

September 6, 2024

Welcome to the 5th and 6th Grade Classroom Newsletter

Happy Friday to all! This week both classes have been working on creating rhythms and routines and understanding school expectations. As a group of 5th and 6th graders, we have been working on learning about each other to promote positive relationships among our community of learners. This year, each classroom teacher will instruct their home room in Writing. Mr. Agran is teaching all 5th and 6th grade students Literacy and Global Citizenship. Mrs. Wagner is teaching all 5th and 6th grade students Mathematics and Science.

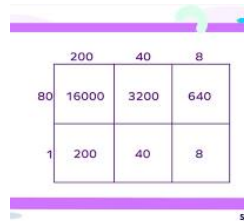


Schedule: Our schedule has been adjusted by adding chorus and band. We are sending a new schedule home with this update in the Friday Folder for your convenience. Individual lessons for instruments will be scheduled with David Kirk, the music teacher, next week.



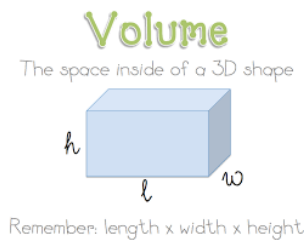
5th Grade Math - This class is off to a fantastic start and the group has started with review of 4th grade concepts such as two digit by two digit multiplication in both partial product and area models. Next week, students will begin our first unit on Whole Number Operations and Applications which includes volume, multiplication, and division.

This group has also learned some math games such as Yahtzee, order the numbers, 21, Pica, Ferme, and Nada. On Monday, 5th grade students will take the iReady Math diagnostic, which will open up iReady math paths for students to complete in class.



	200	40	8
80	16000	3200	640
1	200	40	8

6th Grade Math: It has been a pleasure getting to know this group of mathematicians. The 6th grade group started their first unit of study which is Expressions and Equations. This unit includes area, algebraic expressions, and exponents. This week we learned about Tetsuya Fujita who was a meteorologist who focused on tornadoes. This class has also reviewed and defined area, perimeter, and volume.



Science: The first Science unit covers structure and properties of matter. Students will be learning about energy and matter and its states, including the physical properties of matter making mixtures and solutions, the physical and chemical changes of matter, and separating matter. Such excitement! Thus far in science students have been introduced to scientific practices and expectations when working with science materials.



Mrs. Wagner's Writing Class - Each homeroom teacher will be instructing their class in writing. Our writing block has been busy completing hopes and dreams, an "All About Me" online book, and a getting to know you poster. We have also been introduced to our writer's notebook and responded to prompts on the board to get our writing ideas flowing. Our first genre of writing will be narrative.



Mr. Agran (Literacy and Global Studies) - Hi, I'm Rick Agran. I'm new to Berlin Elementary School, although I've been in the district at EMES for the last five years. I'm a former college language and literature professor who's worked in public schools & colleges, arts & humanities, and community literacy for almost 30 years. I'm excited to team teach 5th/6th with my colleague Lynn Wagner and an amazing cast of special educators, interventionists, and paraprofessionals.

After class Friday the 30th, we surveyed ourselves to get a sense of how we felt about the first week of school. There were earfuls of positives, a number of constructive suggestions, and a few shy votes of "PASS" for the undecided.

I'd love to survey you as well if you have any input after Week Two. Please always feel free to write with literacy, writing and social studies questions, and/or news of your child and family. A student is a three-legged stool of sorts. They are well-supported when their school, home, and peer spheres have equally strong legs. They, of course, can wobble when one leg is shorter. Education is a balancing act!

We've had a wonderful first two weeks of school! We've spent time getting to know one another, getting to know ourselves, doing some team-building, and starting to do a bit of writing. Last week we spent time talking and writing about bucket lists, hopes, and dreams. We made some personal literacy goals. We reviewed nouns, verbs, and adjectives and used them to define and describe ourselves (for example, I am a cold water swimmer). This week we learned about word histories (etymologies) and connected to an online dictionary with over 19

million words in it. In Global Studies, we've also begun "The Little Prince" by Antoine de St. Exupery (1900-1944), a pioneering French pilot and author, whose book has been translated into 600 languages! We read some poems: one by 18th century Maine author Sarah Orne Jewett, and a classic by Robert Frost.

We shared ideas about reading and interpreting, the learning cycle, how to be a lifelong learner by keeping your curiosity alive, what goes into teamwork, poetry, favorite ice cream flavors, and personal responsibility.

The goal for these weeks is to make sure everyone gets grounded in the rhythms and routines of the school. We want to get comfortable with one another and our classrooms. I may need your help in making sure everyone has a good book to read in class and at home. It can be the same book going back and forth, or a student can have two books going.

We are hoping for 30 minutes of independent, quiet reading each day at home. I know family responsibilities are complex to manage, but I also encourage you to read to your child and establish a "book at bedtime" routine as it's a great way to bond and get your kiddo off to lala-land, relaxed and unplugged. You benefit from the pause too. Sometimes you'll fall asleep and your kid will read to YOU!

as ever, Rick

* * *

As always, if you want to get in touch with us about anything, please drop us a line at LWagner@U32.org or RAgran@U32.org. We look forward to seeing you in person at BES Open House, Wednesday, September 25th. We earned our first All-School Celebration for good behavior on Thursday and the 3rd Grade class chose extra recess. We are off to a flying start!



Mrs. Wagner & Mr. Agran