

MAY NEWSLETTER

Mrs. Hahn's ALA/LA Classroom



Dear Parents,

Five weeks from Tuesday your child will be crossing the stage of Elk Grove High School and officially graduating from junior high! Are you ready?

A friendly reminder that students who want to attend the 8th grade trip to Six Flags in June cannot have any missing assignments or Fs this quarter.

Both Classes

We began our Holocaust unit this month, and so far, most kids have been enthusiastic learners about this topic. In an attempt to answer EQ1 (What motivates people to act ruthlessly?), we did some self-guided learning of the Holocaust and shared our findings through a Gallery Walk. We followed this up with a whole class conversation and an analytical study of a piece of Nazi propaganda called *The Poisonous Mushroom*. Your kids were unanimously appalled by this piece of children's literature, and the study of it certainly helped us speculate the answer to our EQ.

We have begun reading the play adaptation of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, and students are enjoying taking on the roles and furthering their understanding of what life in hiding was like. We will do a few enrichment activities along the way, including a virtual tour of Anne Frank's hiding place in Amsterdam. Additionally, according to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, [this Thursday is Holocaust Remembrance Day](#). At the start of the week, students will choose a victim of the Holocaust to learn about and memorialize. They will make a badge of honor and will be encouraged to wear it on Thursday as a way to commemorate those who perished or survived the Holocaust. FJHS's Holocaust Remembrance Day is a legacy of last year's students, and we hope to carry on the tradition with this year's 8th grade class.

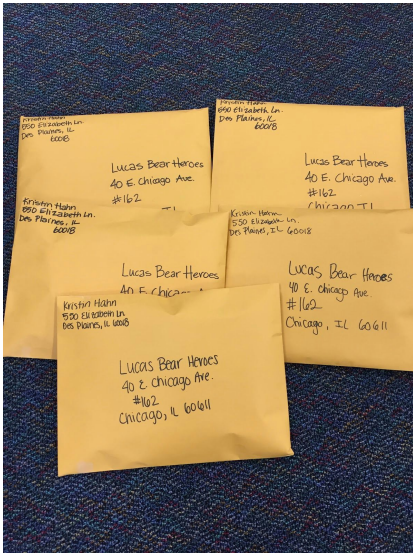


Last year's students on Holocaust Remembrance Day

I told the kids early last week that I strongly believe that **the only way to win a war against hatred is to barrage it with kindness**. That belief is at the root of this quarter's summative assessment. How can we as humans offset all the terrible things that happen in the world? I believe the answer is by spreading kindness. I'm so happy to see so many students excited about this concept! Many thanks to the parents who talked through this Act of Kindness (AoK) project with their children last week. The students submitted their project ideas to me last Friday, and almost all were approved. The next step is for the students to carry out their projects--please remind your child to take as much video and as many still photos as they can throughout the course of planning for and carrying out the AoK. Students' projects must be completed and reflected on by May 16. Their final newscast is due May 23. I can't wait to see your kids' newscasts and more importantly, their reactions when they realize that going out of their way to show kindness affects them positively, too.

We kicked off the idea of an AoK as a full class last week when we made and sent birthday cards to a young Chicago boy named Lucas, who is suffering from an incurable form of cancer. Lucas will turn 6 on May 7, and his family hopes to receive over 500 cards for him, since he loves knowing that people are

thinking about him. **Almost every student of mine was interested enough in the story to take a card to design.** Even though only some of them came back, we got the rest of the 8th grade involved and sent off five stuffed envelopes of cards off to Lucas this afternoon. Earlier in the week each class defined “act of kindness,” and this definition by my 2/8 class perfectly fits this small project: “something good and thoughtful that you do voluntarily for someone else, without expecting anything in return, that spreads happiness.” If you’re interested in learning about Lucas, visit <http://www.nbcchicago.com/news/local/Lucas-Bear-Heroes-Birthday-Cards-377237181.html>



Advanced Language Arts

The students seem really excited to read their independently chosen books this quarter--I love it! In addition to reaching their individual AR goals, students will be responsible for choosing their favorite book from the quarter to book talk and present a creative project on. **Book talks/creative projects are due May 24; AR points are due May**

27. Please check in with your kids to see how they’re progressing towards their goals.

Parents of kids in my 5/6 class: Thank you to those of you who have completed the Google form about attending the D59 Board of Education meeting on **May 9**. We hope to have as many students from our class as possible there to support Natalie as she discusses the topic of recycling with the BoE. I sent an email last week, but in case you missed it, here is the link to the form: <http://goo.gl/forms/CRXZ1c0Dbi>

Regular Language Arts

Students received their edited essays back from me at the end of last week. This last step of the writing process, revising, is perhaps the most important step of all. I explained to the students that they now have my feedback, which will allow them to individually improve as writers. Students are to make revisions to their essays and turn in the newest copy to me by Friday. I would be happy to spend time after school with any student who needs additional help.

Important Dates to Remember:

- 5/5: Holocaust Remembrance Day (wear black and badge)
- 5/9: Period 5/6 class attend BoE meeting, 7PM @ District Administration Building (optional)
- 5/16: AoK project reflection sheet due
- 5/21: Got2Run for Education (www.got2run.org)
- 5/23: AoK newscast due
- 5/24: ALA creative projects and book talks due
- 5/30: No school--Memorial Day
- 6/1: 8th grade trip to Six Flags
- 6/7: Graduation at Elk Grove High School, 7 PM

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

Sincerely,

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