

JOHN JAY MIDDLE SCHOOL

FROM THE MIDDLE

Fall 2021

Volume 3, Issue 1

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Faculty and PTO



Hello JJMS Families,

The first part of the 2021-2022 school year has gone by quickly, and it has been an exciting time. We are thankful for many things as we reflect. Please let me share just a few of them with you:

- We are grateful to have the hallways and classrooms filled with our students, faculty, and staff. Thank you to all for working so hard to keep our JJMS community safe and healthy during these challenging times. We are grateful for the support from our PTO and parent volunteers who enthusiastically provide so much to our students.
- We are grateful for every single member of the JJMS faculty and staff who care about student success and have the best interest of our students in mind. Everyone makes a difference, and our students benefit from those efforts.
- We are grateful for our students' opportunities to experience new challenges and gain the knowledge to navigate the ever-changing path of a middle schooler.

Recently, the JJMS Student Council announced the candidates running for office - President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Speaker of the House. Before the Thanksgiving break, students were able to watch presentations from all candidates during their homebase. On December 2nd, the entire student body will have the opportunity to elect the 2021/2022 JJMS

Student Council Officers. It's interesting to watch and listen as the students craft their powerful messages in preparation for speaking with their peers. I encourage you to ask your child(ren) about it.

Although we are still following a Zoom format, the PTO principal coffees provide an excellent opportunity for the JJMS administrators to stay connected with the parents. The meetings are held on Tuesdays at 9:30 AM via Zoom, and the links are posted on the PTO website. Save the following dates - 1/4, 3/8, and 5/10.

On behalf of the JJMS community, I wish you a Happy Thanksgiving and hope you enjoy a holiday weekend filled with family, friends, love and laughter.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Swiatowicz

Principal, JJMS

QUICK LINKS

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Special points of interest

- [NOTES FROM THE NURSE](#)

A LETTER FROM THE PTO

Dear JJMS Families,

- The PTO would like to remind everyone of a few upcoming dates.
- Picture retake day is Tuesday, November 30.
- In addition on Thursday, December 2nd there is the PTO 7th Grade Conversation.
- Lastly, save the date for the parent social on Friday, February 11th.

We wish everyone a happy Thanksgiving holiday.

Warmly,
Teryn Kendall and Cheryl Roppa
JJMS PTO Co-Presidents

COUNSELORS CORNER

6TH GRADE

Ms. MacSweeney has truly enjoyed getting to know the 6th graders as they continue to adjust to life as middle schoolers. Entering middle school for the first time can be challenging enough, but having to do it in the midst of a pandemic can be truly nerve wracking! Nevertheless, the 6th graders have demonstrated that they have the resolve to jump in, get involved and are ready to learn!

Ms. MacSweeney has been busy assisting students adjust to new academic expectations and has been meeting with all the 6th grade team teachers and Ms. Bermiss to discuss ways in which students can be supported. She has also been meeting with students individually and looks forward to working with students in classroom lessons based upon the feedback she received from the '6th grader Check-In' survey that all students participated in. The lessons will be based on what students reported as being the areas they would like to focus on (e.g., organization, time management, making friends, how to get involved and navigating new academic expectations).

On October 7th, Ms. MacSweeney also led a discussion at the JJMS PTO meeting about 6th grade life and role of the counselor. This presentation is available on the PTO YouTube Channel.

7TH GRADE

We are thrilled to be connecting with our students in a more "normal" school environment as well watching students connect and socialize with each other.

In 7th grade, Jen Makover recently pushed into ELA classes on Team Esteem to present a lesson of "Mindfulness" to reinforce the importance of Social Emotional Learning in addition to academic learning. The lesson began with two minutes of guided meditation and culminated with some "mindful journaling" where students were given three writing prompts to choose from.

COUNSELORS CORNER (cont.)

Jen Makover discussed importance of finding ways "to pay attention purposefully in the moment to what is happening both inside us and around us" as well as discuss how our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are all inter- connected. Monthly SEL lessons will be infused in the curriculum and presented by teachers.

Jen Makover will continue to find opportunities to join team classes throughout the year. In early January, she will meet with all 7th graders to discuss scheduling for 8th grade, the options available to them, and what they can expect.



Ms. Makover presenting a "Mindfulness" lesson

8TH GRADE

It is great to have all the JJMS kids back in school. We are still wearing our masks but the kids are enjoying typical MS days.

Our field trip to Boundless Adventures was awesome. It was great to see our 8th graders pushing themselves to achieve heights (No pun intended) that many thought they couldn't achieve. Student after student was observed succeeding beyond their own expectations.

Mr. Tepper has been talking with the 8th graders about the three points they have discussed since 6th grade.

- School is your job.
- You're expected to be a responsible learner.
- Everything you say and do builds your reputation. What reputation do you want to build?

COUNSELORS CORNER (cont.)

Mr. Tepper will be meeting with all 8th graders in January about their upcoming transition to the High School. In this meeting they will discuss courses, graduation requirements, and many other aspects of the HS.

Please keep in mind that the last day to drop an accelerated course (Algebra or Earth Science) is December 20th.



6th GRADE

SCIENCE

What does it take to be a scientist? Sixth grade students have been learning how to accurately measure, graph and analyze different variables to conduct fair experiments. They are also practicing how to make detailed observations and write scientific procedures for their labs. By working collaboratively on a task, students will achieve more success.

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. Furthermore, 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. Feel free to ask your child about what they are learning in science. Look around. Science shows up in our lives every day!

Students are using a triple beam balance to find the mass of the object. Being able to measure precisely is an important skill to master.



Students are working cooperatively to build a tower. Each person has 1 piece of string so that each member is actively involved.



Students are using a graduated cylinder to measure the capacity of various containers.

6th GRADE (cont.)

MATH

Students engaged in various activities and spent time thinking and working like mathematicians and identifying that failure is the part of the process in succeeding. Students used project-based learning to review and reenforce previously learned skills. They were engaged in reviewing fractions and decimals in solving discrete problems and applying these skills to word problems. Students took these skills to a higher level and challenged themselves with multi-step real world problems and modeling. Moving forward, students will use horizontal and vertical number lines in real world contexts to understand positive and negative numbers.



SOCIAL STUDIES

In social studies, we began the year with a unit on Digital Citizenship where we focused on topics like cyberbullying, balancing our online and offline lives, identifying fake news and staying safe on the internet. These topics are so important in the increasingly technological realms of students' lives both at school and at home.

This is an exciting year as your child will study the ancient world- From the beginnings of human society to the fall of the Roman Empire. Along the way we will learn about the ancient civilizations of the Fertile Crescent, Egypt and Nubia, India, China, Greece, Rome and the start of the Medieval world.

One of the first topics we studied is prehistory- the period of time before people recorded events in writing. The students learned about the Paleolithic and Neolithic periods. We learned of the discovery of Otzi the Iceman, an incredibly well-preserved man from the Neolithic period. From Otzi's remains, scientists and students have learned a great deal about life 4,500 years ago!

Our next unit is the study of Ancient Mesopotamia, located in the Fertile Crescent, currently known as Iraq, Iran and Syria. We have the ancient culture of Sumer to thank for so many achievements such as the development of writing and the wheel!

6th GRADE (cont.)

ELA

In our ELA classes, we started the year with a short story unit. In this unit, we have studied characterization, conflict, theme, setting, and mood across a variety of short stories as well as in their independent reading books. At the same time, students have been practicing crafting original claims about what they've read while identifying and explaining the strongest text support to prove their thinking.

Students have had the opportunity to select independent reading books which have been integrated into our workshop lessons as a way of helping them feel invested and engaged in their learning. Furthermore, they are sharing elements of their completed independent reading books in their personal Padlet which they will be adding to throughout the school year.

Over the course of the year, students will be learning at least 160 new vocabulary words as part of our ongoing vocabulary study. Having learned several lists of words thus far, students have been excited to share the discovery of these words in their own independent reading book as well as the use of them in their writing.

In our next unit of study, students will learn how to write a personal narrative as they practice a variety of writing strategies to help them express themselves through their writing by sharing stories from their own personal life experiences.

7th GRADE

TEAM ESTEEM

Team Esteem is happy to have everyone back in the classroom this year! To celebrate, we had an outdoor bagel breakfast on a gorgeous day in October—you can see in the pictures! Many thanks to the parents who volunteered their time serving the kids and to all those families who donated food & supplies.

SCIENCE

With Mr. Stathis in Science, we began with the foundational tools of our year: the metric system, graphing, the scientific method, and the life functions. Entering into biology specifically, we moved into our Classification unit, learning the domains of life: Archaea, Bacteria, and Eukarya. Within Eukarya, we studied its kingdoms: Protista, Plantae, Fungi, and Animalia. We then dove more deeply into Animalia by studying seven selected phyla within it—ask your child about the Yummy Pickled Animals activity!

MATH

In Math with Mr. Perlin, we have entered into the world of algebra. Students are combining like terms and solving multi-step algebraic equations of varying levels of complexity, some of which are word problems that they are setting up and solving algebraically. After we complete this unit, all classes will begin solving algebraic inequalities. As a reminder, our accelerated math classes are learning the 7th grade curriculum and half of the 8th grade curriculum this year. The pace is starting to pick up a bit. Students may need to do more work outside of class than they are used to in order to keep up with the pace and rigor of this course. Our math classes are all using the Big Ideas Math textbook and resources. These materials, along with the Big Ideas math videos app and notes posted in Schoology, can be used as reference and for additional practice.

ELA

In the beginning of the year of Ms. Jeran's ELA class, we launched our readers' and writers' notebooks. We read several short stories and practiced reading skills such as annotating the text and making inferences. We've reviewed and learned some new literary elements such as plot, types of conflict and points of view. Additionally, we've practiced claim paragraph writing skills as well as reflective pieces and creative stories. We have now moved into a book club unit in which we will study character's perspectives and author's techniques about character development.

TEAM ESTEEM (cont.)

SOCIAL STUDIES

In Miss Horst's Social Studies class, we started the year with a study of geography and an emphasis on how geography determines history. This will be followed by a unit on European exploration and European's interactions with Native Americans. We will then begin a study of the development of European colonies in North America. An overarching focus for these units will be on the role that frontiers play in influencing human behavior!



TEAM GRIT

SCIENCE

Welcome to a great start to the school year. Science class has been studying the life functions and finding examples of organisms carrying out these essential body processes. Our first lab of the year studied how fish regulate their respiration rate in different water temperatures. Students also completed a unit on classification of living organisms and have learned about and observed members of the 3 Domains of life and 4 kingdoms in the Eukarya domain. We have just begun our microscope unit where students will observe and create microscope slides.



SOCIAL STUDIES

We started the year by studying how the *Constitution* prevents tyranny through federalism, separation of powers, checks and balances, elections and terms, and the *Bill of Rights*. The current unit is Native America. By studying Native Americans, the students are learning how geography influences migration patterns and culture, as well as how contact between groups can lead to cultural diffusion, interdependence, and conflict. The following unit will use European exploration and colonization as a way of exploring how government policy effects economic growth. In this unit, they will also start to learn how to analyze texts for validity and meaning.



While learning about the legislative process, students participated in a simulation in which they tried to write and pass three laws. In these pictures, Congressional committees are trying to reconcile bills from passed by both houses of Congress.

TEAM GRIT (cont.)

ELA

In Mrs. Balanda's ELA classes, we began the year by launching our readers' and writers' notebooks. After a brief review of key literary elements in literature, the students began the study of authors' craft in the Investigating Characterization unit.

MATH

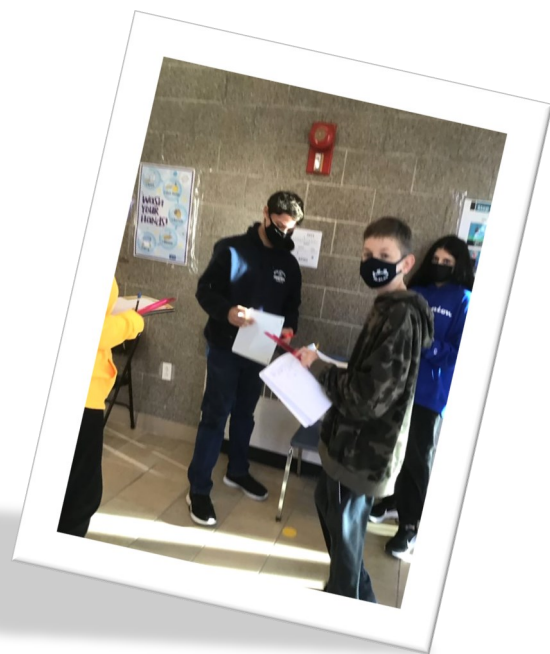
It has been a great start and look forward to continue working with all the students on our team! In math class, students started the year learning about the world of integers; how they work, what they mean, and how to calculate them. Once these concepts were mastered, we moved onto applying these skills to rational numbers. Students completed a project to show where objects would fall on a number line based on sea level.



8th GRADE

MATH

In Math 8 students have been working with the building blocks of algebra. They have been learning the “rules of the road” in simplify algebraic expressions and solving multi-step algebraic equations. Students applied these skills when solving and writing perimeter problems. The pictured students were gathering data on rectangles throughout JJMS. As we moved from the basics, students began to see how equations were directly connected to their science curriculum. We revisited their density formula and the classic distance = rate x time formula. These important concepts build a strong foundation for their Algebra 1 course at JJHS.



The students in Algebra 1 spent the beginning of the year reviewing and reinforcing Math 7 and Math 8 foundational skills needed for a conceptual understanding of Algebra 1. We focused on the process of reading (and comprehending) and translating word problems into algebraic equations. This process can be quite challenging and rewarding at the same time! With these skills intact, we will begin our study of functions, linear equations and systems of equations in the upcoming months.

ELA

As part of our **Independent Reading Program**, eighth graders are currently reading fiction IR books. They have also been updating their IR padlets and reflecting upon their reading lives. Please continue to encourage your teen to read a minimum of 20 minutes on weekdays. In addition to e-books and local libraries, students can select books from their classroom library and/or visit the JJMS library during home base or lunch.

During our Literary Essay Unit, students have been exploring this question: *How do fiction writers use literary elements to convey themes?*



8 GRADE (cont.)

ELA (cont.)

Every student picked a fictional text they have finished reading this fall; then, they analyzed *how* this author used literary elements such as conflict, characterization, irony, and symbolism to transmit a life lesson they inferred.

We have been immersed in a writing workshop, and students have been working diligently at each step of the process: making inferences, selecting evidence, outlining, drafting, revising, and editing. Being able to have mini-lessons and conferences *in person* has been so wonderful!

In addition, 8th graders have been building their vocabulary and discussing the importance of using good diction with the appropriate connotation to fit the writer's context and purpose. Furthermore, students have been using context clues to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words as they read. Finally, we have been using strategies to master vocabulary from our classroom Word Wall.

We are excited for our next unit: using contemporary fiction book clubs to develop critical literary skills! Wishing you a happy, safe, and healthy Thanksgiving break. We are grateful for your continued support and communication as we prepare our amazing 8th graders for high school and beyond!



SOCIAL STUDIES

Grade 8 Social Studies students spent the first part of the year working on three different objectives. First, students reviewed the seventh-grade curriculum to reinforce the content that was covered during the challenging COVID-inhibited year. More time than usual was spent making certain that students have a foundation in American History up to the Civil War so that Reconstruction, the first official unit of study in the eighth-grade curriculum, is put into proper context.



8 GRADE (cont.)

Second, students took several days to engage in Digital Citizenship, a program created by Common Sense Media that explores how to best navigate and benefit from the digital world. Topics included internet safety, understanding personal digital footprints, and raising awareness about the benefits and pitfalls of social media. Third, students have been actively engaged in their first unit of study, The Reconstruction Era. Students have been engaged in examining historical documents and WebQuests with their MacBooks.

SCIENCE

Our Scientists are conducting many investigations using new equipment and scientific equations! We have also been practicing our math skills because "Math is the Mother of all Sciences!"

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 Formation of Earth and its layers! 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!

PHYSICAL SCIENCE

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.



UNIFIED ARTS: GRADES 6 –8

ART—6TH GRADE

Our 6th grade students are working on their Identity Name Sculptures in their first Art rotation. These young artists are learning how to draw letters as imagery rather than write them as text. In addition, it gives them the opportunity to tell us a little bit about themselves. Their sculptures must illustrate 5-10 identity elements about who they are. Once they have drawn their names with their identity elements, they cut each letter out and assemble them into their 3-dimensional structure. Please ask your child to show you their sculptures when they come home!



Olivia Kirker

Ruby Kalish



Lee Nelsen

UNIFIED ARTS: GRADES 6 –8 (cont.)

FAMILY CONSUMER SCIENCE — 6TH GRADE

Students are currently in their Cooking Unit. They begin by learning about kitchen safety with an emphasis on preventing accidents in the kitchen. From there, students learn how to read and prepare a recipe, garnish a meal, accurately measure ingredients, use tools safely and efficiently, maintain safe and sanitary conditions, set the table and use proper table etiquette. Cooking helps students develop independence, as well as build a sense of togetherness and belonging. Please encourage your children to help prepare meals at home!



TECHNOLOGY

Our Technology Department for grades 6-8 has transformed! Please read about this by clicking on the link below.

https://www.klschools.org/groups/57965/jjms_news/welcome_to_tech



UNIFIED ARTS: GRADES 6 –8 (cont.)

ART—7TH GRADE

Seventh grade artists are **EXCITEDLY** and **ENTHUSIASTICALLY** back to full-sized art classes!

The focus of our creative work for Trimester 1 (and 2) is the Fantastic SELF Sculptures! A variety of materials are being used to create sculptures that **SYMBOLIZE** something about each student's identity. We have everything from a skateboarding giraffe to a dragon to sports equipment...just wait till you see this work, it's incredible!

Our first two rotations are being spent learning about symbolism and planning and executing the structure of the sculpture. The Art rotation in Trimester 2 will find us finishing the projects with acrylic paint. We can't wait!



UNIFIED ARTS: GRADES 6 –8 (cont.)

FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCE—7TH GRADE

Students are exploring the connections between Food, Wellness, Community and Sustainability in a choice-driven inquiry unit. They will then educate, advocate, or act to share their learning beyond our classroom.

In the 3rd trimester, students will execute their plans and share their work through media they create: a podcast, a TED style talk, a children's book, a movie, a social media campaign, a school lunch proposal.

Recently, students also had a chance to learn about sustainable farming methods through a virtual visit with Joe Alvarez of High Ridge Hydroponics.

Joe started his business in a repurposed shipping container in Ridgefield, CT.

Last year, he applied for and received a \$49,999 state grant to build an indoor, vertical, hydroponic, **shipping container farm** in Bridgeport's East End to combat food inequality in CT.

Here are some of the student-designed inquiry questions:

- What is the relationship between farming and sustainability?
- How does what we eat affect the planet?
- How can a community provide food for people in the community who need it?
- How does food impact our mental and physical health?



UNIFIED ARTS: GRADES 6 –8 (cont.)

ART –8TH GRADE

8th graders have been busy as bees in the Art room this year! They started the year with a quick warm-up drawing, recalling skills from last year and 6th grade to make a shaded tube drawing. Students mixed colors, used line, and created a variety of tones from light to dark to create an illusion of depth in this abstract drawing. It was a great way to reform connections between the hand, brain eye- something that is very important to creating successful art pieces. Kids had a great time being creative with these drawings as you can see!



Our current project is a 3-dimensional Spirit Animal sculpture. Student spent some time learning about the concept of a Spirit Animal throughout time and cultures. We looked at the artwork of the Aboriginal peoples of Australia, Inuit, Tligkit, Hopi, Navajo peoples of North America, Celtic and Norse, Buddhist, peoples from across the continent of Africa, and ancient Mayan and Aztec, all of whom have the idea of a Spirit Animal in their artwork in a variety of ways. A common theme across time and place is bright colors and pattern. Finally, we concentrated on the Alibrijes of the Oaxacan region of Mexico- colorful monsters that combine parts of different animals to create new ones. Student identified their own Spirit Animal, and are now making them out of plaster.



Sculptures begin with wire armatures and paper.



Sculptures completed in plaster, waiting to get painted!

WORLD LANGUAGE

6 & 7 French

FRENCH 6

As 6th grade French students learn the basics of pronunciation, they also are learning to greet people, introduce themselves and say where they are from, introduce family, relatives, and friends.

In addition, students are learning to count to one hundred, give their age, and find out someone else's age.

Students are researching France and the French-speaking world. Their research culminates in posters, classroom presentations and games. In addition, we are reading stories from Francophone countries around the world.

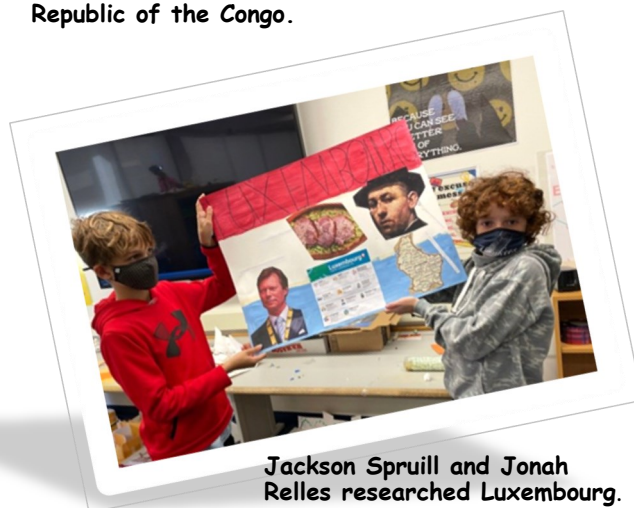
Classroom learning activities focus on authentic culture and real-life communication in French. We practice listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and are introduced to culture typical of France and the French-speaking world. By comparing the French language and culture with those of their own community, students gain a deeper understanding of the interculturality that exists between diverse languages and cultures.

FRENCH 7

Welcome back to school, les étudiants! To start this year students in French 7 are studying important concepts such as subject pronouns, the forms and uses of the verbs to be and to have, and the three ways to ask a question in French. Our vocabulary review has spiraled topics from 6th grade, though we are taking a closer look at the gender of nouns and the agreement and placement of the adjectives that describe them. We are paying close attention to the spelling of these words to find patterns in letter combinations and sounds to improve our pronunciation. Going forward we will learn to give our address, describe our home and town, and compare it with towns and cities in France.



Aubrey Schall and Cassandra Juchem researched the Democratic Republic of the Congo.



Jackson Spruill and Jonah Relles researched Luxembourg.



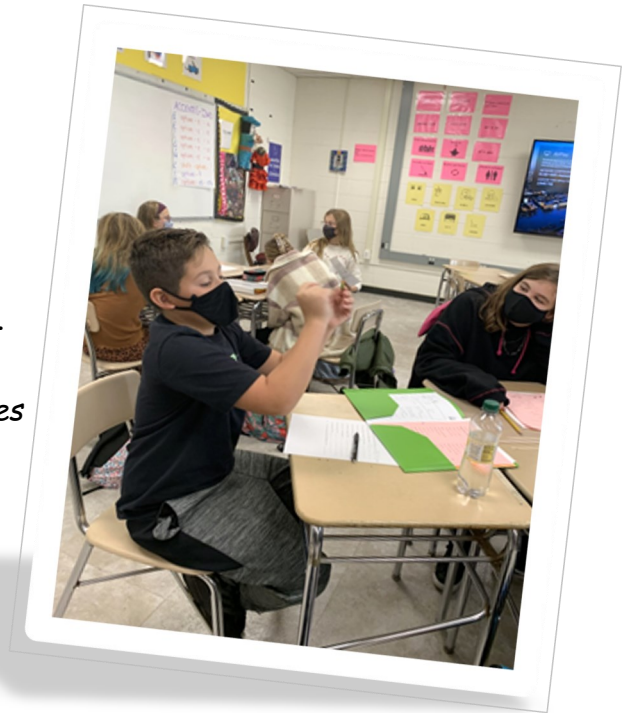
Descriptive Halloween paragraphs.

6-7-8 SPANISH

SPANISH GRADES 6A

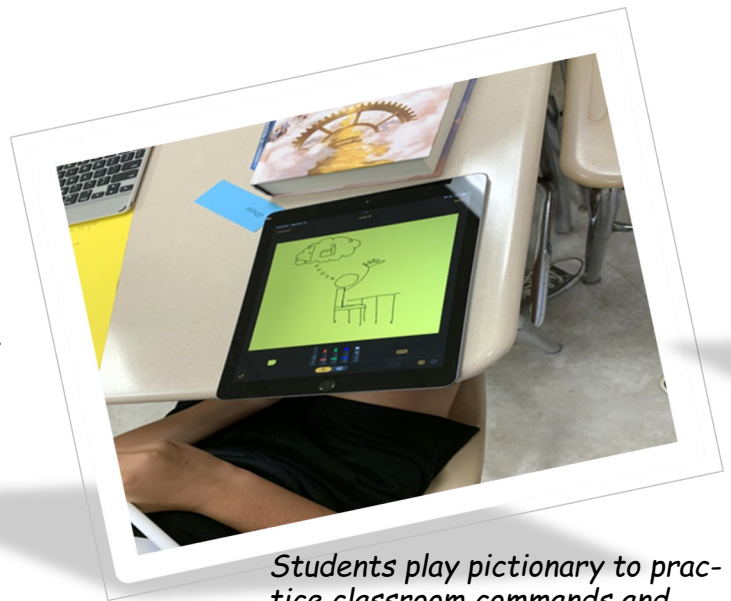
Students are enjoying speaking Spanish and listening to songs to help them learn vocabulary. Students ask and answer basic questions about themselves and will soon learn about where Spanish is spoken throughout the world. Next, students will learn numbers and weather expressions. We will focus on cultural topics in each unit of study this year.

Students playing charades to practice classroom commands vocabulary.



SPANISH 6

Students are enjoying communicating in Spanish with their classmates and teachers. They are learning to ask and answer questions about basic personal information. Students have also learned about where Spanish is spoken throughout the world, completing a project in which they explored Spanish speaking countries. Soon they will learn to describe daily activities, likes and dislikes, and personal traits. Students are encouraged and expected to use Spanish at all times during class; to ask to use the bathroom, to ask for pencil or paper, and to use other useful expressions they have learned. We will focus on cultural topics in each unit of study this year.

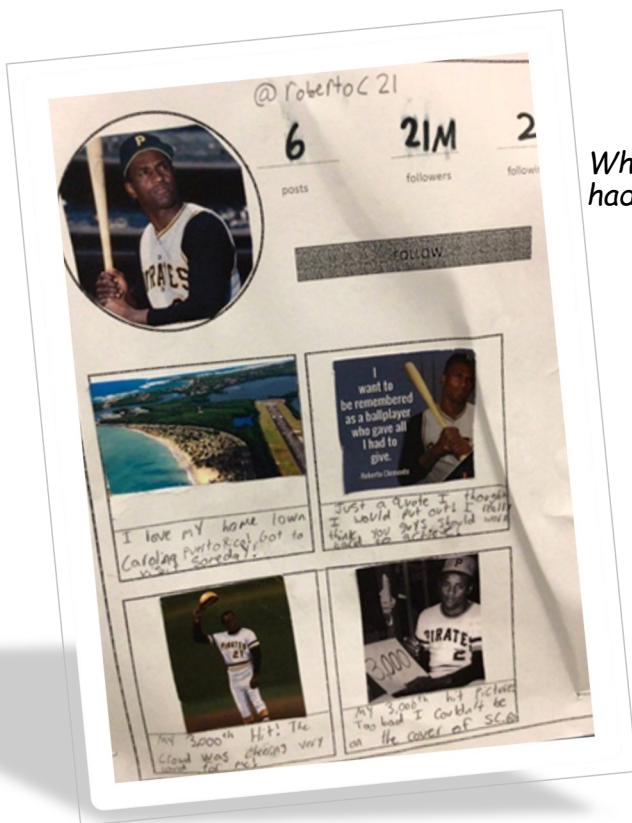


Students play pictorial to practice classroom commands and useful expressions in Spanish.

6-7-8 SPANISH (cont.)

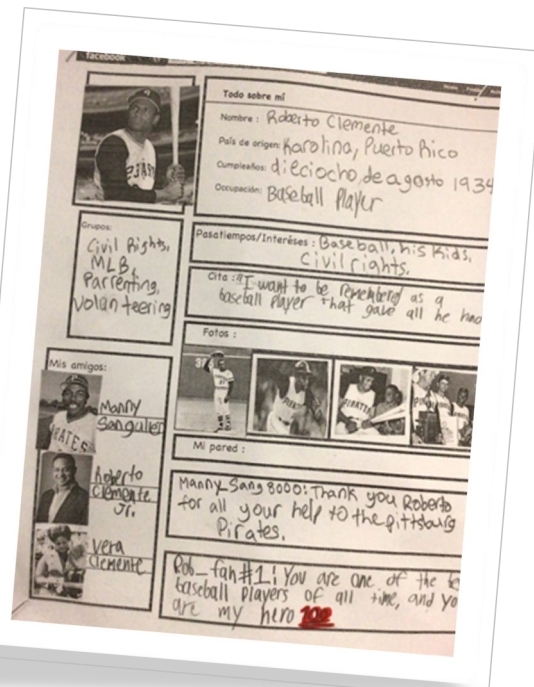
SPANISH 7

We are so thrilled to welcome students back to school for in person learning this year! Students in Spanish 7 are reinforcing the vocabulary and skills they learned last year. We are expanding on uses of familiar verbs and can give a physical and personality description of ourselves and others. Students are learning to talk about school including schedule, school supplies needed for different classes, and what they need to do in these classes. September and October mark the Hispanic Heritage month, and so we studied what it means to be Hispanic, and some influential figures including Roberto Clemente and César Chavez. Students in Señora Mulvihill's classes imagined what it might be like if these historic figures had a social media page and created Instagram and Facebook "accounts" for them. Check out our work below!



Roberto Clemente's imagined Instagram page.

What is Roberto Clemente had a Facebook page?

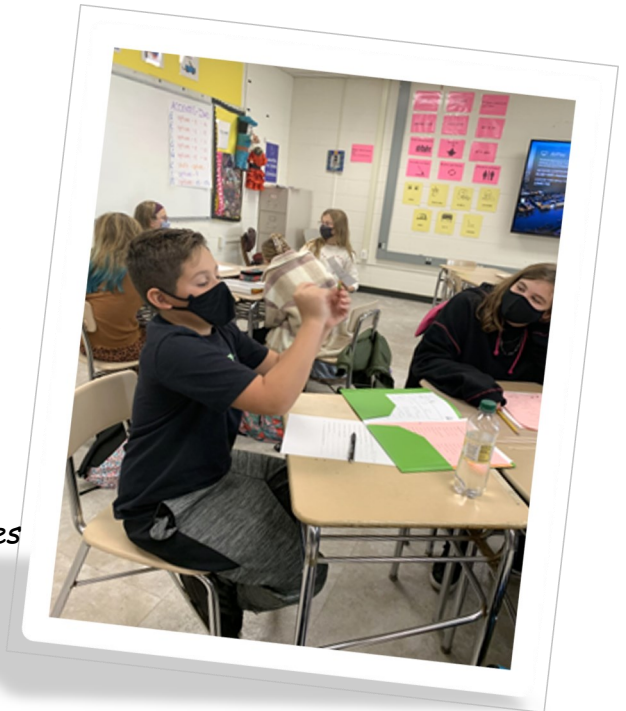


6-7-8 SPANISH

SPANISH GRADES 6A

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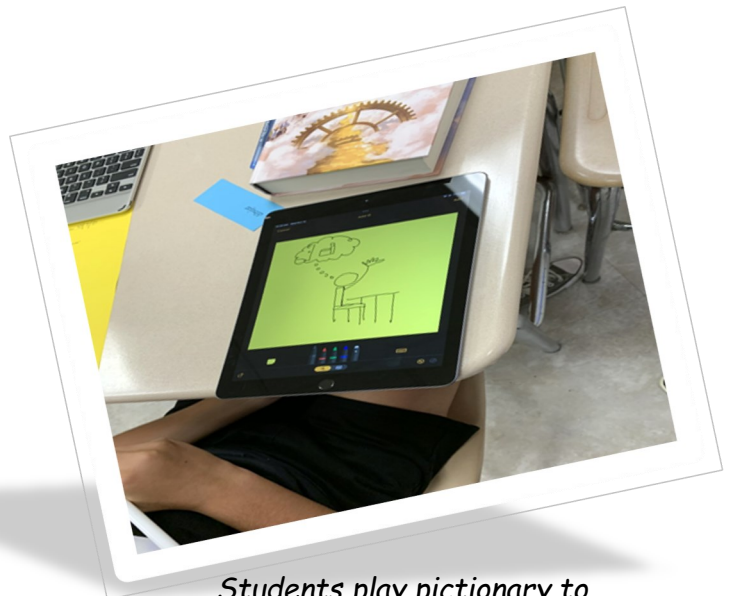
Students playing charades to practice classroom commands vocabulary.



SPANISH 6

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Students play pictionary to practice classroom commands and useful expressions in Spanish.



MUSIC

ORCHESTRA

Welcome to orchestra! 6th graders are adjusting well to the middle school orchestra program, and are well on their way to becoming fluent note-readers! They spent the first month of school perfecting their posture and bow hold, which are the most important foundations of playing a string instrument. 6th graders did a great job on their very first performance assessment on *Mary Had a Little Lamb*. Now they are moving on to more advanced orchestral works, such as *Mythos* by Sean O'Loughlin.

7th and 8th graders are busy learning new string techniques, such as spiccato bow strokes, which can be heard in their latest piece, *Spiccato Moderato* by Edmund Siennicki. They are also learning how to play in $\frac{3}{4}$ time signatures and new keys through the composers' uses of accidentals. 7th and 8th graders are rising to the challenge of more advanced music this year!

BAND

We are delighted to welcome back everyone to the band room. We are excited to, once again, be able to play in room 007.

Our 6th Grade musicians have really taken off and are already practicing their first MS band piece.

"Creatures in the Attic" is our first concert piece for our January concert. We continue to work on the first 5 notes as well as 2 new notes. Percussion has begun their study of the 40 rudiments as well as adding in technique for the timpani and crash cymbals.

Our 7/8th Grade band is working well, as a team. In each class we work on rhythmic reading, note reading and are beginning to add articulation and dynamics to our concert repertoire. We have also begun our challenge piece "High Hopes" and hope to present that to you at our first concert, in January.



MUSIC (cont.)

CHORUS

Welcome back to the choir room! It is so nice to make music again in room 006. Our sixth-grade singers have really been enthusiastic about the warmups and the repertoire for the concert. We are working on a bunch of pieces including *Bidi Bom*, *Step In Time*, *Gallop*, and *Blackbird*. Students are learning to sing in harmony and also learning to blend with one another. The students are learning how to use proper breathing technique and sing with the correct vowel shapes.

The Seventh and Eighth grade singers are working on more advanced repertoire that is in three parts: Baritone, Alto, and Soprano. They are also learning to sing their own part especially the females who are now split into Alto and Soprano. They are also learning proper breathing techniques and singing with correct vowel shapes and singing through phrases. They are also learning how to read dynamic markings and tempo markings. Some of the repertoire they are singing include *Truly Brave* (A mash-up of *True Colors* and *Brave*), *A Beatles Medley*, *Rhythm of Life* and *The Lion Sleeps Tonight*.

GENERAL MUSIC

In the general music class, the students recently finished Hispanic Heritage Month where they learned dances, instruments, and famous musicians from Latin countries. They also learned about singing in minor as we celebrated Halloween and now, they are learning songs about being thankful and are even learning a Native American Lullaby to learn to differentiate between steady beat and rhythm.

DISCOVERING MUSIC

Sixth and seventh grade students began their study of music technology by using GarageBand loops to create music that could be used to signal class changes. This task is surprisingly complex as it requires setting a mood (e.g., calmness, nervous energy, excitement, etc.) using a single musical gesture. For their second project, students crafted a ten-track "spooky" Halloween composition. A sample of this work by sixth grader, Elise T., may be found [HERE](#).

With Thanksgiving on the horizon, the sixth and seventh grade

MUSIC

DISCOVERING MUSIC (cont.)

students have started to develop musical arrangements of "What a Wonderful World," accompanied by images that express gratitude for the people in their lives and opportunities that they have been afforded.

Eighth grade students are developing the musical and persuasive skill sets needed to create effective public service announcements. They have completed drafts of the images and voiceovers for their projects, and are now engaged in a study of harmony in preparation for composing the soundtracks for their PSAs.



LIBRARY NEWS

We have had a fantastic start to the 2021-22 school year. Students from all grades have visited the library to check out books and 6th grade students have all received a library orientation lesson to learn about all the amazing resources we have available. 7th graders have come to the library for their Family and Consumer Science class to conduct research, and in ELA to check out books for an upcoming unit.

Our library has been equipped with new tables and chairs for a more flexible learning environment. We also have new seating for students who come to the library to read.

Students all 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

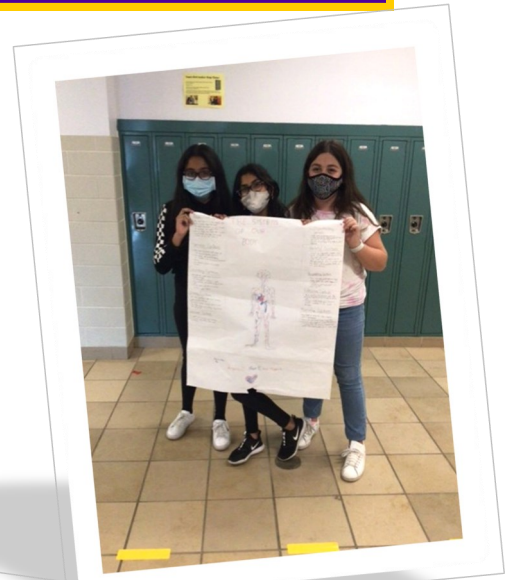
Students in our physical education classes have completed their Flicker Football unit and are now in the middle of their soccer unit. We have been going outside as much as possible, but we realize that the beautiful fall weather will soon leave us, and all our activities will be moving indoors to our gyms. Fitness is an important piece of our PE curriculum. All students are participating in some form of fitness. The class warmups usually consist of a combination of dynamic stretching, a Tabata workout, and/or an AMRAP workout.

Please remind your child to have proper footwear for PE days and to dress accordingly for the outdoor weather and to wear clothing that is comfortable to participate in.

HEALTH

We have recently finished our first rotation of 6th grade health and it has been amazing to have student energy back in the classroom! Our 6th graders spend a lot of thinking about the decisions they make and how they impact our overall health. We have also been extremely fortunate to have educators from Northern Westchester Hospital come in and discuss stress management and positive sleep habits. Essential skills for all, and especially middle school students!

To wrap up 6th grade health, students completed a group project examining the different systems working within our bodies, and their final products are the best classroom decorations I could ask for! See a few of their pieces below, as well as Megan Venkatraman, Neha Nitta and Harper Christian displaying their incredibly detailed work!!



HEALTH OFFICE REMINDERS!

Physical Education Excuses

If a student sustains an injury, please consult the health office prior to their return to school. Doctor's notes for PE restriction must be signed, dated and sent to the health office. If the doctor writes "until further notice" then a follow up note must be provided within 30 days to either clear them for activity or to renew their restriction. If crutches are to be used in school, they must be prescribed by a physician.

Medications

If your child requires medication of any kind in school, even over-the-counter, a written doctor's order is required. Forms can be printed off our district website and must be signed by a licensed practitioner, co-signed by a parent. Students are only allowed to carry Epipens, Benadryl and inhalers that correspond to a completed district medication administration form.

Cell Phone Usage

Students who become ill or have an injury during the school day should not be texting their parents to arrange a ride home. They must come to the health office where the nurses will facilitate communication with parents. If your child does text you, please send them to us for an evaluation of their need & a follow-up call to your home.

Modified Sports

Modified winter sports will start on November 30th. There was a meeting on November 23rd after school for students who are interested in playing a modified winter sport. For further information regarding modified sports, please contact the KLSD athletic department.

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