

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

Mrs. Hahn's ALA/LA Classroom



Dear Parents,

I always feel like the year starts to fly by after Halloween--and here we are, with only three weeks to go until winter break!

I probably should have started the year with this little explanation, but we have split the categories in the grade book this year in two: Formative and Summative. **Formative**: all classwork/homework that is designed to give students practice in the new skills

Summative: the formal assessment of the skills practiced throughout the unit
In language arts, each category is worth 50%.

Advanced Language Arts

We wrapped up our Frederick Douglass unit before Thanksgiving break by taking an in-class summative assessment that centered around our unit EQ: What moments in Frederick Douglass' life defined his character and brought him from slavery to freedom? Students were able to use their book, annotations, and the prep sheet I encouraged them to complete prior to the assessment. For the most part, students who were prepared with all of these documents (and who had made quality annotations relating to the EQ throughout the unit) did very well. Unfortunately, a number of students decided against annotating thoroughly and completing the prep sheet. These students found that completing the in-class assessment was more difficult than they had expected. **My hope is that students have learned the important lesson of prep work--all the formative work we do throughout a unit is meant to lead up to the summative task.** Students who do not do their classwork/homework are going to struggle this year (and in high school) if they're not willing to put for the effort throughout the unit.

Regular Language Arts

Students finished up the *Tuesdays with Morrie* unit by tracing the evolution of Mitch, the main character. Students, for the most part, did a great job on this. Our classroom atmosphere continues to evolve, as well. I am very thankful for the students whom I can consistently rely on to stay engaged and participate. I will continue to encourage the more reluctant students to join in our conversations. Participating in class not only makes class more enjoyable, but practically guarantees that a student is focused, engaged, and on task. Please encourage your children to find their voice and be brave enough to contribute.

Both Classes

All students completed their memoirs in November! I provided thorough feedback to students, who then had the job of revising their work and improving their writing. These finished versions were turned in on Monday. Instead of reading their full memoirs to the class, students wrote shortened versions of them in the vein of the popular Instagram site, Humans of New York. We created our own Instagram page, @HumansOffJHS, and we have over 85 followers! I hope you will check it out if you are on Instagram--some of the stories are quite moving.

We have begun our unit on Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. Our focus for this unit is to determine theme. The summative task will be to determine a theme for the story and back up its viability with evidence from the text and personal analysis. Just like with previous units, students will be able to utilize all their notes, their text, and the prep sheet we do in advance when they complete the in-class summative (the week of 12/13).

Finally, as I'm sure you're already aware, we are going on a field trip! I have arranged for us to see a live production of *A Christmas Carol* and enjoy breakfast together at the Jelly Cafe. I want to make a special point to thank any of you who either volunteer or donate money to the District 59 Foundation, the organization that so generously granted us \$500 for the trip. I am asking your children to get "all dolled up" for this trip--please make sure they dress nicely next Friday, December 11. Students may bring their phones, but they do not need to bring any additional money.

While the reading of students' INP books is due on Monday, December, 7, I want to remind you that students have an on-going extra credit reading opportunity. Please encourage your children to pick up any recommended book from the LRC before winter break--certainly there will be some "down time" during which they can do some pleasure reading. Additionally, Mr. Hahn in the LRC is running a 2nd quarter program through the LRC called Cover 2 Cover. Students who reach their individualized AR goals will be invited to a celebration at the end of the quarter.

Important Dates to Remember:

12/4: Field trip money due--no exceptions!

12/7: INP reading due

12/11: Field trip to Jelly Cafe and Metropolis Theater for the Performing Arts

12/18: 2:05 PM dismissal; start of winter break

12/19-1/3: Winter break--HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

1/4/16: School resumes

1/15: Q2 INP written work and presentation due

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/>

Twitter: @mrshahnfjhs

Instagram: @mrshahnfjhs, @humansoffjhs