

This week in AEP
September 9, 2016



Dear AEP Families,

Hope you're having a great week! This week in AEP, we began creating handprint banners with inspirational quotes to personalize our space!



Thanks to the 6th grade girls for the fun idea! We also ordered a bunch of great new materials for the AEP room! We are looking forward to decorating the space and making it our own.

A favorite activity was watching videos from the band "Ok Go" on Youtube and talking about the creativity that went into their creation, as well as playing Set and eating popsicles. We are enjoying spending time getting to know one another.

On My Bookshelf

If your child struggles with organization, check out [Smart but Scattered Teens: The "Executive Skills" Program for Helping Teens Reach Their Potential](#), by Richard Guare Ph.D. and Peg Dawson Ed.D. Many gifted kids struggle with executive function, and this guide can help them be more successful. It has rave reviews on Amazon, and our own John Paydo has endorsed it as a great read—not necessarily a cover-to-cover book, but one you can use to help in areas of need. I have the version for kids 8-12, and am looking forward to reading this one. I just ordered my copy!

IN LANGUAGE ARTS

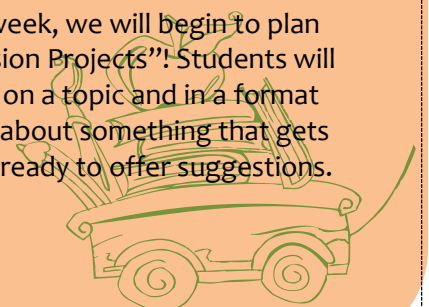
This week in LA, 8th graders got to experience Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery" through the lens of a culture that practices everyday rituals. Why do we follow these rituals, especially ones we didn't invent?

We watched the 1969 film of the story as well. Some great discussion topics arose, looking at events in ancient times, during the Salem Witch Trials, and in modern-day North Korea. **Eighth graders will be coming to me on MONDAY, 9/12 rather than Wednesday this coming week.**

In 7th grade, we were presented with choices! Seventh graders did station work on centered on conflict projects, poetry, or analysis. In one area, we discussed/reviewed literary conflict, and they were given a choice board of conflict projects. In another area, we learned about Dr. Seuss' anapestic tetrameter-style, and I challenged them to create a poem in his style, inspired by their independent reading book. Lastly, we learned about Myers-Briggs personality types, and I challenged students to decide on a type for a major character in their IR book, justifying their decision with support. **Students are to complete one of the choices and be ready to share on Thursday, 9/15.**

Our sixth graders and I watched a video titled "I Forgot my Phone", and read an article in the New York Times posing the question, "Does technology make us more alone?" We wrote and shared our opinions, using this as a lens to examine the structure of a written argument. Students will continue this work in their regular language arts room.

This coming week, we will begin to plan and choose our "Passion Projects"! Students will research and present on a topic and in a format of their choice. Think about something that gets them fired up and be ready to offer suggestions.



MEET DOT AND DASH!



Our new class “pets” don’t eat much, but they’re pretty fun to play with, and introduce kids to the basics of coding. We are going to create challenges for Dot and Dash, compose music for Dash to play, and more. We also have Arduino and Makey Makey as part of the family, with an eye toward coding projects with Mr. Rice from the high school in the spring.

RESOURCES

If you haven’t seen Ian Byrd’s blog “Byrdseed”, I encourage you to check it out. It is mostly geared toward teachers, but the parent section often has some great resources.

<http://www.byrdseed.com/parents/>

I also encourage you to watch this video about gifted students and share the information!

<http://www.byrdseed.com/tennessee-keynote-so-much-more-than-smart-kids/>.

Lastly, I thought you may find this interesting. It deals with the “Overexcitabilities” in gifted individuals. Gifted people are intense with a greater depth of emotion. These areas of intensity are gifts in themselves, but they can lead to maladaptive behavior or difficulties if they are not managed. If you notice an especially intense side to your gifted student, you may want to learn more about how to help them handle those senses or emotions.

<http://www.txgifted.org/files/Overexcitabilities%20-%20Dianna%20Mullet.pdf>



Looking ahead, we will begin some affective curriculum in the next week or two, as students begin to see me periodically for social/emotional learning. Our students can achieve so much more once they learn to think about their gifts and embrace the differences in their unique ways of thinking and perceiving.

In addition, I am considering some enriching field trip experiences as well as an “Art to Go” presentation from the Art Museum in the coming months. Lots to do!

Have a wonderful weekend!

Sincerely,

Sandy Bean

