

Teacher Write-Up April 21, 2020

Grades 1-2

The grades 1 & 2 team of myself, Mrs. Adams and Ms. Becca have been learning more every day about best practices and resources available for distance learning. We have essentially created two programs to serve our students and families. One is all paper based and the other is a blended curriculum utilizing both online and paper materials. We've set up a two week cycle for packet pickup so that as we discover new resources and what works and doesn't work we can adjust accordingly every couple weeks. Almost all our families have returned completed work by dropping off completed packets or submitting photos digitally. We have three students who chose the paper based version and the rest are utilizing the blended learning program that we rolled out after Spring Break.

We are continuing with topics that would be covered if we were still seat based. In Science the class is beginning a unit on Light and Sound and in Social Studies we are learning about rural, suburban, and urban communities, and exploring rights and responsibilities in the American democracy. P.E. packets are also being included in the bi-weekly cycle, where the students are given diagrams for different ways they can exercise and be active for 30 minutes a day, right in their own home! We continue to follow the Bridges math curriculum.

The two versions of the curriculum are:

Paper Based Curriculum

We are doing our best to select materials that can be completed with parents or independently. Packets are in folders for each week and the work is color coded by subject. Parents may either return completed work when they pick up every two weeks or submit pictures of work samples by email or text.

Blended Learning Curriculum

Chromebooks have been checked out to twelve of our students who chose this option. The others have their own devices. We set up a Google Classroom as a hub for communications and accessing online materials. They receive a paper packet every two weeks as well but some of the materials are substituted with online work. For example, we are using the Read Theory website for reading comprehension where students read and answer questions at their level and I can monitor student progress. They are watching Mystery Science video lessons and Brain Pop videos for Social Studies with corresponding paper activities in the packets. I am also trying out having students watch video lessons provided by our Language Arts Program, Wit & Wisdom. This will enable students to engage in the final module, "Good Eating", that I would have taught in class. Math is completed in their packets and we share digital resources like online math games, virtual manipulative tools and videos that they can access through Google Classroom.

We are holding Zoom Classes daily at 11am. Monday and Wednesday are Language Arts focussed and led by Ms. Morgan. Tuesday and Thursdays are Math- Ms. Morgan teaches the 2nd graders while Mrs. Adams has 1st graders in another meeting. Fridays are live Science or Social Studies lessons taught by Mrs. Adams. Ms. Becca attends the Zoom classes and assists

by managing the host duties of admitting participants and controlling the "mute" feature. We have had class sharing (show and tell) on Zoom also that was fun and we'll continue. We have also set up a YouTube Channel that has videos of the three of us reading stories. Ms. Becca created some amazing art lesson videos that give step by step instructions for three art projects and students have the materials for the projects in their packets. The channel is "TRCS Grades 1 and 2" on YouTube if you would like to check it out!

In this challenging time we are working hard to be there for our families and find what works to keep the kids engaged in learning and feeling connected to their school community. Each family has their own situation and our intention is to help everyone participate in the least stressful and most equitable manner. Please get in touch if you have any questions and as always, thank you for your service.

Kim Morgan

From grades 3-4

Distance learning is in full swing. Grades 3 & 4 own a daily routine of practicing spelling, math skills, and reading comprehension independently inside online apps using their chrome books which went home when the classrooms shut, along with a binder full of paper assignments, daily task logs, and supplies. Veronica assists me in closely monitoring student activity and performance in the teacher portals. In turn, student successes within those portals are given a shout-out during our daily Zoom live sessions. We use these 1-hr live sessions for social connection, teaching new skills, reviewing math homework, and clarifying procedures.

Students are reading *The One and Only Ivan* by Katherine Applegate and receive daily study questions to which they provide a written response, and they have the opportunity to respond to classmates.

While US studies is typically a 5th-grade social studies mode, I've observed that within the history of CA which we look at in 4th grade, students become very confused at the point in history when settlers come over the mountains in the 1800s eventually claiming what is now CA for the US. To that end, I'm sharing a video cartoon series written for kids and PBS called *Liberty's Kids* which highlights the key events leading to the Revolutionary War and setting up an independent government. Students watch an episode and practice summarizing by providing a summary paragraph in a google doc. This week we will be creating a timeline to compare and contrast the events occurring in the colonies with the events occurring in the Mission system. I'm hoping the cartoons provide clarity when we get to California becoming a state.

Last week we concluded our California Landmarks floats parade in which students each researched a CA landmark, wrote a summary paragraph, and built a model on top of a shoe box. Veronica and I had sent the shoeboxes with the binders and chrome books went to remote learning.

We are using Mystery Science and Science Studies Weekly content to provide some exposure to science information. Students write summaries on the episodes viewed and complete activities contained within Science Studies Weekly.

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Natalie Shoptaw

Class 5-6

Good afternoon, Board Members,

I hope this finds all of you well and coping with life in the days of COVID-19.

I'm struggling with knowing what to say right now, so I'm going to take a chance and be candid with you. The students and I are coping. We are trying to make the best of a very difficult situation. 26 out of 27 of my students have internet access and are capable of participating in Zoom class time. Of those, about 17 attend every class, six come and go as their home life permits, and three rarely or never attend. Their lives are too chaotic to manage this bizarre situation. I have talked to their parents numerous times, offering support and alternatives. They are doing their best, which is all we can ask. My one non-internet student has paper-based assignments and a dedicated parent. I have no concerns about that student's situation.

I believe my primary function at this time is to be a stabilizing influence in the student's lives. It is not possible to teach as I would in person. Student/teacher relationships rely heavily on presence, eye contact, observation of non-verbal cues, and responsiveness to moment by moment changes in the room. Zoom may seem like personal contact, but there is an unbreachable wall which occurs when it is impossible to know where anyone is looking from moment to moment. I suppose if I had been born blind, I might have developed some compensating sense, but I have none so far. Hence, I am working awfully hard at trying to make that contact and to give the kids some small sense of the classroom environment we worked so hard to foster for six months. I am being as real with them as I can be, as I always have been, hoping to hold on to them in the face of this storm. It feels like a losing battle, but I'm doing the best I can.

Academically, math is the easiest subject to teach for several reasons: I have only half of the students at a time; the students have two math blocks, so I know they will receive the support they need when they are with Mrs. Adams or Ms. Huerta; and, we have well-established routines and habits in math that translate fairly well to the zoom environment.

We are addressing Language Arts and Social Studies standards together so that our reading and writing components are based on their study of the Revolutionary War. Wit and Wisdom lends itself well to this. For Science, I am taking advantage of the Knowledge on the Go curriculum being offered by the people at Wit and Wisdom. It addresses the same standards as we would address in class but is fairly light in expectations and gives the kids a break from typical assignments. We are also creating a list of websites that offer enrichment opportunities and learning games for those who are so inclined.

I believe it is crucial to keep the academic pressures to a minimum at this time, so we have less than three hours of class time per day, with breaks in every hour, and I set them loose to work independently whenever possible. I am focusing on maintaining skills and moving forward gently and cautiously. I have told the kids that they can think of the work we are doing as the mental equivalent of the stretching and warming up needed to keep their bodies ready for physical exercise. I am not interested in grading their work, only in offering them opportunities to stay mentally active, engaged, and to learn cool stuff that will help them next year. I cannot fathom grading students who are in and out of the zoom environment several times a day, distracted by the family activities around them, in a constant state of anxiety from the events of the world, and trying to manage the isolation-induced depression that most of them probably can't even identify.

We are all--all of us, all around the world--experiencing trauma in varying forms and degrees as our lives are turned upside down by this situation. Telling ourselves that we are fine does not make it so. This is not our normal life, and ways of being that normally work may not work right now. It is important that we understand and acknowledge this. Some of our families are being pushed to the breaking point, others are only unraveling a bit. No one is unaffected. For now, I'm just trying to hold my kids in a safe space. We can go back to doing normal when normal returns.

Stay safe. Stay well.
Linda Tulley

Class 7

Hi board!

This has a whirlwind of a month! I have been teaching math and English for the 7th graders over zoom. I have had great attendance so far, I only have two students who have not shown up consistently. The main argument the students have had about the zoom is that the math class is at 8:30 am.

So far I would consider my zoom classes a success. What is working is that the students are showing up to class and they are participating. They are doing their homework, and when I ask questions they are answering correctly. I have been assessing the students answers over the

zoom chat, and they can only chat with me, so I know that they are understanding what I am teaching.

The downsides to long distance learning: The students and I do not like to stare at a computer screen for hours on end, so I only teach from 8:30-11:00ish. Sometimes longer depending on the day. I have found that if I look at a computer for too long I get headaches. Also, it is hard to show the students hands on activities when they are not sitting in front of me, so for right now I skip those parts. It is also hard to grade and collect homework when it is all through email.

I hope you are all staying safe.

Dani

Class 8

8th Grade Class Board Write Up

Modified School has been going as well as can be expected so far for the 8th grade students. From the first day of our new schedule, that Tuesday 4 weeks ago, Dani and I have been holding class daily, M-F, for our students in the morning, in addition to posting independent work for them to do for all subjects (even p.e. and electives!) in Google Classroom. I am happy to report that from the first day I had perfect attendance for most of my 8th graders, and by the second week 2 of the 3 who were not attending had started a trend of perfect attendance that is still holding. That left just one student whom I was finally able to track down after repeated calls to both parents and emails and I can happily report that he too is now attending class regularly since before last week's vacation.

The students and I have also gotten into a routine on turning in homework which is all done via phone and computer. What can't be typed on Google Docs, the students take pictures of and then send them to me via text or email or Zoom Chat. I now have a system for viewing, grading, and filing the pictures so that the kids get feedback on how they did on everything. I think they are paying more attention to my corrections now, as I send them in personal emails for each individual assignment and I often get a reply back from the kids about my corrections. I also have a slightly higher rate of requests to redo assignments when they discover they did not understand something correctly.

Just before vacation we also successfully started some tutoring up using Zoom. Sofie, my classroom aide, is now tutoring one struggling student in math in one zoom session while I am working with other students in a second zoom session. With both of us working at the same time we can have the kids pop out of one Zoom and into the other which gives them a more dynamic school day. Sofie and I meanwhile stay connected while we work with the kids via email and texting. Now I am working out a plan with Mrs. Brink to do the same. She will be helping me, one-on-one with students on their writing skills while I am working on whole-group instruction with the others. She and I are going to try something new tomorrow. I am going to try having two Zoom sessions going simultaneously on two computers so that I can be her back-up in her

Zoom tutoring session. We were talking about some of the weaknesses to Zoom from a liability stand-point and I was telling her about some of the cautions Roger shared with us about Zoom and how to manage things to avoid liability pitfalls when we came up with the plan.

Other plans that are in the works include:

Zoom art party for interested JH students. We will need to find containers we can put paint in for students to take home.

Activities that teach English Language Arts Standards that also get the students exploring new hobbies or skills.

Virtual gardening classes. Need to put together garden take home kits for interested students.

More targeted tutoring time.

Virtual field trips.

Well, that's all for now. Time to get back to grading homework, which fortunately I have a lot of



to grade!

Let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Kasperson