

October Newsletter

Contents

Principles Letter.....	2
Art Newsletter.....	3
Team Solstice.....	4
Team Phoenix.....	6
Middle Years Newsletter.....	9

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

November is known as Stick Season in Vermont. The days are shorter and everything outside is turning brown but inside HMS our hallways are filling up with colorful posters and student work that our new Art teacher Sandy Hawkes is hanging up. Ms. Hawkes has taught over the years in PreK-12 grade in various Burlington & Chittenden County Schools as well as in Baltimore, MD. She recently transferred from Edmunds Middle School to teach in the art program at HMS. Ms. Hawkes was a former art specialist at the King Street Center and in the Art from the Heart Program at the UVM Medical Center, which was sponsored by Burlington City Arts.

During the month of October, we had WCAX come to our school to film a segment about how we are teaching drug and alcohol prevention in our health classes. We also sponsored a Red Ribbon Week that brings drug prevention activities into our community and educates our students about healthy drug free programs that we have after school and early evening. Our students participated in bird watching, egg drops, field hockey, soccer, cross country, and many other fascinating activities. Our fall sports have wrapped up and we will be having basketball tryouts starting in early November.

On Tuesday November 13th the BHS Booster Club will showing the film “The Mask You Live In” from 6-8 in the HMS Auditorium. This is a free event open to anyone who would like to attend. This film Explores how our culture's narrow definition of masculinity is harming our boys, men and society at large and unveils what we can do about it. We will also be having Coffee with the Principal on November 9th from 7:30-8:15 AM. Please join us for the best coffee in the New North End.

Hunt Middle School Conferences will be held on November 19th and 20th.

Please sign up here: https://www.ptcfast.com/schools/Lyman_C_Hunt_Middle_School

Art Newsletter

Ms. Hawkes is very excited to be sharing in the Creativity at Hunt Middle School! Students in 7th & 8th Grade Art have started to explore and gather a deeper understanding of the Elements of Design. Artists worked to show an understanding of *line, shape, value & texture* as they filled in the *space* on a 3D form of a mini pumpkin canvas. The surface was covered with chosen Zentangle inspired designs using the contrasting sharpie. Students were able to have a relaxing experience and expand their imaginations through the creative concept. Grade 6 is working on drawing from observation as they identify forms within a still life. The harvest theme displays both the use of geometric and organic shapes in their compositions.





Team Solstice News

Science

Solstice scientists concluded our exploration of the scale properties of the solar system by constructing an epic model at 1:10,000,000,000 scale. At this scale, Earth was the size of a cake sprinkle. Jupiter, the largest planet, was a small glass marble. Meanwhile, the distances between planet orbits was so great that we had to set up our model in the field. Even then, we ran out of room for Neptune! We walked over 2 billion miles, and boy were our legs tired!

Now that we had a more accurate picture of our solar system, we turned to questions about planet orbits. How do orbits work? Why don't the planets just fly off in every direction?

We have begun the next phase of this line of inquiry by exploring forces. We were (re)introduced to the topic by Ms. Yoon through some lessons in Argentine Tango. We have since moved on to study the invisible forces of electrostatic charge and magnetism. We will conclude quarter 1 with an investigation of factors that influence the strength of an electromagnet.

We will be equipped with a better understanding of invisible forces when we return to questions about planetary orbits and gravity in quarter 2.

Follow us on Twitter @SolsticeScience



Math

- Our seventh graders have completed an investigation of operations with positive and negative numbers- adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing- and are beginning to apply that knowledge to solving equations and word problems.
- Our eighth graders have reviewed how to solve algebraic equations and applied that knowledge to solving word problems dealing with angle relationships, proportions containing algebraic expressions, and finding missing lengths of similar polygons. We are doing a small investigation of the Pythagorean Theorem, and will be looking at linear relationships through tables, graphs, and equations.
- Some of our eighth graders have also chosen to be part of an Algebra Seminar, and are working hard.

Language Arts

- Students are discussing challenges they face as we read short stories around various issues. Challenges include but are not limited to: identity around race, religion, gender, sex, etc; , social issues, being nostalgic for being younger, ability, homelife.
- Throughout this, we are writing about these issues and learning ways to improve our writing. Strategies include: word choice, figurative language, dialogue, showing and not telling and focusing on one moment.
- We will end the unit (at some point... it's gone on for a while) with a personal narrative that will be written and then potentially spoken as a podcast.
- Are you getting the Friday updates in your email? If not, please let Ms. Sawtell know and she can make sure you are on the list: csawtell@bsdvt.org

Social Studies

The next time you are at Hunt, take a look at the topo maps of the United States which are hanging up in the B-wing. Solstice students did some really nice work on these projects as they learned about the physical geography of our country! Since the last newsletter students have also examined various forms of government and debated the merits of each in a "March Madness" style competition. Republic was the winner in two classes while oligarchy and theocracy carried the day in two others. Students have progressed to examining our founding documents: the Declaration of Independence and Constitution. Next up: a quick unit on the branches of government; both their composition and responsibilities. As the year progresses, we will have some more topics pertaining to civics to study and will explore U.S. history from the colonial era to reconstruction. We will also working on a variety of academic skills including persuasive writing, research, note taking, test preparation, and content area reading strategies. For more detail, visit our website [here](#).

Team PHOENIX:

Much of our team and class updates can be found at our team Twitter feed (<https://twitter.com/PhoenixLearns>) and team blog (www.hmsteamphoenix.blogspot.com). Please visit them and be sure to sign up/follow for updates. We welcome your feedback as we seek to make these tools as helpful as possible for you all.

Language Arts:

Ask your student to share his/her/their short story about an event that happened at home. They were amazing!

Students will finish reading two stories about being 13. During this work, they will analyze how dialogue and sensory language improves writing. Additionally they will study a plot line.

Students will use these new skills to write a personal narrative.

The major homework in language arts is reading. Students should read half an hour, five times a week.

Ms. Hickey can be reached at lhickey@bsdvt.org.

Social Studies:

We have been exploring primary and secondary sources to understand the theories behind how the first humans arrived on this continent. We then worked to build an understanding of the complex lives of the First Americans. We are now turning our attention to European contact.

Our student teacher extraordinaire, Ms. Naylor, is beginning her unit on civics and government. Stay tuned.

We continue to use Google Classroom for assignment tracking and information about class. Please have your child show you this tool.

Ms. Fabri can be reached at jfabri@bsdvt.org. Ms. Naylor can be reached at knaylor@bsdvt.org.

Mathematics:

- 7th graders are continuing to study rational numbers.
- 8th graders are continuing to study algebra.
- All students are required to write down their assignments in their assignment notebook each class.
- Help with math assignments is available after school Monday through Thursday in homework club.
- Ms. Gagnon can be reached at agagnon@bsdvt.org

Science

- Phoenix scientists finished up their solar system models.
- They completed a design task where they had to design something to fill a need of astronauts in space.

- They did an investigation on: How does the type of material affect the amount of static charge?
- Next, they will be exploring gravity .
- Ms. Cullen can be reached at mcullen@bsdvt.org

Middle Years

Working Together for School Success



Short Stops

Get going with breakfast

Eating breakfast will help your tween start the day ready to learn. Together, come up with quick and nutritious breakfasts to make at home. Or encourage her to eat a healthy meal in the cafeteria with friends. *Note:* If she receives school lunch at a reduced price or for free, her breakfast will be reduced cost or free, too.

Walk this way

Let your middle grader know it's important to keep his eyes on his surroundings as he walks. He'll avoid serious injury from falling, running into objects, or stepping into traffic. Explain that he shouldn't play electronic games, listen to music, or text while walking—including to and from the bus stop or school.

Conserve resources

Ask your youngster to help your family be more environmentally friendly. Have her research ways you can conserve resources (switch to low-energy light bulbs, recycle more items, take reusable bags when you shop). Then, try to adopt one of her ideas each month.

Worth quoting

"Every strike brings me closer to the next home run." *Babe Ruth*

Just for fun

Q: Why did the boy put honey under his pillow?

A: He wanted to have sweet dreams.



Tween discipline that works

Your middle schooler wants more freedom. You want to keep him safe and set age-appropriate limits. How do you balance his need for independence with the need for rules and consequences? Try these strategies.

Let's review

Go over the rules you have in place and get his input. He'll be happier to comply if he has a say in them. Perhaps he thinks he should be able to go to friends' houses on school nights, and you agree to that for one night a week. Explain your reasons, and be clear you have the final word. Also, lay out consequences so he knows what will happen if he breaks the rules.

Expect to be tested

Tweens tend to push the limits to see how serious parents are and may argue to get out of consequences. Stay calm and on point ("Nevertheless, we agreed you wouldn't eat in your bedroom"). Stick to the consequence you set (having him wash his bedding to get rid of food



stains). He'll see he can't slide by and will be more likely to follow the rules in the future.

Reflect on actions

The goal of discipline is to teach your child good judgment. He can learn a lot by reflecting on his actions. Say he breaks a rule, like heading to a social outing without finishing his homework first. Ask what he *thought* would happen. Maybe he didn't think you'd notice. What happened instead? He has to miss an event this weekend as a result. How could he avoid this situation next time? 🍊

Speak up!

Participating in class can help your tween get more value out of school and learn to express herself. Encourage her to contribute with these tips.

■ **Find your zone.** Suggest that she participate in ways she feels comfortable with and then expand her "toolbox." She might start off commenting on assigned readings she enjoyed. Eventually, she may speak up when she agrees with someone's viewpoint or to offer a different one.

■ **Mix it up.** Class-wide discussions aren't the only opportunity to participate. When your middle schooler works in smaller groups, she could ask and answer questions, make observations, or give opinions. These steps can build confidence for talking in front of the whole class. 🍊



Real-world reading

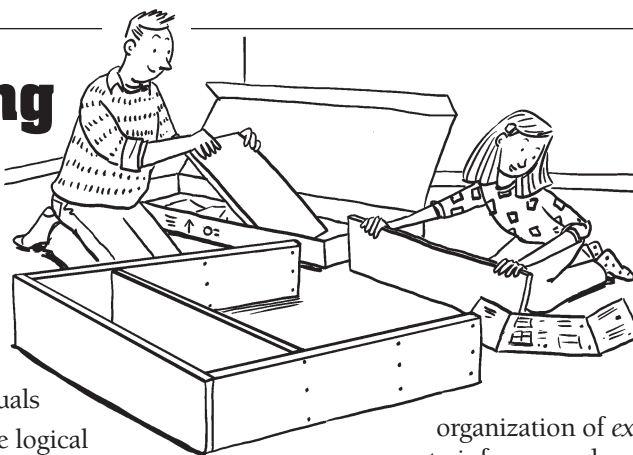
Nonfiction reading is a big part of everyday adult life—at work and home. To help your middle grader learn to pick out and analyze important information, encourage her to read more nonfiction texts now. Here are some easy ideas.

Follow a process

What: Recipes, game directions, how-to manuals

Why: These texts teach youngsters to navigate logical sequences of steps and identify key details.

How: Let your tween read and share directions as family members cook or play a game. Or have her read instructions



as you put together a bookcase or figure out how to operate a new phone or microwave.

Follow the facts

What: News articles, menus, travel guidebooks

Why: Your child will get familiar with the organization of *expository text*, which seeks to inform or educate readers.

How: Talk about news articles you read and what you learn, and inspire her to do the same. If you order carryout food, have her read menus and place the order. When you visit new places, ask her to scan guidebooks and share facts. She can play tour leader, suggesting sights and activities your family will enjoy. 🍌

Notable notes

Good notes can help your tween remember what was taught in class, create study guides, and review for tests. Share these steps for being an excellent note taker.

1. Prepare beforehand. Your child will have an easier time keeping up with the teacher if he has read the assigned handouts or chapters. Why? He'll be familiar with the material and vocabulary.

2. Learn each teacher's style. To emphasize crucial material, one teacher may use hand gestures, while another may write phrases on the board. Your middle grader should write that information down and star or circle it.

3. Ask questions. If your child doesn't understand something, he could jot a question mark in the margin of his notes. Then, he can ask about it when the teacher invites questions. Most likely someone else has the same question and will be glad he spoke up. 🍌



Q&A

Learning to have grit

Q I've heard that kids need "grit" to be successful. What is it, and how can I teach it to my 12-year-old?

A Grit involves perseverance, courage, and resilience—basically sticking with tasks or goals until you see them through. Having passion will help your child to develop grit, enabling her to stay with something when the going gets tough and to overcome problems along the way.

You can foster grit in your middle grader by explaining it and pointing out examples, such as a coworker who learned to read as an adult. Or bring home library books about famous people who persevered. For instance, Dr. Seuss had his first book rejected by 27 publishers before it was accepted.

Setting up a family challenge can give everyone a chance to be "gritty." Have each person choose something they want to do that might be difficult but is possible. The key? No one is allowed to quit! 🍌



Parent to Parent

Get to know new friends

When my son was in elementary school, I always knew his friends. Once he got to middle school, he started hanging out with classmates I'd never heard of.

It worried me to let Jake spend time with kids I didn't know. I asked him to invite them over, and meeting them in person helped put me at ease and gave me a

way to connect faces with names. I asked for their phone numbers and their parents' numbers as well. That way, I could contact them if they were with Jake and I couldn't reach him. Calling the parents to say hello opened the door in case we ever need to get in touch.

I'm still getting to know Jake's pals. But at least I'm feeling more relaxed about his new middle school social scene. 🍌



OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ideas that promote school success, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

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