

Johnson Journal

October 18th, 2011

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Cardinal Community Academy Middle School

Special points of interest:

The 8th grade class has set up a new goal! Their goal is to only have two checks on the board for excessive talking. Their previous goal was three checks. I know they can embrace this challenge!

8th Grade Spelling List

Instance

Avenue

Newspaper

Actually

Employee

Occasion

Courageously

Apparent

Technique

Temporary

Counterfeit

Factual

Boulevard

Science

Bones and Muscles! These topics have been running along smoothly in science class. Most of the material is review of what they had in younger years. This week however, we are looking at the muscles in a more complex way. Going down to the tissue level, we will learn about muscle contractions. What steps does it take? How do our muscles know when to contract? We will start by reviewing the function of neurons in the nervous system and how the motor synapses initiate the

contraction process. This material is collage level and I am very excited to teach it to them!

I will be gone on Friday. During my absence, the students will be constructing models of muscle contractions using noodles and tape. They will also complete review assignments on the immune system, cells, and genetics. All of the review we have been doing during this unit is to assist the students in preparing for science CSAP. The review assignments are due on

Wednesday next week. It is possible the students will finish them in class, but if not they are homework.

Homework this week:

Due Wednesday: Muscle & Bone Worksheet

Due next Wednesday: Review Assignments

Core

In CORE this week we will continue working on our "Ever Wonder Why" papers. Rough drafts are due this Tuesday. The students will revise in writing groups, identifying how they are going to STAR their paper. (S-substitute, T-take out, A-add, R-rearrange). I have been trying really hard to increase awareness with the student's writing. I want them to have the skills they need to critique and revise their own material. Rubrics on Ideas, Conventions, and Organization will be handed out so the students can see, in more detail, what I expect

of them with these writing traits.

For grammar this week the students will learn about progressive and emphatic verbs. We will also refresh our skills in locating indirect objects and other parts of speech within sentences.

Over the last nine week of school the class and I have been building up our vocabulary. We now have a list of seventeen roots and twenty seven vocab words. While I am gone on Friday, the students will be forced to use more descriptive and com-

plex words in a writing assignment. The writing trait of Word Choice is going to be our next area of focus, and I want the students to experience how powerful their writing can become with more complex word usage.

Homework-

Due Tuesday: Rough Draft "Ever Wonder Why" Papers

Due Friday: Core Packet 10

Science

Our unit on the Nervous System will soon be over, as we only have two weeks left. We did not get to our lesson on nerve impulses last week and will start with that on Wednesday this week. This is always an interesting lesson for the students as they explore the process of nerve cells communicating with one another. These cells, neurons, use chemical communication much like plants and non-human animals.

I will be gone on Friday, but while I am away the students will read about how drugs, alcohol, and hor-

mones affect the nervous system. These chemicals greatly affect brain function and the rate of nerve impulses. In groups the students will prepare a two minute speech on what they read, to be presented next week. The students will also take a quiz on Friday during my absence. We will make a list of what they should study in their planners. You can expect to see this list by Wednesday.

Homework this week:

Due Friday: Study for Quiz

Essential Question:
How have scientists throughout history positively or negatively impacted the environment?

Science Fair

This is the first week of the second quarter. Every quarter the student's elective classes change. They will still have their required electives; art, PE, computers, character ed, study hall, math lab. In addition, they will have a science fair elective class. This class is designed to give the students work time to complete their project. If the students' are using their time wisely, you should not see much of

their project at home. In the elective this week, we will focus on procedure steps and materials list. The goal is for students to complete their experiment in the first two weeks of September.

Essential Question:
How have scientists throughout history positively or negatively impacted the environment?

Science

Oceans become more and more complex this week as we learn about additional methods scientists use to classify and organize ocean life. We don't realize it, but the ocean environment contains just as many (if not more) life forms than the rainforest. The students have been learning about common ocean phylum (Porifera, Cnidarians, Mollusks) and will be placing them into additional classification categories this week. We will watch a Planet Earth video on oceans, giving the students a glimpse of this mysterious and diverse habitat. On Tuesday next week, we will be having a quiz on the material from our ocean unit so far. Please see the student's planners for a list of what they

should study. They will receive this list on Thursday.

I would like us all to celebrate the fact that the students have greatly improved in their homework over the last two weeks. The majority of the class turns in their homework on time and completed. Woohoo!

Homework this week:

Due Tuesday: Mollusk Worksheet

Due next Tuesday: Study for Quiz

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