

GRADE 8 ELA UPDATE

"Today a reader; tomorrow a leader." - Margaret Fuller

April 2017

APRIL'S CLASSROOM FOCUS

This month students will be examining informational texts to make connections and distinctions between individuals, ideas or events. They will use what they have learned about text structure in 7th grade and apply it to a variety of text when analyzing the author's meaning and purpose.

Students will also begin to explore different topics and learn how to use appropriate

search tools. Precise word choice and logic are two key ingredients when looking for information on the Internet. Students will begin to hone their digital literacy skills by looking at a variety of databases available to them through our local libraries and on-line resources.

Ultimately, students will write an informational piece of text based on their own research which demonstrates an

understanding of organization through text structure and research, including citation.

Also, throughout the month of April, our students in grades 3-8 will be taking part in ELA MCAS testing. Thank you for supporting their efforts, as this data is critical as we continuously improve instruction to meet the needs of all learners.

EXTENDING THE LEARNING AT HOME

Remember when our children were young and they asked the most interesting questions? "How do bees fly?" "Why is the sky blue?" Now, in the midst of their teenage years, it is often difficult to find that same curiosity and wonder. To motivate our adolescents to learn something new is sometimes a challenge.

As our children begin pre-

paring for high school and choosing classes, it may be a good time to begin discussing plans for the future. Questions to start the conversation may include: What inspires you? What makes you happy? Do you want a job in an office or outside?

Use research to help your child determine his or her

future, as the path begun in high school lays the foundation for further opportunities. Use "key word searches" to find out more about colleges, specific professions, or the military. Help them apply the skills they are learning at school to the real work of life that begins at home. Fuel their curiosity for the future.

Reading Recommendations

<i>The Mysterious Benedict Society</i> by Trenton Lee Stewart	Gr 6
<i>Be a Changemaker</i> by Laurie Ann Thompson & Bill	Gr 7
<i>The Adventures of Tom Sawyer</i> by Mark Twain	Gr 8

*April: MA ELA State Standards

- RI.8.3. Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g. through comparisons, analogies, or categories)
- W. 8.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
- W. 8.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarisms and following a standard format for citation.
- *Other ELA/Reading standards are addressed during the month of April as well.

If you have any questions about WPS' ELA/Reading Curriculum, please contact Chris Tolpa, Supervisor of Humanities:

c.tolpa@schoolsofwestfield.org

413-642-9318