

NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER

Mrs. Hahn's ALA/LA Classroom

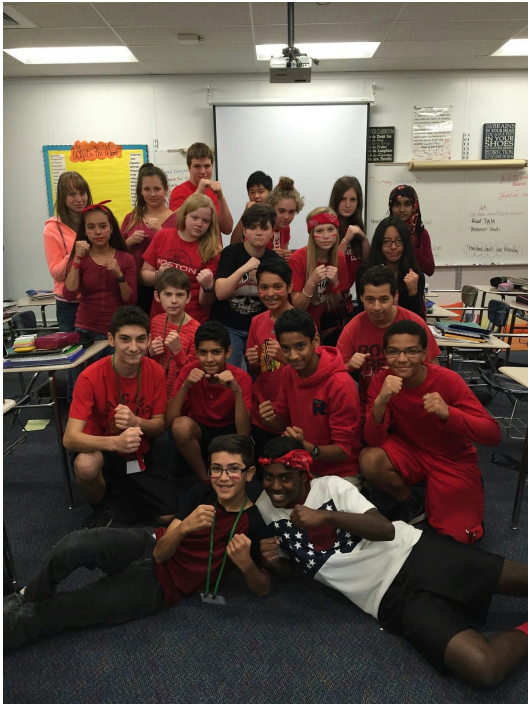


Dear Parents,

Happy fall! I hope you have been enjoying this beautiful weather!

Advanced Language Arts

We succeeded in holding our first Socratic Seminar of the year on Friday, October 23. It was definitely a learning experience for the students, and many of them loved the chance to lead their own discussion. I was proud of their intellectually stimulating conversations and the fact that almost all students participated at least once. We followed up the seminar with an in-depth look at what makes good discussion questions. Our class discussions that commenced that next week were AMAZING as the result of your kids' great, original discussion questions about Frederick Douglass' *Narrative*. We will complete our Frederick Douglass unit next week and will have a summative assessment that centers on our unit EQ: What moments in Frederick Douglass' life helped define his character and bring him from slavery to freedom.

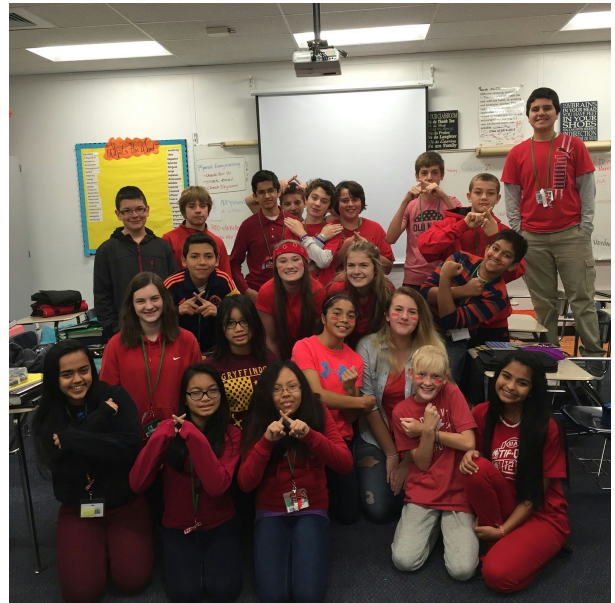


We are coming to the conclusion of our memoir unit this week, as well. Students have drafted four versions of their memoirs; tomorrow they will receive peer feedback, and by the end of the week they will have polished and published the fifth and final version of it. This has been a lengthy unit, but I feel

confident that the students understand the basics of not only the genre itself, but also of the core principles of creative, descriptive, meaningful narrative writing. Please ask your kids to share their final piece with you!

Regular Language Arts

Our class has come a long way this month. I mentioned last month that this group has been very quiet, in general. In an effort to get the kids to further know and trust each other, we did a series of team building/icebreaker activities. I have been very impressed with the results, as your children seem to be more willing to participate, volunteer, and work together in small groups. I look forward to continuing down this road as the year progresses.



This group also completed its first Socratic Seminar on October 23. One of our main goals with *Tuesdays with Morrie* was to learn how to lift an important line of text and discuss it. I was very proud of the

students who came prepared to ask text-based discussion questions, and I was even more proud of the students who shared things about their life that related to the book. Having a student-led, text-based discussion is a challenge, but I am hopeful we will go far this year based on your kids' first attempts.



Because the quarter ends on Friday, and because we have been working with *Morrie* for many weeks now, I have decided to stop reading it as a whole class. Students were told last week that they have an opportunity for extra credit: any student who wants to finish the last half of the book and take the AR test by Friday can earn extra credit. I sent them some directions in Google Classroom should they be interested in taking advantage of this.

We are about mid-way through the crafting of our personal memoirs; we should be done by the end of next week. Many of our recent lessons have been focused on descriptive language and memoir introductions. Students are putting their skills to use this week in crafting full versions of their memoirs. By the end of the week we will self-edit, and next week we will get peer feedback before we polish and publish our final drafts. I hope you will encourage your child to share his/her memoir with you. Many students have been working hard, and it's so cool to see the progression of their learning from draft to draft.

Both Classes

Because so much was going on, I extended the due date of the INP. Students turned their written work, slideshows, and creative projects in today (Monday). We will spend four periods this week sharing the great books we read this quarter. My hope is that the audience will be inspired to pick up some of their classmates' selections and read them for extra credit in the coming quarters. We are looking forward to being "wowed" by your kids' engaging novel presentations and creative projects. I will send rubrics and self-reflections home next week for you to peruse and sign.

The students were informed at the start of the quarter that they could read up to three extra books this quarter for extra credit. The parameters were sent through Google Classroom. Not many students have taken advantage of this so far (despite my frequent reminders), so I wanted to mention it here in case you want to remind your child to do it. Extra credit is due this Friday.

Our next unit will be centered around *A Christmas Carol*. The advanced classes will be reading Charles Dickens' original, while the regular class will be reading a slightly modified version. I will take a very non-denominational approach to this unit, seeing as a number of our students do not celebrate Christmas. The unit is centered around the text as a piece of classic literature as well as its themes of kindness and generosity. We will begin this favorite unit of mine the week after next. I have a couple surprises up my sleeve that I will share with you in the coming weeks. Stay tuned!

Finally, I have uploaded a number of pictures to my website. Please check out <http://friendship.ccsd59.org/teachers/hahnkristin/photos-class-of-2016/> to see your kids in action!

Important Dates to Remember:

11/2: INP due

11/6: End of 1st quarter

11/13: 7th and 8th grade school dance

Report cards sent home

11/25-27: No school--Happy Thanksgiving!

As always, if you have any comments, questions, or concerns, please contact me!

Sincerely,

Kristin Hahn

847.593.4350

hahn.kristin@ccsd59.org

<http://friendship.ccsd59.org/teachers/hahnkristin/>