

World Cultures

In World Cultures we have started our tour around the world with the first stop in the Middle East. In order to begin understanding this region, we have taken a close look at the religion of Islam, and the different types of Muslims that exist. We have focused on Saudi Arabia and Iraq, and the current events going on in these countries. Students wrote an essay in response to Vice President Cheney's speech about the need to enter Iraq. Iran and Afghanistan are the next countries we will be studying in which we will examine current events.

Math topics

FIRST QUARTER TOPICS FOR GENERAL MATH

- Problem solving
- Powers and exponents
- Evaluating expressions
- Solving equations
- Area and perimeter of rectangles, squares and parallelograms
- Solving and graphing inequalities
- Absolute value
- Graphing integers
- Operations with integers
- Matrices
- Graphing ordered pairs
- Ratios, per cents, fractions and decimals
- Solving proportions

FIRST QUARTER TOPICS FOR ALGEBRA

- Expressions, equations and functions
- Order of operations
- Stem-and- Leaf plots
- Open sentences
- Properties
- Integers and the number line
- Line plots
- Operations with integers
- Square roots
- Solving equations
- Using formulas
- Measures of central tendency

Language Arts and Common Time

Language Arts classes are off to a strong start this year!! Mrs. Leikin's classes are focusing on writing, grammar, and public speaking. Mrs. Agnello's classes will study literature, reading skills, and responding to literature. Classes will complete two quarters of learning with each teacher. At the end of the first quarter, classes will trade teachers. This way, by the end of the semester, students will have completed the normal Language Arts curriculum for the first two quarters. Students' classroom experiences will have

the opportunity to be deeper and more individual with each teacher.

During Common Time we are preparing students for their Lake Park entrance exam writing sample. (At this printing a date for the administration of this writing sample has not yet been set. Once it is, a note will be sent home via your son/daughter.) A large part of this preparation involves learning how essays are evaluated so we can apply that to our own essays for improvement.

Writing persuasive and expository essays sharpen our writing skills not only for the Lake Park test, but also for the State of Illinois ISAT, which we'll take in April.

La Clase de Español

Family, (La Familia), is the focus of our first chapter in Spanish II. Students have learned the nouns for family members, adjectives used to describe family, and how to ask what someone's age is. To enhance these skills each student created a family tree showing 3 generations of family, and did a short oral presentation about someone in their family for the class. Also, during this chapter we will learn how to use possessive adjectives. A term long assignment students have is called Espanol en mi Vida or Spanish in my life. Students are required to write about ways they have encountered Spanish in their lives from newspaper articles to labeling on food products. Extra credit can be earned by finding more than three examples of Espanol en mi Vida. After our first test at the end of the month, we will begin studying clothing.

Constructing Reconstruction

Welcome Back! Eighth grade social studies students began the quarter with a review of the Reconstruction Era, the time period immediately following the Civil War. Specifically, we have focused on the political agendas of Reconstruction government, the emancipation of slaves, and discrimination toward the freedmen throughout the north and south. The students engaged in an emancipation project, which focused on political, economic, and education freedom that black people experienced after the Civil War. The students are about to recreate history by hosting the impeachment trial of Andrew Johnson in class. After studying each concept within the context of Reconstruction, we made connections between current events and the past. Our next unit focuses on the westward expansion. We will study various areas in order to answer, "How were the conflicts and consequences of moving onto the frontier settled?"

Science is off to a running start!

Welcome back! Chemistry will be the first unit of study for all eighth graders. This quarter students will learn about the Scientific Method, hypothesis, law and theory; the metric system; and fundamental properties of matter, which include both physical and chemical properties as well as phase changes.

Students will also be using workbook and lab equipment. They will do investigations, lab reports, research and presentations. One activity the students will be doing is to measure different parts of their body; legs, arms, face, and then using the metric system draw themselves to scale. They will also take a practical test using

metric rulers, balances, graphs, and math to solve problems. In addition, they will also take an everyday problem that could apply to their life, and using the scientific method they must solve the problem.

This year students will be introduced to aspects of science that will be new and exciting to them. Parents, mark April 23, 2003 for our trip to Fermilab in Batavia. Scientists there work with subatomic particles trying to discover the smallest possible particle in all matter. Students will participate in activities, a tour, and even have an opportunity to ask questions of a real scientist who works at Fermilab!