

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

Mrs. Hahn's 8th Grade ELA Classroom



Dear Parents,

We're halfway through the year! Third quarter is historically the most challenging one of the year, and we are going to try and accomplish as much as possible to get your kids ready for high school.

Advanced LA (ALA)

Thank you for looking at your child's AR project work and rubric last week. My goal for this project is for students' writing, creating, and presenting abilities to improve in such a way this year that they will feel confident displaying these talents next year in their freshman English class. The class was "wowed" by many of the creative projects this quarter, and I'm very excited to have so many displayed at the Mount Prospect Library. Aside from the artistic projects that are displayed, a number of students impressed us with their talents--playing music, acting out scenes, ice skating, and engaging us with creative, interactive projects. Presentation weeks are some of my favorites of the year; I hope your children enjoy them, too, and are inspired to read many of the books their classmates presented. You may be interested in some of the titles, too!

We are embarking on two big units this week--our argumentative writing unit in which students will choose a controversial social issue about which they are passionate, and a novel study of *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury. The central question of the 451 unit should lend itself to some passionate, intelligent conversation: To what extent is technology today fostering intelligence or ignorance? Needless to say, I am excited about engaging in these units with your kids.



Passion Projects

1/2: Issue three of the *Firebird Feed* will be released on Friday. Our theme was "New Year, New You," and the issue came together beautifully. Dr. Fessler, superintendent of D59, visited last Friday remarked, "I particularly appreciated the level of professionalism, seriousness, and pride each student exhibited." I, too, am continually impressed by how hard so many of these students work on the *Feed*. Our current editors-in-chief, Ryan and Deanna, will "pass the torch" to Olivia and Makayla this week, and we are excited to see how their leadership impacts the evolution of our publication. Please check in with your child to see what he/she contributed this month, and check out our online copy on Friday: firebirdfeed.weebly.com.

4/5: We finished writing and sharing our individual acts, and they were outstanding (far better than we all had imagined they would be)! Students helped each other identify the holes in their stories and made constructive critiques for improvement. Last

week we made observations about the components of a good play script, and now we are off and

running with the transition from story to script. Our next deadline is before spring break; then we will begin casting and preparing for the show. Our tentative show date is **Thursday, May 26**. Please pencil it in on your calendars.

6/8: I am so excited and happy to report that the 6/8 class has its own passion project now, too! All the sample articles from our nonfiction reading unit were about the controversy surrounding the banning of plastic water bottles. As we learned about the havoc they wreak on the environment, we were spurred to action and are now planning a fundraiser to raise money to purchase a water bottle refilling station (a.k.a. hydration station) at FJHS. The students gave a magnificent presentation to Mrs. Megerle and Mr. Timmins a couple weeks back, and they were convinced! They followed up with us last week and gave us the “go ahead” for our project. Mrs. Megerle will match any funds we raise, so currently we are brainstorming ways to raise approximately \$500. It’s a big task, but we are up for it!

Language Arts (LA)

We are nearing the end of our argumentative writing unit. This has proven to be a difficult unit for many students, some of whom, at the beginning of the year, were writing a full essay as one paragraph. We have broken down all the components of a formal essay and they are confident with the organizational piece. The real struggle has been to locate convincing evidence that supports their reasons. We should be wrapping this unit up in the coming weeks, and I am certain they will see the great gains they have made this year compared with the pre-assessment they took week one. Seeing as this unit was mentally taxing, we will be taking a bit of a “break” next by reading one of my favorite YA books, *Flipped*.



#fjhs210B hydration station squad

Every Friday this group gets to hear book talks from our librarians about their favorite books. They’ve heard so many book talks that I think it’s time for them to do the talking! This quarter, each student will do a book talk in front of the class about their favorite book from the quarter. Additionally, they will create a project that reflects something they learned or “took away” from the book. This book talk and creative project will be due April 3, and I cannot wait to see what they come up with! Your kids have all the guidelines (and samples, too), so feel free to ask them for more information, if you are interested.

AR goals went up for almost all students this quarter. Please know that these goals are individualized based on your kids’ FAST reading score and my observations of them as a reader. As always, they should be reading at least thirty minutes a night.

Conferences

Conferences are right around the corner. **If you do not receive a call or email from me this week, you are welcome to drop in during the times listed below.** I have been contacting parents with whom I would like to schedule a private conference due to concerns about their

child's progress. Scheduled conferences will take place outside of the times listed below. Please email me if you have any questions.

Important Dates to Remember:

2/3: Report cards go home; please return the signed envelope to your child's 1st period teacher by next Friday.

2/7: PTO meeting, 7PM in teachers' lounge

2/15: Conferences, 3:00-6:00 PM

2/16: No school, Conferences, 12:00-3:00 & 6:00-8:00PM

2/17: No school

2/20: No school, Presidents' Day

2/23: Variety show performance, 7PM

Sincerely,

Kristin Hahn

847.593.4350

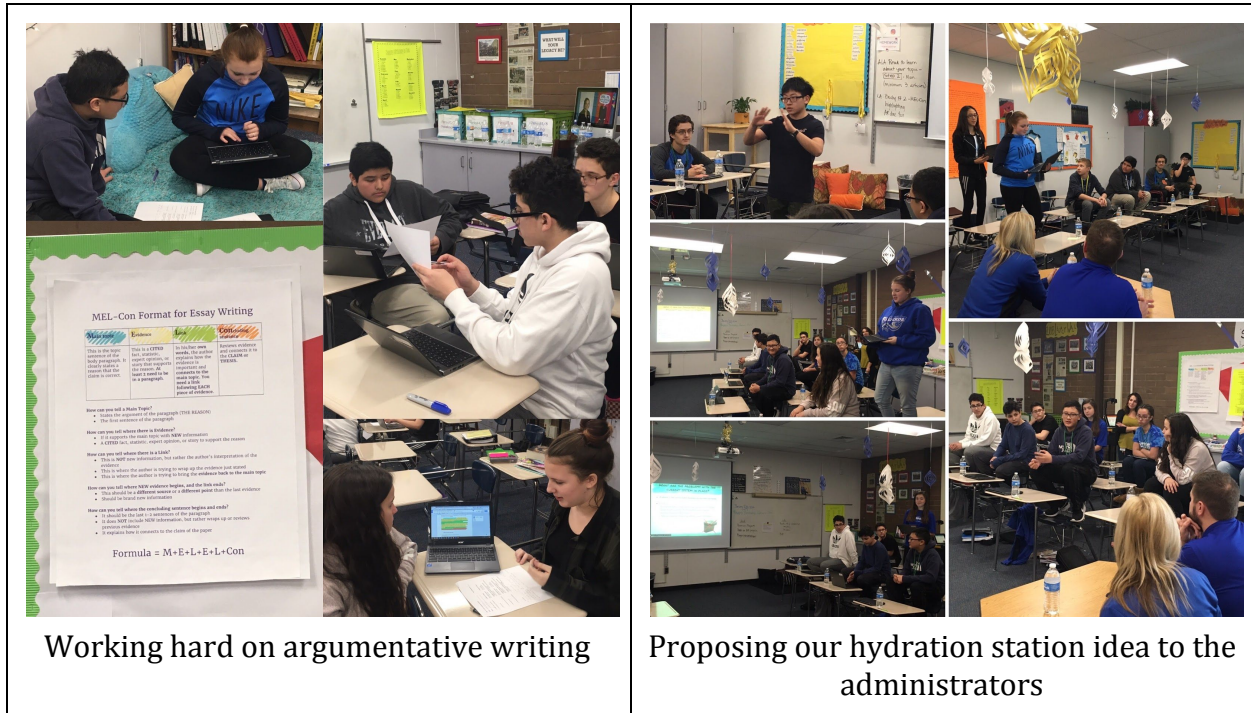
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Follow me on Instagram and Twitter: @mrshahnfjhs

Have you joined PTO this year?

I learned at last month's meeting that only 58 families are members of the PTO. Membership is only \$6 and can be sent with your child to school. Please consider supporting this organization--100% of the money goes to the kids!



Working hard on argumentative writing

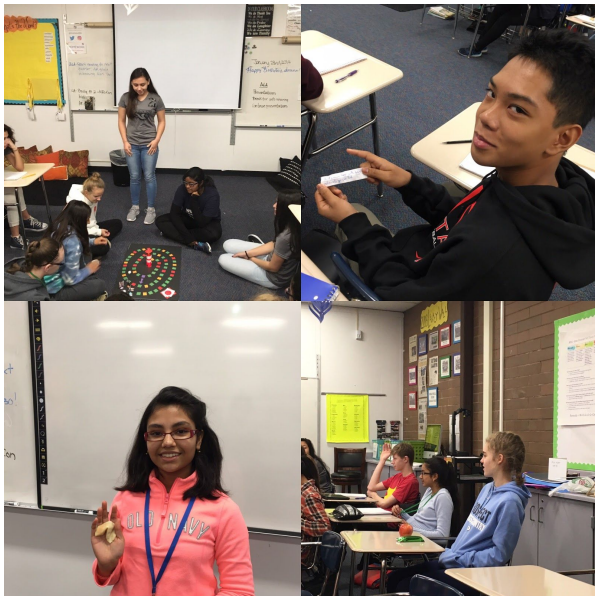
Proposing our hydration station idea to the administrators



Kicking off Q3 creative projects with a little sand art!



Projects on display at the MPPL



So many great projects!



I can't wait to see what they come up with for Q3!