Teacher Write-Ups - October 25

1-2 Class

Ms. Morgan's report for the board:

The grades 1/2 class successfully took our first field trip of the year to the Botanical Gardens. We have been focussing on plants in science. It was a foggy morning but the children enjoyed being out and about and it was a free guided tour of a local treasure. A highlight this month was School Spirit Week. The class was enthusiastic about our theme of "Extinction of the Dinosaurs" for the class project. I tied this theme into science, literature and art this month. Another success has been our Reading Buddy program with the 3/4 class. The older students come in for a half hour on Fridays. I partner them with new buddies each time and they read a Scholastic Weekly News together and complete the questions on the back. This has proved to be a great way to get all the ages into reading non-fiction text and answering questions for comprehension. Then pairs also get a chance to read a book of choice and the older buddies get an Osprey Buck for helping out. We have a sweet golden retriever therapy dog that now visits on Fridays as well with her owner. The students get a turn reading to Stella the dog and snuggling with her as a special canine reading buddy! My classroom aides have been wonderful this year and our new RTI program is really helping support the students that need a little extra teacher time. We are off to a great start and getting settled in nicely in the 1/2 class.

3-4 Class

5-6 Class

Jr. High Class

School Spirit Week was a success! Our class had a blast and we tied for 3rd place overall and 3rd place on our Black Plague Spirit Board. I enjoyed the enthusiasm and sportsmanship the students displayed during the costume and activity filled week. With all the parent volunteers Field Day was a huge success and I hope we can do more in the future. Also, we raised about $400 with the bake sale and movie night!

In English we returned to our Poetry unit and focused on the masterpieces of two of my favorite poets: Robert Frost and Emily Dickinson. We will be closing our poetry unit with a research project on a poet and reciting poems when we return from the October Break. Students will then be gearing up for the NaNoWriMo novels for the month of November. In Science we are beginning a new unit focusing on "Matter in Motion" and will be learning about speed, acceleration, velocity, force and friction. Students will also get to enjoy some Bill Nye the Science Guy videos on these topics.

High School Class

This month the high school class has been busy with Spirit Week which I'm sure none of the other teachers have mentioned! ; )- The students were thrilled that after putting in two busy weeks of learning about the catastrophes of D-Day during WWII that they successfully defended the trophy for best board decoration/model!

This was the best year in terms of really incorporating the theme of School Spirit Week into our lessons (for me I worked it into English and History lessons). We were able to use English class time to learn about techniques for communicating that go beyond the printed word - discussing how artists communicate themes, messages, and even facts they want to tell their audience through things like focal points, medium, color tones, and arrangement. In history class we focused, of course, on the history of D-Day from primary sources. We had lively discussions about the perspectives of the various nations involved - including the French and the Germans (which surprised my students), and took the time to compare the textbook version of this event to the primary source accounts of soldiers who were actually there. In addition students practiced true teamwork and solving the social problems they ran into working together, which is not a small goal of Spirit Week! REACH values in application!

In addition to this all-consuming activity, half of the high school students elected to participate in the Noyo Marine Science Center's second to last Trip to Sea for this season. This was to be an exciting trip as the NMSC was planning to launch a brand new robotic camera they have been working on for data collection on the sea floor. They hope to use this data to understand the actual affect of temperature changes of the water on the various populations of marine life off our coast. The ocean proved to be uncooperative with too many swells for much success on launching the robot but the students enjoyed learning all about how it works and got some additional bird watching and one-on-one marine science with the main staff of the NMSC! When asked about the trip, all reported wanting to go again to participate in the studies when the robotic camera, dubbed Nemo, can move forward!

Finally, we are accomplishing our regular work load as well, in both on-line and live classes. The entire class was able to leave for this October break, feeling no pressure from online class work, as they have done a stupendous job of keeping up with their classwork this semester. I am keeping my fingers crossed that this is a pattern that will continue. It seems that with a few years to work out the bugs in some of our class systems for supporting students in staying on pace, we are finally succeeding at helping them to truly succeed in both online classes and live classes alike.

Please don't hesitate to email me if you have any questions!

Sincerely,

Kathleen