

February 2015



Dear Parents,

It's been a frigid start to the new term but we are staying cozy. In Humanities, we are studying the mighty African trading kingdoms of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai. Students have been learning the significance of gold, salt, and slaves in this region, the influence of Islam, and the North Atlantic triangular trade system. Students are honing their final projects to be presented this Friday. As enrichment, we would like to capitalize on UPenn museum's upcoming African Arts event this Saturday. Students are welcome to travel with me in the school van as we will meet at 10 am at MANJ and return around 4ish. The trip will be provided for from our fundraising efforts. Check the following link for more info:

http://penn.museum/events-calendar/details/1513-celebration-of-african-cultures.html?utm_source=homepage&utm_medium=slider&utm_term=4&utm_content=africancultureday&utm_campaign=home

In Mathematics, We have started our geometry unit for this year with the Pythagorean Theorem and the properties of right-angle triangles. The Pythagorean Theorem tells us how to predict certain distance relationships from other distance relationships. This theory will help students answer any physics or engineering questions of any kind that involves the notions of "distance", "length", "angle", or "rotation". In the next couple of weeks prior to Easter Break, students will learn about different kinds of triangles and angles. They will also be provided with different kinds of questions, handouts and assignments in preparation for their upcoming Stanford Achievement test.

In Spanish, Students concluded their research on the history, culture, traditions, religion, government, etc. of the Hispanic countries they chose to explore and began to present their discoveries to the class. So far, we have been fortunate to explore, learn and virtually visit: Argentina, Mexico and Ecuador.

In Language workshop, students are drafting compare and contrast essays. They are doing peer reviews and will then have a teacher review and writing conference. In seminar, the students have been discussing their current non-fiction, I Am Malala, the story of a courageous Pakistani girl who stood up to the Taliban for women's education. It has been a real insight into another culture and raises many questions about tradition and modern human rights.

I don't know if you have heard the buzz but in practical work, students will be building a fence to pen in our upcoming beekeeping area. Local beekeeper, Lou Maylor is cooperating with us to start hives and learn the importance of bees to our ecosystem. An occupations unit on the science of bees and beekeeping will commence next week. We are very excited to bring the production of honey into our micro-economy. It's really a sweet deal. (uh hum, those coffee house emcees are infectious ☺)

All the best and stay warm,

Will and Erika