adjective agreement. The writing component involves them describing their loved ones and applying their knowledge of the plural forms of "ser." Next week, they will learn about idioms and the verb "tener" as well as other verbs from the super 7 cohort, conjugated in both singular and plural forms. Simultaneously, they will learn vocabulary about transportation & places as they learn how to apply the verb "estar" (to be) and "ir" (to go). At home, please continue asking your children to describe their loved ones individually and as a group.

Hispanohablantes:

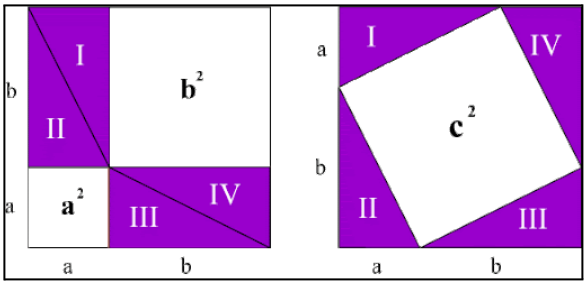
¡Hola familias! Students culminated their learning about some of the aspects of Aztec culture by illustrating the concept of duality and how this concept is emblematic of Día de los Muertos in the way it's celebrated in Mexico and in other parts of Central America. "No hay vida sin muerte y no hay muerte sin vida." For Mesoamerican cultures, death was not feared because it is inevitable. Students also learned that Amatl/paper played an important role in Aztec culture, and it was used to decorate temples, and that the current tradition of making papel picado is a fusion of Aztec and Chinese traditions. Students made some beautiful papel picado creations to decorate our altar. In addition to learning about culture, students focused on the use of the imperative and the preterite of irregular verbs. This week we only had one class, due to conference prep. During this class, students explored a different way of acquiring new vocabulary by playing Código secreto/Code Names in Spanish! Students did an excellent job.

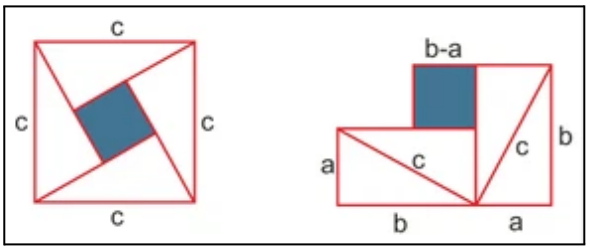




Mathematics:

Seventh graders recently finished an algebra unit on solving equations, and have now started a geometry unit about triangle side lengths. Last Friday we solved problems with tilted squares, which will lead us to deriving the Pythagorean Theorem in the coming weeks. There are several beautiful intuitive proofs of the Theorem, and we will explore these, along with the Distance Formula, in the coming week. Ask your student: Are there side lengths that cannot form a triangle? Are there side lengths that make specific kinds of triangles? What is a hypotenuse?





Your child should also show you their Solving Equations assessment from the past unit, so feel free to reach out with any questions about that.

Music:

Our horn players continue to impress with their growth! We're stretching to higher and lower notes, sharpening reading skills, and polishing technique. After a dazzling first recital, we're already eyeing the next one just after Thanksgiving break. At home, please continue to carve out short, steady practice, remembering that "patience + determination = progress." Our music theory knowledge is growing

through our composition study, and their brand-new musical language is turning into clear ideas on the page. In the coming weeks, we'll explore tension vs. resolution, repetition vs. variation, and how melodies sit on chords (some fit like a glove, some… not so much). If you haven't yet checked out the composition materials, please go to Google Classroom, search under the classwork tab under the Composition Topic, and click around! Many students still need to finish their work on flat.io, so check in to make sure they are keeping up with this new, exciting, and tricky skill set!

Physical Education:

Seventh graders are in the prep phase of their fitness video projects. Taking everything they have learned over the semester, including Calisthenics, Aerobics, Core, and Agility training, students are working in groups to create videos to present to the entire class. The goal is to create something that is challenging, engaging, fun, and demonstrates knowledge of basic physical fitness. Please ask your 7th grader what they are planning to include in their project over the next few weeks.

RISE:

We took an intentional pause from our Mental Health curriculum to make space for the questions submitted through our anonymous question box. This time of year often brings new and sometimes challenging experiences for 7th graders, whether related to friendships, academic stress, or family dynamics, and students have been making thoughtful use of this space to seek guidance and support.

The submissions have been plentiful! The question box provides a wonderful opportunity for community building, allowing students to practice attentive and active listening while offering empathy, encouragement, and supportive feedback to their peers. Grounded in our shared group agreements, students are also learning how to respectfully disagree, offer different perspectives, and gently challenge one another in ways that are constructive and caring. These conversations offer valuable opportunities to strengthen both our classroom community and students' capacity to support one another.

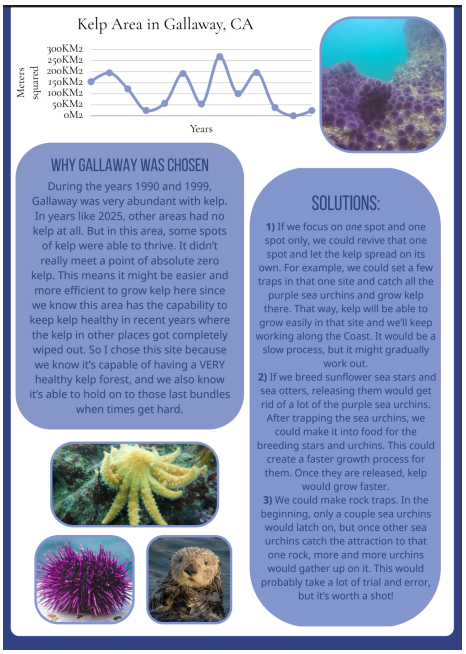
Next week, we will return to our Mental Health unit, spending the next couple of weeks exploring sadness, depression, and suicidality. These conversations will be developmentally appropriate and thoughtfully facilitated, with an emphasis on recognizing emotional experiences, identifying healthy coping strategies, and understanding how and where to access support. I will be using Erika's Lighthouse as a curricular resource while also drawing on my research and professional experience as a licensed psychologist.

As always, please don't hesitate to reach out if you have questions or would like to collaborate as we navigate these topics together.

Science:

Last week to wrap up our marine ecology unit, 7th graders put their scientific knowledge and creativity to work designing kelp forest restoration proposals for sites along the California coast. Using real-world data from KelpWatch, students investigated changes in kelp coverage over time and developed science news feature articles to highlight their evidence-based ideas for helping these important ecosystems recover. This week, students are taking their learning a step further by practicing civic engagement, writing letters to state officials to share their ideas and advocate for kelp forest restoration along the California coast. Ask your student how learning about environmental challenges can inspire us to take action. What role can young leaders play in creating change? Next week, we'll kick off our second unit, *Life on Land,* exploring

terrestrial biodiversity, engaging in community science, and diving into the fascinating world of microbiology. Lots to look forward to!









Humanities:

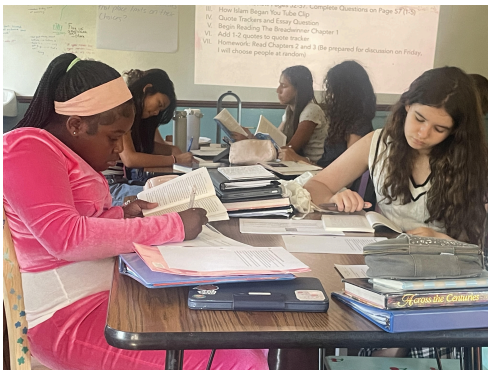
In Humanities, students just completed a creative museum exhibit exploring the origins of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula during the 7th century CE. Through a museum display board, historical comic, or interactive history guide, students examined the Five Pillars of Islam, considering how shared beliefs and religious practices helped unite and shape the early Muslim community.

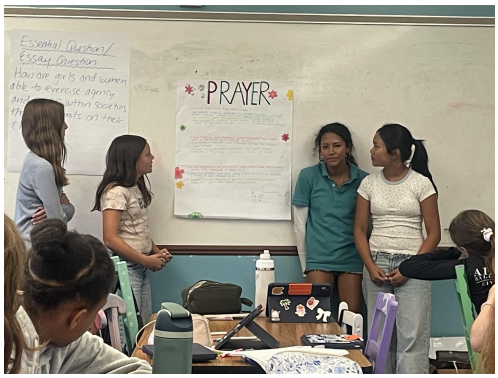
We also recently finished the novel, *The Breadwinner,* by Deborah Ellis, which explores the life of Parvana, who must dress as a boy to make money to support her family during the Afghan Civil War. Looking ahead, we will continue developing our understanding of women and girls' power and agency as we prepare for our essays about the book due on November 20th.

One important learning goal is for students to strengthen their ability to analyze how religious beliefs, historical circumstances, and social structures shape individuals and communities, while developing their skills in supporting ideas with historical evidence.

Questions parents can ask their children:

- What are the Five Pillars of Islam, and why are they important to Muslims?
- How did shared religious beliefs and practices help unite the early Muslim community?
- What does it mean to show power and agency, and how might women and girls demonstrate these qualities when their choices are limited in the book we just read, *The Breadwinner*.





STEAM:

Seventh grade STEAM students have just completed their first project: to design a custom flower to serve a specific pollinator. Students began this project by doing field research in our school garden boxes, observing flowers, their structures, and the pollinators who visited them. They then researched various pollinators, what they are attracted to, feeding behaviors, and their traditional habitat. Students chose a specific pollinator to serve and designed a flower to meet their needs. Their final informational poster displays the flower, all of its attracting features, measurements, habitat, and life cycle. Additionally, students describe how the pollinator serves the plant in fertilization and reproduction. This project helped students practice their precision measurement skills, strengthen their observation skills, think critically about the needs of their chosen pollinator as well as their custom plant, and how they might serve each other in a *mutualistic* symbiotic relationship. Ask your student to describe the relationship between their pollinator and flower and how they serve one another.

