

# FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

Mrs. Hahn's ALA/LA Classroom



Dear Parents,

Third quarter is historically the most challenging quarter, in part because it spans the longest stretch of uninterrupted school days. We are tackling some of our most challenging units too, this quarter, and the students are off to a great start.

## Advanced Language Arts

We have begun our *Of Mice and Men* unit. Now that we are halfway through, the students are getting a good feel for the characters. We had a GREAT discussion yesterday about chapter three; we had a lengthy debate on whether or not a pet in the story should have been euthanized. These class periods are my favorite--when students can converse intelligently about a piece of literature that eventually gets them questioning their beliefs and morals. Many students participated yesterday, but a number still sat quietly in their seats, listening. If you know you've got a shy child, please encourage him or her to muster the courage to share in class. My hope is that by the end of the year, everyone will feel comfortable enough to find their voice in our classroom.



We will finish up the unit this month and will take our summative, which centers around the question: What social issues was Steinbeck addressing in *Of Mice and Men*, and what was his commentary about each? As always, students will be able to use all of their materials and resources.

We saw some of the best creative projects of the year during the 2nd quarter INP presentations. I want to thank all parents who, in some way, contributed to their child's success. Whether you purchased materials for a creative project or provided feedback during presentation rehearsals, thank you for getting involved in your child's education!

## Regular Language Arts

I'm happy to report that we continue to grow closer as a class as the weeks progress, which results in the students sharing and talking more. This is a big win, especially considering where we started the school year! We began our *Outsiders* unit by playing "the line game." Ask your kids about it--it has opened our eyes and made us realize that, as individuals, we have a lot more in common than we may have thought. Our focus for the novel unit is on stereotypes, and we are beginning to break some of those down in our very own classroom.

As you may know, the independent reading requirement has changed for the rest of the year. The students were not having the success I was hoping for with the INP, as it was. As a result, we have made some changes to better fit their needs. Moving forward students will have to do three things/quarter:

1. Reach an individualized AR goal. Students have a chart in their notebooks with their goals.
2. Choose their favorite book from the quarter and create a presentation to share with the class.
3. Craft a creative project for their chosen book.

Please let me know if you have any questions about this.

### **Both Classes**

We are in the early stages of our argumentative unit. We dissected a great student sample last week and determined the qualities of an effective argumentative. This student-generated list will serve as the foundation for our papers. Today, in fact, we will be getting into the social issues/topic portion of the unit. My guess is this will generate a lot of discussion among the students--who believes what and why? We will then break down the writing process, draft our papers, and prepare them for publishing.

Did you see your child's report card? Signed envelopes are due on Friday. Did you see your child's PARCC test results? These should have come home in yellow envelopes a couple weeks ago.



Congrats to our Geo Bee finalists and winner!

### **Important Dates to Remember:**

**2/4: Sports picture day**

**2/10: Drop-in conferences 3-6 PM**

**2/11: Drop-in conference 12-3 PM; 6-8 PM**

**2/12, 2/15: No School**

**2/20: PSAT at your high school 7:45AM-noon**

**2/26: INP reading due (ALA only); Graduation picture day (through SS class)**

**3/11: AR points due (LA only)**

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

Sincerely,

*Kristin Hahn*

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