

JOHN JAY MIDDLE SCHOOL

FROM THE MIDDLE

Winter 2021
Volume 2, Issue 2
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Faculty and PTO



Hello JJMS Families,

It's hard to believe that despite our current situation and all the challenges thrown our way, the 2nd half of the year is in full swing already! We are all looking forward to warmer weather and the ability to get outside more!

Afterschool clubs are busy at work and providing chances for students to connect socially- outside of the classroom! A few highlights include:

- The JJMStream club, a group of students who write and produce a JJMS News Show where they cover national, collegiate, and professional sports, review movies and games, and conduct interviews on various topics. Five episodes have already been produced and can be watched on the JJMS YouTube Channel. These episodes are played during the lunch waves for our students.
- The Student Council just kicked off a mask designing contest that will be combined with a fundraiser. The winner will receive a gift card and have their design printed on a face mask. To help raise funds for the Student Council, the masks will be available for purchase by the JJMS community once it's produced! All students received a notification on their JJMS Schoology page with the template and directions.
- On Friday and Saturday March 5 & March 6 at 7PM the JJMS Drama club will share their performance of *Socially Distant Scenes from Monty Python*. The link to view the performance may be found on the JJMS website. Please take the time to watch the play and celebrate the accomplishments of our actors, set designers, costume designers and so many more students, who did a great job producing their very first socially distant play!

While we have spring to look forward to, the month of March can be particularly challenging for students since the next scheduled day off is not until spring break, March 29-April 2. We are working with the teachers to provide support by reviewing classroom expectations and incorporating activities into their lessons and daily activities to keep the students engaged and interested.

Wellness Week 2021 is March 15th, and our school clinicians will be teaching the students how important it is to take care of themselves, even if they don't think anything is wrong. Sometimes all any of us need is a good laugh with friends, a moment of meditation, or special time listening to our favorite music with friends; all of this does a body & mind some good! More about this in the coming days will be communicated to our JJMS families and students.

8th grade parents: While it's only March, we know that you are probably wondering what the end of year Moving Up ceremony will look like. I assure you we are working with the PTO to come up with creative ways to make it a special day for our 8th grade students and will update you as we progress with our planning.

Lastly, you will notice that we included a few dates under the Important Dates section of our newsletter; however, we will always send out reminders and notices of new dates or cancellations.

You can always check our webpage for the more up-to-date information at:
<https://jjms.klschools.org/home>

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Swiatowicz , Principal, JJMS

QUICK LINKS

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- IMPORTANT DATES
- NOTES FROM NURSES

A LETTER FROM THE PTO

Dear JJMS families,

We hope you all are well and looking forward to spring as much as we are! We wanted to remind you of the following:

Yearbooks: On sale now and available for purchase by visiting <https://www.yearbookordercenter.com> and entering **Code 5027**.

Yearbook Photos: We need your help!! The Yearbook Committee is looking for photos from:

- First Days of Schools (in person and remote)
- Hybrid Learning
- Halloween
- Thanksgiving
- December Holidays
- Snow Days
- 6th and 7th Grade Team Members
- 8th Grade Candids and Collage (Group and Individuals)
- Student Music
- Student Artwork
- JJMS Theater
- Clubs and Organizations

Upload photos to <http://www.hjeshare.com/eShare/index.html>

Enter code: **JJMS**

Please include your name and phone number.

Moving Up Ceremony: It is a JJMS tradition to have 7th grade parents/caregivers volunteer to help with the 8th Grade Moving Up Ceremony. The exact date and details are still being worked out, but please email us at jjmspto@yahoo.com if you are interested in helping with this celebratory event.

Thank you again for your support!

Warmest regards,

Teryn Kendall & Jessica Inglis
JJMS PTO Co-Presidents

IMPORTANT DATES FOR MARCH & APRIL

MARCH	
March 2—Tuesday	Student Government kicks off mask designing contest/fund raiser for student body
March 5 — Friday	Socially Distant Monty Python Presented by the JJMS Drama Club— COHORT A
March 6— Saturday	Socially Distant Monty Python Presented by the JJMS Drama Club- COHORT B
March 9 —Tuesday	PTO Principal's Coffee
March 11—Thursday	JJMS 2nd Trimester Ends
March 15— Monday	Submission for Student Council Mask Designing Contest are Due
March 29-April 2	Spring Recess
APRIL	
April 9— Friday	Deadline to waive into a course or change course selection for grades 6-8 (refer to Counselor's section of newsletter)

We will always send out reminders and notices of new dates or cancellations.

COUNSELORS CORNER

6TH GRADE

Mrs. Makover had the pleasure of visiting students in Social Studies classes mid-January to reflect upon students' 6th grade experiences to date, and to discuss the 7th grade schedule. Transitioning to middle school is a big developmental milestone from an academic, social, and emotional perspective. 6th graders have made awesome efforts to adjust to a new school and to all the COVID protocols put into place this year.

In addition to a "Get to know you" activity, Mrs. Makover presented a PowerPoint highlighting the similarities and differences between the 6th and 7th grade schedules and discussed what students can expect next year in 7th grade. The 6th and 7th grade schedules are very similar, minus a few differences, such as two options in Math and an "academic extension" replacing the "academic block" period that was solely devoted to extra time in ELA and Math. Mrs. Makover highlighted the recommendation timeline and differences between Math 7 vs 7A (accelerated), the waiver process, and the deadline for any schedule changes (**April 9th**). Mrs. Makover's PowerPoint can be found on your child's Social Studies Schoology page.

With the hopes of diminishing restrictions in the future, we look forward to the possibility of seeing our rising 7th graders move toward a truer middle school experience.

7TH GRADE

Towards the end of January, Mr. Tepper presented in the 7th grade Social Studies classes to discuss scheduling for 8th grade. In this meeting, he discussed the differences between 7th and 8th grades, accelerated classes, music options, the importance of world language, and reminded students of the April 9th deadline to waive into a course or change their music class for next year. Mr. Tepper focused his discussion around being a "responsible learner" and building your reputation during these tough times.

COUNSELORS CORNER (cont.)

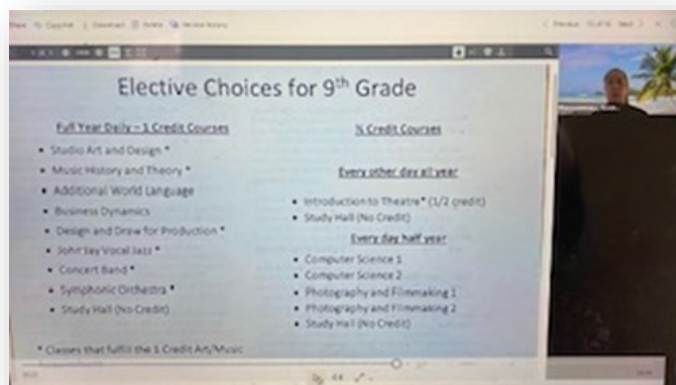
Mr. Tepper watched a motivational video with the 7th graders that focused on the theme of goal setting. While we will always encounter challenges in our lives, our mindset plays a key role in how we approach these challenges. As highlighted in the video, students can either view experiences as an *"obligation or an opportunity"*. Mr. Tepper shared that students could get more out of the homework if they viewed it as an *opportunity* as opposed to an *obligation*. Mr. Tepper reviewed the scheduling process and encouraged students to reflect upon their growth throughout the pandemic. The PowerPoint of this presentation is available to parents on Schoology.

Mr. Tepper also spoke at the February PTO meeting about 7th grade and how to help our children during this pandemic academically, socially and emotionally. The presentation and PowerPoint can be accessed on the PTO website.

8TH GRADE

We welcomed the new year with a focus on the 8th to 9th grade transition process. In early January, Ms. MacSweeney spoke at a well-attended PTO meeting which was solely devoted to a discussion regarding 9th grade course selections for 8th graders. She discussed the importance of students choosing courses that are balanced in that they not only meet the appropriate level of rigor, but also represent a student's individual interests. Later in January, Ms. MacSweeney gave a 40-minute Zoom presentation in 8th grade world language classes where she discussed the course options for 9th grade and reiterated the notion of maintaining a balance and choosing courses for one's individual aptitudes and passions. In February, Ms. MacSweeney met with all 8th graders either in person or on Zoom to help students confirm their 9th grade electives and to answer any follow up questions.

Please note that the firm deadline to change electives and to submit waivers for Honors courses is **April 9th**.



Ms. MacSweeney presenting to 8th graders on Zoom.

6th GRADE

SCIENCE

Did you ever wonder why more dense matter sinks and less dense matter floats? The sixth graders have been exploring this "wonder" and applying it to real-world situations on Earth. Observing convection currents in the classroom through various demonstrations and/or simulations, students are learning that this phenomenon can be found under their feet in Earth's mantle or in the atmosphere. The simulation software being utilized by students attempts to replicate what scientists believe is occurring on our planet. Furthermore, by conducting experiments that focus on the density of solids, liquids and gases and then how these states of matter react to an increase or decrease in thermal energy, allows them to make connections to real world phenomena. We continue to encourage our sixth-grade scientists to ask thoughtful questions and apply their STEM skills every day.



These sixth grade scientists are learning how to find the density of irregular objects.



Students are measuring the volume of a liquid using a graduated cylinder.

*Riley Sacco,
Derek Gober,
Simej Matamoros*



Student scientists are exploring the properties of air. They are collecting evidence to determine whether air has volume using a pump and balloon.

*Ryan Whalen, Derek
Gober, Jake Knopke,
Lillian Siciliano,
Lillian Palladino*

6th GRADE (cont.)



Students are finding the mass of the air in a balloon using an electronic balance. Recording data in their OneNote Notebook is all part of being a scientist.

Ryan Whalen, Lillian Siciliano,
Gemma DelRosso, Lillian Palladino,
Ava Dennis, Dennis Galvan

MATH

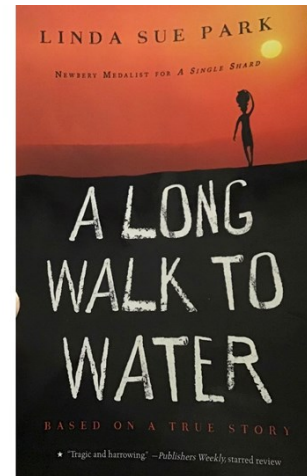
Over the past couple of months, 6th graders have been weaving their way through several topics in the enVision Math Program. Students were introduced to exponents, order of operation using GEMA, finding the greatest common factor (GCF) of two whole numbers less than or equal to 100 and the least common multiple (LCM) of two whole numbers using prime factorization. These skills laid the foundation for the next topic of understanding and creating algebraic expressions, solving one-step algebraic equations; using variables to represent related quantities in real-world situations; using patterns to write rules and equations with these variables to describe and extend the patterns. Going forward, regular reinforcement of these skills will be essential, especially as we delve into the next three topics: Rates, Ratios and Percent of a Number.



6th GRADE (cont.)

ELA

Sixth grade ELA classes have been centering their work around a whole class read, *A Long Walk to Water*, by Linda Sue Park. During this unit students learned about the geography, life, and struggles of the Dinka and Nuer tribes in South Sudan. Through analysis of websites, articles, and powerful videos, students considered the impact of conflict in the region of northeast Africa on the lives of those who live there. Students considered the ways in which Linda Sue Park crafted the story of Salva Dut's personal journey around theme topics such as loss, uncertainty, leadership, perseverance, acceptance, hope, personal change, and selflessness.



SOCIAL STUDIES

Over the last few months in social studies, students studied ancient Mesopotamia and the various civilizations that rose and fell near the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. Students learned about the contributions that the Sumerians, Babylonians, Assyrians, New Babylonians, Phoenicians, and Israelites made that had a lasting impact in the ancient world and life in the modern world. Students then traveled along the Nile River delving into a study of the ancient Egyptians. As they studied the daily life, government and many accomplishments of the Egyptians, students had the opportunity to create their very own Egyptian tomb paintings! The Egyptians would be envious of the talented artists we have here at John Jay Middle School!



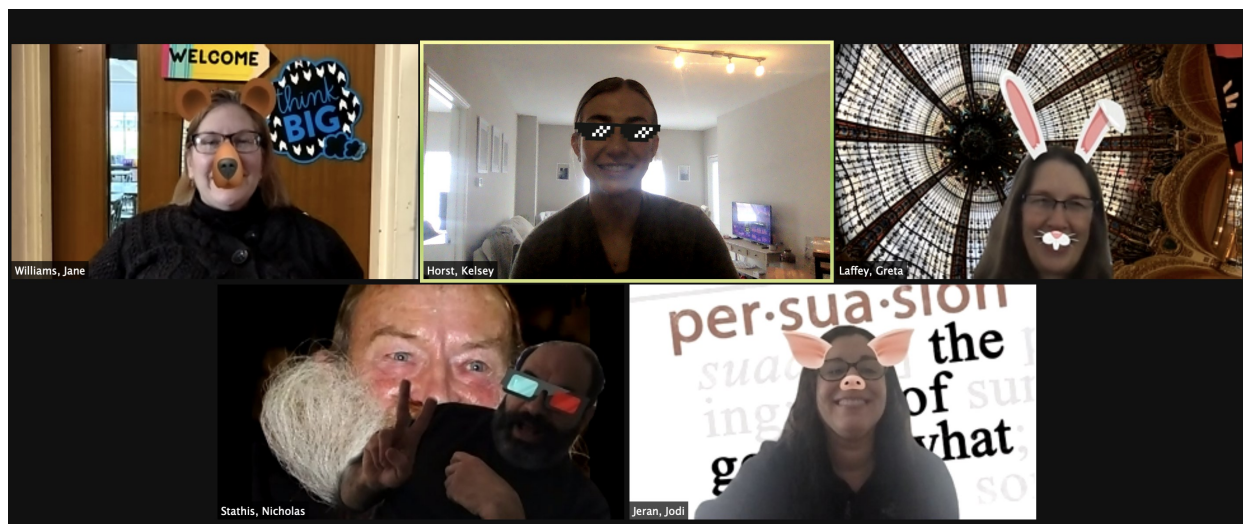
Kathryn
Becker
Team Aspire



Sebastian
Donnelly
Team Aspire

7th GRADE

TEAM ESTEEM



SCIENCE

In science with Mr. Stathis's, students completed their Evolution unit. Charles Darwin would have appreciated their virtual peppered moth work! After Evolution, we dove into our current unit—Genetics. Though science has been interesting all year (of course!), learning how Gregor Mendel's laws explain so many aspects of our own genetics has been particularly intriguing. Ask your child to do a Punnett square sometime!

MATH

In math class students reviewed and expanded on important 6th grade topics: ratios, unit rates, proportional relationships and using fractions, decimals and percents. Accelerated students worked on some very challenging 8th grade topics exploring Slope by Graphing and Writing Linear Equations. These students just started another accelerated unit on Exponents and Scientific Notation. With the end of Trimester 2 approaching, students should strive to consistently complete and submit all work on time.

TEAM ESTEEM (cont.)

ELA

In January, we completed our unit on S.E. Hinton's classic, *The Outsiders*. Students wrote 3-4 paragraph essays about the theme they found to be most significant. Students are now immersed in studying the topic of persuasion. They will read multiple articles, and will practice active reading strategies, identifying bias, author's tone, and author's purpose. We will incorporate persuasive techniques in our writing such as loaded language, flattery, logical reasoning, guilt, and research as students take part in writing workshop to write business letters and persuasive essays.

SOCIAL STUDIES

We started the second trimester with a study of The Thirteen Colonies, The French and Indian War and how policy had changed in North America post 1763. Next, we are studying The Revolutionary War, where students will be asked to analyze the specific events that led to the insurrection fought between 1775 and 1783. An overarching focus for these units will be on the notions freedom, independence and colonial representation!

TEAM UNITY

SCIENCE

Team Unity science classes completed a unit on the Reproductive and Development Strategies in Plants and Animals. Students completed activities using vocabulary describing the strategies organisms and looked at artificial flowers while studying plant reproduction. We also completed lab work looking for reproductive patterns from data. We have since moved onto genetics and the study of DNA and how traits are inherited by offspring. In class we will complete a number of fun genetics labs.

SOCIAL STUDIES

In Social Studies, we started the second trimester with a study of The Thirteen Colonies, The French and Indian War and how policy had changed in North America post 1763. Next, we are studying The Revolutionary War, where students will be asked to analyze the specific events that led to the insurrection fought between 1775 and 1783. An overarching focus for these units will be on the notions freedom, independence and colonial representation!

ELA

Students have finished reading The Outsiders and are currently working to write an essay about a theme from the novel. In our next unit, students will be immersed in nonfiction and persuasive writing. We will read a multitude of nonfiction articles and focus on how authors craft their arguments. Ultimately, students will be writing their own persuasive essay. Within their essays, students will be expected to take a position on a topic and defend it using logical reasoning and strong evidence. Additionally, students will be required to acknowledge the opposing point of view in order to strengthen the persuasiveness of their piece.

TEAM UNITY (cont.)

MATH

Students have recently completed a unit on proportional relationships and are beginning to work with percents. This year, students will be working with percent change, discounts, markups, and other related applications. Accelerated math students are finishing the 8th grade curriculum topic of linear relationships and beginning another 8th grade topic involving exponents and scientific notation.



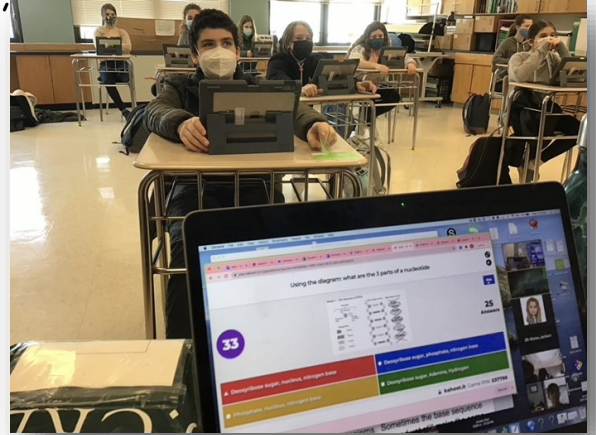
TEAM GRIT

SCIENCE

Reproduction, development and genetics have been the science focus. After learning how genetic information is passed into cells and onto offspring through reproduction, students are now focusing on how genes are expressed as traits and patterns of inheritance.

SOCIAL STUDIES

In social studies, students have been studying how to organize a political movement by examining how "The Patriots" organized their movement against changes in British policy before the Revolutionary War. We are now using the Revolutionary War to learn about military strategies!



ELA

In ELA, the students have been immersed in non-fiction texts in order to identify techniques used by persuasive writers. Through the reading of famous speeches, movie reviews, op-eds, and various other nonfiction texts, students have become aware of the effective methods of persuasion. We are now diving into our *Art of Argument* unit where students will learn more techniques to support their claim and acknowledge the counterclaim in their writing.

MATH

The math 7 classes have been diving deep into the world of Percents. Students will learn concepts of discount, percent savings and sale prices, as well as percent markups with taxes and tips. They will also get a glimpse into the world of finance as we learn about simple interest. The accelerated classes are completing a unit on exponents and scientific notation and how they function prior to diving into percents.

8th GRADE

MATH

Math 8 students have been entrenched in the study of linear equations, systems of equations and functions. Just like many of the cycles studied in science, equations have their own life cycle which connects tables of values to graphs on the coordinate plane to written equations. Students learn how the pieces are related to one another. Application problems to real world situations are often challenging for students when solving systems of equations. The process of learning such a visual topic in a hybrid teaching model has been challenging. Both teachers and students are missing the dynamics of live instruction. Hidden smiles, muffled laughter, sterilized rulers and computer screens are common place. We strive each day to prepare our lessons and find useful ways to engage our students. Whether we use breakout rooms, iXL, Edpuzzles, Quizizz or Power Point lessons our goal is to engage them and provide our Math 8 students with solid foundations in the building blocks needed for Algebra 1.

In Algebra 1 students have been working with functions and analyzing their characteristics, it might be determining the domain(inputs) or the range(outputs), looking at maximums or minimums or focusing on what happens when you get to the end. That is known as end behavior. This type of analyses is critical to understanding and interpreting data. A critical thinking skill that is often used in mathematical modeling. The students have been learning lots of notation, the language of mathematics surrounding absolute value functions and arithmetic sequences, which is a fancy way of expressing patterns. We will soon be moving onto a review of Math 8 Exponents and into exponential functions.

ELA

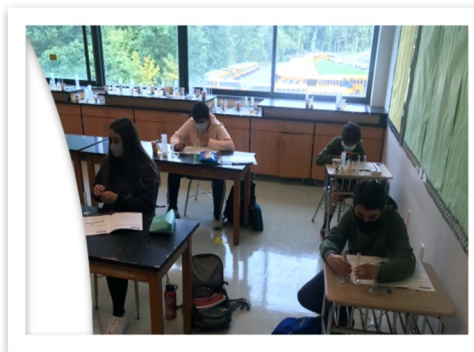
As we all continue our hybrid teaching and learning academic year, we encounter moments of great challenge and wonderful moments of perseverance and encouragement. The 8th grade ELA classes have been dedicated to building historical context for the play "A Raisin in the Sun" that was set in the Chicago's south side during the 1950s. We discussed the reality of how working class African American families (main characters) were subjected to racial prejudice, discriminatory

8 GRADE (cont.)

banking practices, and institutional racism that limited their opportunities in the United States before and after the civil rights act. This play could not have been used to teach certain skills at a more appropriate time in our nation's history. We only wish we could have had these courageous and sensitive conversations in person with all of the students in lieu of some via Zoom. 8th grade will continue to use the writing workshop model to craft a writing that analyzes the themes or life lessons from Lorraine Hansberry's play. Following this read, we will focus on a persuasive writing unit, where students will select a current and controversial topic to research and write about effectively in an editorial.

SOCIAL STUDIES

After grade 8 social-studies students wrapped up their work on WWI students were given the opportunity to investigate the changing of 1920s culture through student-lead inquiry. They picked their own topics to understand the intricate shift of culture that was the 1920s. These topics included the changing role of women, prohibition, the Harlem Renaissance, the rise of professional sports, nativism, and the stock market. When this student lead inquiry was complete, students dove into the Great Depression adding to their ELA schema from the beginning of the year. Currently, students are in the middle of a World War II unit where they had their own input on topics or questions they are searching for answers for. Once again, student lead inquiry will be a major part of this unit.



PHYSICAL SCIENCE

Students in Mr. Kastanis' class have been learning about Measurement and the Metric System. Students have completed Mass, Volume and Length labs both in class and on zoom. We have moved onto Density and have seen density phenomena and completed "Calculating Density", "Density Column" and "Sink-Float" lab work.

Mr. Miller's and Mrs. O'Gorman's Physical Science students have been reviewing the scientific foundations and measuring skills that they learned in previous years, plus some new methods of measuring matter. Students are not only measuring matter, but investigating the properties of matter, beginning with density and melting/boiling point, before we move on to the study of the basis of matter - the atom. These topics have begun to lay the foundation for our culminating Chemistry and Chemical Reactions unit.

8 GRADE (cont.)

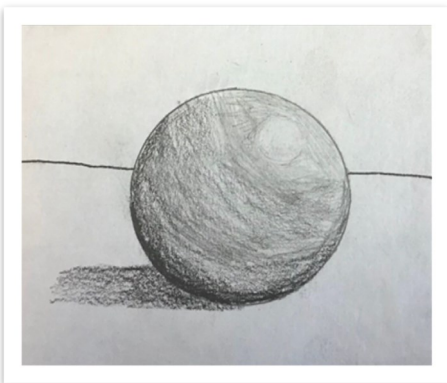
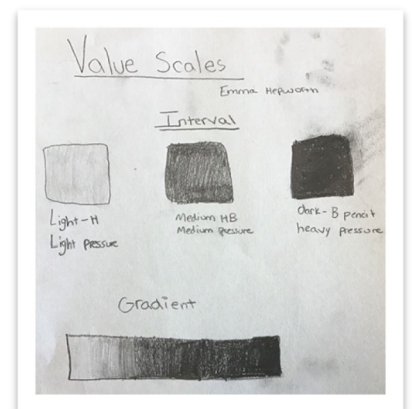
EARTH SCIENCE

Earth Science classes reviewed the scientific foundations and measuring skills that the students learned in previous years and then dove into the topic of density via a study of Meteorology and the interaction of matter! We are currently investigating mapping fundamentals, where we studied Latitude and Longitude in depth and became familiar with why we have time zones. Our theme of the year is that Earth is an interconnected system!

UNIFIED ARTS: GRADES 6 –8

ART—6TH GRADE

Our young artists are learning how to use the different drawing pencils to create a range of value of lights and darks on surfaces. The unit begins with value scales and learning how to shade by controlling their pencil strokes. Drawing by: **Emma Hepworth**

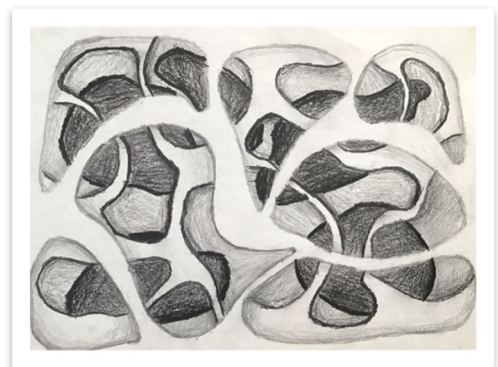


The next step is to use the different pencils to shade a flat, 2-dimensional circle into a 3-dimensional sphere.

Drawing by: **Seth Denker**

The unit ends with a layered drawing where students apply what they learned to create the illusion of depth of "holes" in their paper.

Drawing by: **Noah Goldberg**



UNIFIED ARTS: GRADES 6 –8 (cont.)

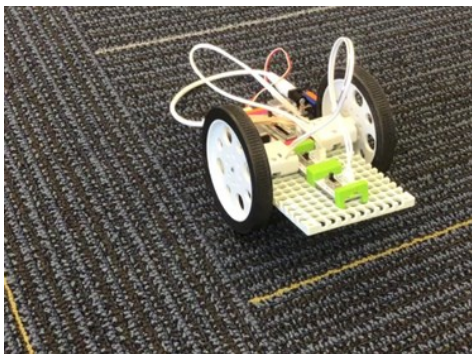
FAMILY CONSUMER SCIENCE – 6TH GRADE

Students in 6th grade Family & Consumer Science enriched their studies of Ancient Civilizations through examining food eaten in ancient times. We focused on bread, a food staple for thousands of years, dating back to the ancient Egyptians. Students compared and contrasted bread making from ancient times to today. In addition, students connected our work in class with their Science class, and investigated the science of baking, focusing on chemical and biological leavening agents.



TECHNOLOGY—6TH GRADE

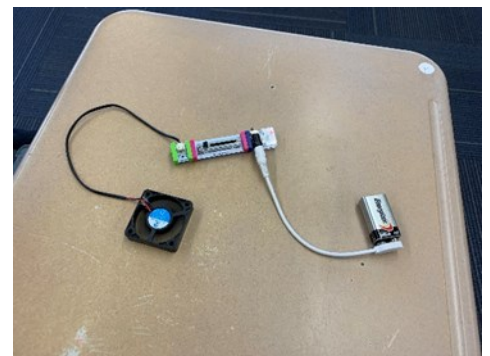
Students in Grade 6 technology spent this rotation learning about the six simple machines. (screw, pulley, wheel and axle, wedge, inclined plane, and lever. Students learned about potential and kinetic energy while utilizing Inclined planes to create straw roller coasters, they then created Rube Goldberg machines employing at least three of the simple machines that they learned about in class. Students who also attended in person sessions, had an opportunity to extend their learning using LittleBits, circuitry pieces; to invent chandeliers, handicapped accessible doorbells and self-driving vehicles.



Littlebits Self Driving Vehicle



Rube Goldberg Machine- Dog
Treat Delivery System by
Haley Castaldo



Littlebits Adjustable Speed Fan

UNIFIED ARTS: GRADES 6 –8 (cont.)

ART—7TH GRADE

Students in 7th grade art have been working on honing some basic Elements of Art so far this year. We have been practicing color mixing using colored pencil, and learning about three different color schemes: Monochromatic, Analogous, and Complementary. Students used these color schemes to mix new colors and shade in a gradient.



Our next project was a strengthen of perspective skills. Students reviewed drawing in one and two point perspective to create 3-dimensionality and depth. They applied this to a Fantasy City, finished with shading, color, or ink. Both of these skills, color mixing and perspective drawing, will be used in our next project, the Social Justice Super Hero comic book.



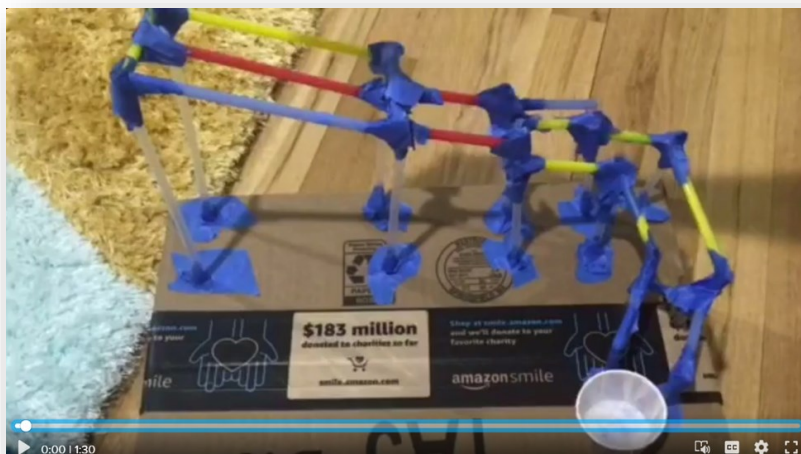
UNIFIED ARTS: GRADES 6 –8 (cont.)



TECHNOLOGY — 6TH-8TH GRADE

Students in 6-8 technology have been learning the Engineering Design Process" by way of hands-on projects. The engineering design process is a common series of steps that engineers use in creating functional products and processes.

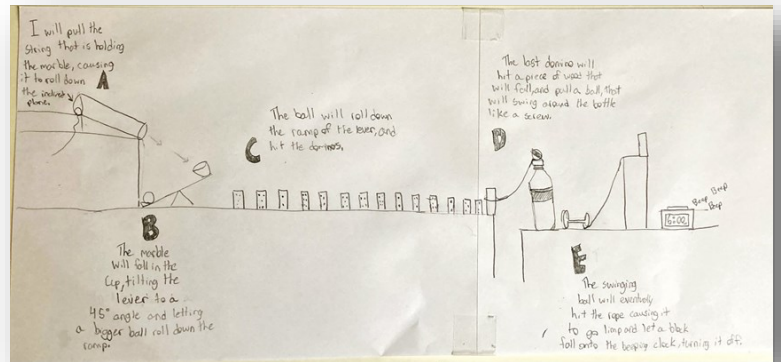
Students are working on building projects such as Rube Goldberg machines, balsa wood towers, straw roller coasters and solar cars both remote.



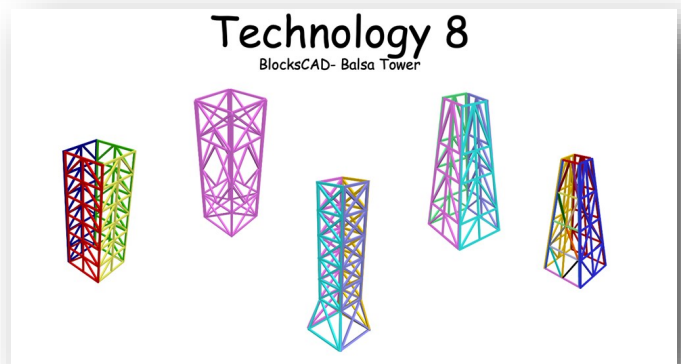
UNIFIED ARTS: GRADES 6 –8 (cont.)

TECHNOLOGY —6TH & 8TH GRADE (cont.)

Students are documenting their learning via videos that they create and then share in class. Students discuss and document their progress and the revisions they make once they test their projects. The design process is all about testing a theory and then make revisions to improve what they have built.



In addition, the technology department now has a new laser cutter and 3D printers that students will learn to use to add to their building projects. Programs such as BlocksCAD produce STL files that enable students to print to the 3D printer.



FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCE—7TH GRADE

Learn, Do, Reflect, Share

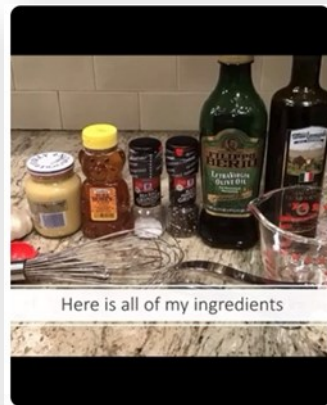
In the Culinary unit students are experimenting with cooking techniques, flavors and ingredients, working their way towards independence with practical life skills as they make progress with the goal of their choice.

On at home days, students select a culinary topic to explore from a choice board filled with learning resources. Students plan an experiment and create a digital journal to share their results and their learning through Flipgrid. Here are some clips!



UNIFIED ARTS: GRADES 6 –8 (cont.)

FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCE –7TH GRADE (cont.)



WHISKING AND EMULSIFYING

After this I started to cook I put the chicken in the frying pan and start to fry it with sesame oil I then put broccoli in. And then I poured the marinade in to give a chicken extra flavor. Then I put the pass I am boiling water to soften it up and make it edible. My senses that I was using was the touch smell. Everything was going wonderful.



IMAGE : LOGAN BOERA- GRADE 7

In school, students aim to create pleasing combinations of taste, texture, and appearance through an experiment with Avocado Toast -here are some of the "crunchy, colorful, creamy, savory, salty and smoky" results!



UNIFIED ARTS: GRADES 6 –8 (cont.)

FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCE –7TH GRADE (cont.)

Students are also exploring the wonders of Salt in the Culinary Lab. In these photos, students use their sense of smell and a mortar and pestle to create a customized salt blend from a spice kit of aromatic options (taste tested on popcorn) .



ART –8TH GRADE

Eighth grade artists have been hard at work, honing their creative skills-both at home, and in school!

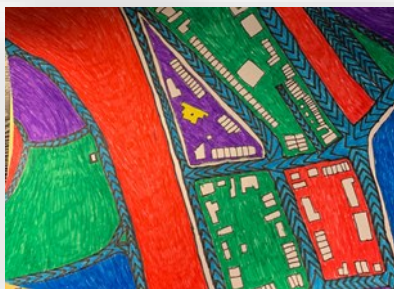
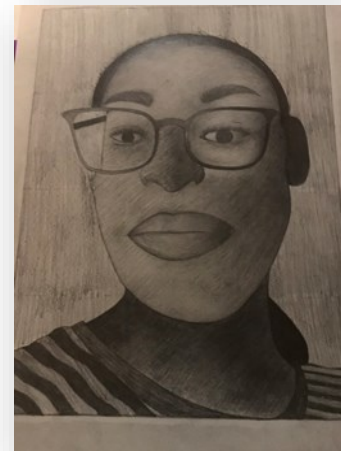
The projects that we have been focusing on in the last couple of months are the Map of the Heart project and the Pencil Portrait project.

UNIFIED ARTS: GRADES 6 –8 (cont.)

ART –8TH GRADE (cont.)

In the Map of the Heart project, students began by selecting a geographical location that was close to their heart -a place precious to them....summer camp, Grandma's house, the NYC Public Library! They then created an abstracted work that focused on both a strong sense of composition and a strong center of focus, while using color to create mood.

In the Pencil Portrait, students used the gid system to transfer the contour lines of their face's features onto a piece of drawing paper. We re-visited shading lessons from the 6th grade curriculum, as students focused on creating a strong sense of 3 dimensionality with a range of values.



WORLD LANGUAGE

6 & 7 French

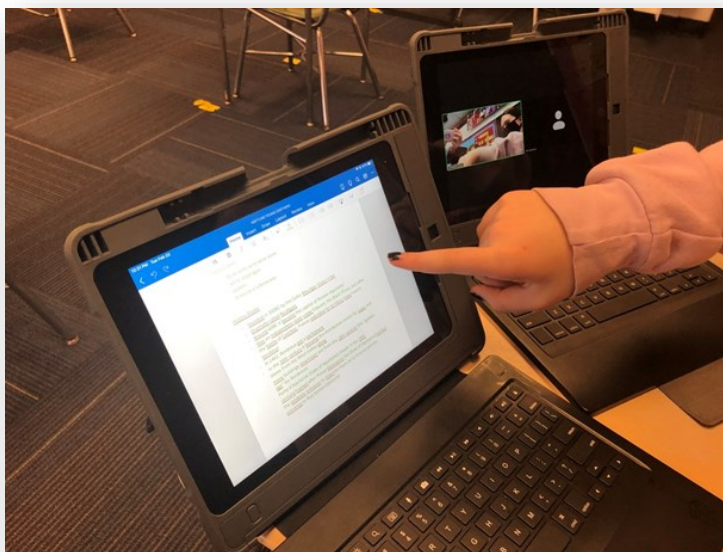
FRENCH 6

French 6 students are researching the geography, flag, and culture of Francophone countries. The research of each Francophone country group culminates in a Powerpoint and 'game board' for a class game.



FRENCH 7

French 7 students are researching the geography, history, economy, and culture of French cities. The research of each French city group culminates in a newscast, PowerPoint, magazine/ brochure or 'game board' for a class game.



In-person learners zoom with a remote learner to collaborate on their research for Bordeaux.

6-7-8 SPANISH

SPANISH 6A

Students have been practicing basic conversations and can identify numbers, days, weeks and months in Spanish. Students are currently learning to describe the weather in different months and seasons. Students continue to learn through a variety of songs, speaking activities, and games, all aimed to increase speaking proficiency.



6a students practiced months, weather and seasons vocab by drawing weather expressions and asking each other related questions.

SPANISH 6

Students are enjoying communicating with classmates in Spanish and are able to talk about basic personal information and classroom objects. Students are currently practicing describing the activities they like and dislike in different seasons and months, along with the weather vocabulary they learned earlier in the year. They are also creating their own questions to ask others about their preferences. Students continue to learn through a variety of songs, speaking activities, and games, all aimed to increase speaking proficiency.

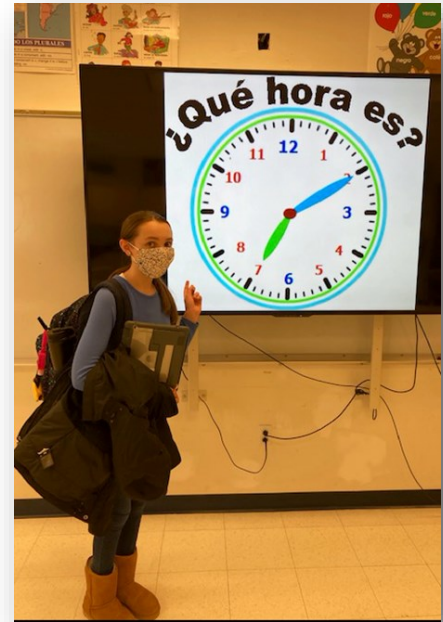


6th grade students use a virtual spinner with Spanish questions for a partner speaking activity.

6-7-8 SPANISH (cont.)

SPANISH 7A

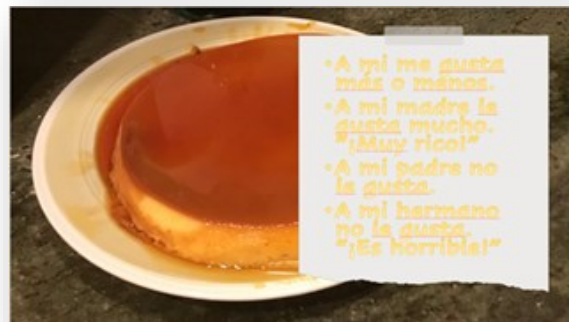
Spanish 7A students recently learned adjectives to describe themselves and other people. They have also spent time practicing noun-adjective agreement and applying it to form grammatically correct sentence structures. Students reviewed vocabulary on passed times and other activities. They are now learning to talk about time and when they do certain activities. Students are given many opportunities to practice speaking the target language and share what they've learned with others in the class.



Molly Mirabell

SPANISH 7

Seventh grade Spanish students have been busy the past month learning to talk about different meals and what they like and don't like to eat. Students studied how to discuss what they eat and drink using the verbs, "comer y beber." We also learned how to talk about where you live and with whom you may (or may not) share your pizza, with the verbs "vivir y compartir." To wrap up the unit of study, students had the choice of inventing a typical Puerto Rican restaurant and creating a "Menú del día," or trying their hand at Puerto Rican cuisine by preparing a traditional recipe in their own homes. The results? ¡Qué rico!



Un flan delicioso

A menu created by Amanda Altholz

6-7-8 SPANISH (cont.)

SPANISH 8

The 8th graders are working hard to master complex grammatical concepts to use their expanding vocabulary. Students have learned to talk about the furniture and objects found in various rooms of the house. We studied the complicated idea of the verb "to be" which in Spanish has two forms: "ser y estar." More recently, students can talk about the chores that are done in these rooms. We are beginning to navigate different tenses, speaking in the present progressive, recent past, and near future. For instance, "I just made my bed, now I am sweeping the floor, and I am going to vacuum the living room." Next up? Learning how to give commands to get those chores done—¿and maybe earn "el estipendio!?"



8th graders turn and talk to write a directed dialogue about cleaning the house.

SPANISH 8AB

The students did a great job creating their own sentences using all the conjugations of -ar verbs. We took a small break from grammar to learn about some interesting facts about our neighbor Mexico. For example, did you know that the capital of Mexico (Mexico City) is sinking due to it being built on a lake? Or that Plaza Mexico, which is located in the capital, is the largest bullring in the world? These are just some of the many interesting facts and places, the students learned. Currently, the students are learning how to create sentences using the near future. They're able to tell you where they are going and what they are going to do. This is being practiced through various reading, writing and speaking activities.



6 & 8 LATIN

LATIN 6

In 6th grade Latin, we are just beginning our exploration of Latin. As students learn basic Latin sentences, they are learning to greet people, introduce themselves and their family, and express how they are feeling.

The curriculum focuses on comprehension of the Latin language through readings based on the first century C.E. Pompeian household of Lucius Caecilius Iuncundus. Embedded, relevant readings prepare students for the stories about Caecilius. The goal is to make language and culture relevant to the 21st century student in order to increase comprehensible input and output.

Currently, students are learning to read and understand sentences with the nominative and accusative singular. They also participate in listening, speaking, and writing activities - most recently they are rewriting a story in Latin.



Caitlin Brennan, Lillian Siciliano,
Sebastian Donnelly, Elyse
Hermanto, Jeffrey Quinlan

LATIN 8

Students in Latin 8 have been adjusting to our new reality by absorbing a lot of comprehensible Latin input (reading and listening) and generating a lot of comprehensible Latin output (writing and speaking). They've watched movies, read novellas, acted out plays, saved each other from certain doom (pavimentum est lava- "The floor is lava"), and engaged in the epic and eternal struggle of life and death (homines contra corpora animata- "Humans vs. Zombies"). And it isn't even Halloween yet!

MUSIC

ORCHESTRA

6th grade orchestra just started a new piece: Burst! With that, they have focused on counting and clapping eighth notes accurately and learning new notes like C natural. 7th and 8th grade orchestra have been working diligently on Smart Music assignments on orchestra repertoire such as Harry Potter and Fire in the Bow. They have also been learning how to count fancy new rhythms, such as sixteenth notes attached to eighth notes.

BAND

Our 6th grade band continues to grow and refine their musicianship. We work on scales and rhythms, at every rehearsal and have begun a unit on dynamics.

7/8th grade band is doing a great job with rehearsals and their repertoire. We continue to work on scales and rhythms during every class and lesson. We are focusing on articulations like tenuto and marcato.

CHORUS

JJMS Chorus students continue to work diligently as we navigate ensemble singing through hybrid learning. In 6th Grade Chorus, students are working on incorporating musical elements, such as dynamics and expression, into their daily singing. 7th & 8th Grade Chorus members continues to work on 3-part singing, projection and articulation as we expand our repertoire and musicality. In addition to working on choral repertoire, all Chorus students have spent time throughout the month of February exploring the music of black musicians in honor of Black History Month.

DISCOVERING MUSIC

6th grade Discovering Music students continue to develop their music theory skills as they compose music during class. They have been using Garage Band to record themselves playing their compositions and produce different arrangements of instruments. 7th grade Discovering Music students have begun a composition unit based on developing strategies for composing in different keys. 8th graders are focusing on musical phrasing and chord progressions and will be using our new notation software, Noteflight, to create compositions on sheet music.

LIBRARY NEWS

Since we can't have students visit the library to check out books this year, we're taking the library to the students with our JJMS mobile library! We've visited several classrooms in the past few weeks, sharing book talks and checking books out to students. We have also been working to add to our impressive collection of graphic novels this year, because we know how popular they are!

As a reminder, students have 24/7 access to a large collection of eBooks and audiobooks through Sora. For directions on how to use Sora and access the public library eBook collection without a public library card, please visit our [JJMS Library YouTube Channel](#). The videos are also posted on the JJMS Library website.

For more information about our library, please visit the Library Media Center website, or follow us on Instagram: @jjmslib

Ms. Jennifer Useted
Library Media Specialist

Ms. Susan O'Malley
Library Clerk



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students in our physical education classes have been participating in fitness, Tabata warm-ups and badminton skills and games. Our remote students have been completing a variety of home workouts as well as creating their own. Our home workouts have consisted of cardio, core, upper/lower body exercises, as well as yoga and flexibility.



HEALTH

Here in 7th grade health, we are loving having more students in person! We are practicing the skills of planning and goal setting to achieve our goals and better ourselves. We are also exercising the skills of decision making and time management with a focus on how to be more efficient to help reduce our stress levels. We are combining these skills with the functional knowledge of our alcohol, tobacco, vaping and other drugs unit to continue to make good decisions for not only our physical health, but our mental and emotional health as well!



HEALTH OFFICE REMINDERS!

Please plan now to update your child's annual physical and immunizations!

Official NYS forms must be used when documenting updates.

These forms can be printed off our school district website ahead of your appointment. WE MAY NO LONGER ACCEPT FORMS USED BY INDIVIDUAL PEDIATRIC OFFICES.

Please send all updated paperwork as soon as possible, attention "health office".

Students who are sick or injured should not be texting their parents directly to arrange rides home. Please direct your child to come to the health office if they text you from school. Here we can evaluate their complaint and facilitate home-school communications.

During this time of pandemic please feel free to call or email us anytime with questions.

We appreciate all the support and cooperation that has enabled us to maintain a safe & healthy John Jay Middle School environment!

MARY MULLANEY, RN

mmul-laney@klschools.org

Office: 763-7508

Fax: 763-6014

ELLEN PAPPAS, RN

epappas@klschools.org