

MATH FACTS

Fourth Quarter Math Topics

Algebra

Factoring Polynomials-Solving Quadratic Equations- Rational Expressions-Pythagorean Theorem-Radical Expressions and Equations-Distance Formula

General Math

Functions-Graphing Linear Functions and Systems- Area of Circles-Surface Area and Volume of Prisms, Pyramids, Cylinders and Cones-Geometry of Translations, Reflections and Rotations- Permutations and Combinations-Pascal's Triangle

Learning about our government

Eighth grade social studies students have spent the part of the last quarter studying immigration. We uncovered the reasons for immigration by learning about our own specific family's individual journey to America. As we acquired information on immigration, we placed the immigrant's experience in the context of early 20th century America, specifically the discrimination that immigrants faced. Trends were noticed and compared to today's immigration. Currently, we are piecing together the history of the Constitution. After understanding the forces that helped create the Constitution, we began to look at the specific branches of government and amendments.



Jenn, Rachel, Sarah, and Colleen pose with their creative and very informative projects.

Language Arts and Common Time

Mrs. Leikin's students have been travelling through time to understand powerful civil rights issues in connection with Black History Month.

Starting just prior to the Civil War, we learned about slavery and the Underground Railroad. The people who helped slaves escape bondage put their own lives and the lives of their families in grave danger. Those who harbored runaway slaves could lose everything and go to jail.

Moving through time, our next stop was the Great Depression. We read *Roll of Thunder, Hear my Cry!*, a novel about an African-American family trying to make ends meet and survive unfair Jim Crow Laws in Mississippi during the 1930's. These issues prompted many interesting discussions!

Mrs. Agnello's classes researched African-Americans who have made significant contributions to American culture. Research was conducted in the Media Center and online. These biographies were presented to her classes in the form of original PowerPoint presentations.

Later in the quarter, Mrs. Agnello's classes worked on reading and test-taking skills in preparation for the ISAT and Stanford tests. These strategies should prove helpful to students.

In Common Time, we studied the Holocaust. We learned about stereotyping genocide, and took a trip to the Holocaust Museum in Skokie. This was an unforgettable unit!

La Clase de español and world cultures

Europe

Throughout third quarter in World Cultures we have been studying countries throughout Southern and West Central Europe. During this time students wrote magazine articles about cultural topics from Southern Europe such as bullfighting, the Sistine Chapel, and Greek Easter. We also read the legendary story, The Pied Piper of Hamelin Germany, and wrote alternate endings to the story. During fourth quarter we plan to have a European Potluck to sample foods from the region.

Mi Casa es Su Casa

Spanish students began third quarter by making travel posters for Spanish speaking countries. We also created video weather forecasts for the countries in the broadcast studio to culminate the unit on vacations and weather. Our latest chapter is all about houses. We have learned how to describe rooms and furniture, also how to use prepositions and possessive adjectives. Additionally, students have built or drawn their own dream house and written a corresponding description of it.

Of songs and chemistry and moles

As the winter turns to spring, eighth graders were very busy singing songs, working with "decayed atoms" and learning about "good" chemistry and "bad" chemistry. Your child wrote a song about an element on the periodic table to a famous tune and then performed it in front of the class. Students worked with and learned about radioactive atoms, what makes an atom stable or unstable, and the use of these elements in medicine. Students learned the meaning of half-life of radioactive elements, the time required for one half of a sample to decay, and engaged in a hands-on activity communicating their results onto a graph.

Presently, students are learning about over the counter drugs, prescription drugs, and illegal drugs; in other words "good" chemistry and "bad" chemistry, in what ways drugs are helpful, and in what ways drugs are harmful. Venn diagrams, KWL, and two-column notes were used for students to write down what they know

information. They are now working in groups to make a pamphlet of information about illegal drugs. An activity that students have begun, and will continue until April 10, is "Just for Today" goals. Students will write one short-term goal in their Beauty and Charm journals that can be accomplished during that day. The goals must be based on the six pillars of Character Counts. As students volunteered to share their goals, I was so impressed with the thoughtfulness, compassion, and soul searching of the eighth graders.

Students have received permission forms for their field trip to Fermi Lab in Batavia. The due date for the permission form is April 14, and the field trip will be April 23. Also, any student wishing to do an extra credit "mole" must hand the mole in by April 17. Finally, Peacock Middle School students are continuing to collect pennies for charity. Our goal is six million pennies. Please allow your child to bring