



OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

Mrs. Hahn's ALA/SS Classroom

Dear Parents,

There's a lot to share this month, so please forgive the length of this update. I hope you are enjoying the change in weather and the fall colors. Fall is my favorite season of the year, so I am excited not only for pumpkin-flavored coffee, but also for the opportunity to continue working with your wonderful children.

The students have accomplished quite a bit over the last month. Many of them mastered the often-challenging skill of annotating text. This is a skill the high schools have asked us to teach the students in preparation for freshman year. In a nutshell, when annotating, students are asked to underline important text and make notes and comments in the margins. My guess is that if you asked your children what they think of annotating they'd say they hate it but that it helps them understand what they read. The students have also been introduced to reading check quizzes in ALA. These quizzes gauge the students' reading comprehension of text that was assigned for homework. If your student is struggling with these quizzes, encourage them to review their annotations prior to coming to class. One student even asked if her parent could quiz her after she finishes her nightly reading—what a great idea!

After almost a full quarter of reading and working, students will turn in and present their independent novel projects on Tuesday, October 14. **I would appreciate it if you would check in your child this weekend about his/her progress.** If you're interested, the assignment sheet can be found on my website, and your child can share the rubric with you as well. Next quarter's focus is nonfiction, and since I'm aware that students typically do not have as great a knowledge of nonfiction books as they do fiction book, I'm excited to inform you that Sara McLaughlin, the teen librarian at the Des Plaines Public Library, will be "book talking" a slew of high-interest, teen-appropriate, nonfiction books to the students on October 23. They may choose any of the titles she presents for the unit. The Mt. Prospect library will have many of these selections for check out, too. This is a great way to bring the community into our classroom and expand our knowledge of popular literature.

We just wrapped up our Civil War unit in social studies. It was our first full Common Core aligned unit, and I think it went well. Students delved into close readings of primary source documents like the Constitution and Gettysburg Address. On Thursday, they took their final assessment, an in-class mini essay about the application question: Why should American students learn about the Civil War? I will have feedback to the students in the next week or so. The quest for civil rights was a central theme of the Civil War, and we will continue with that topic over the next couple weeks when students begin the Civil Rights newspaper project. Each child will choose a famous figure or event from 1900-today to learn about and will create an electronic newspaper of their topic. This will be due by the end of the quarter.

Important Dates to Remember:

10/7: Hard deadline for field trip permission slip and money
10/8: Goal-setting conferences, 3:15-7:15 P.M.
10/9: Goal-setting conferences, 4:15-7:15
10/10: No school
10/13: No school—Columbus Day
10/14: Due date for independent novel project
10/20: No school—Teacher Institute Day
10/21-10/24: Red Ribbon Week (dress up days for students)
10/24: End of 1st Quarter
10/31: Report cards go home
11/8: Explore (high school) Placement Test—be on the lookout for info in your mailbox

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

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