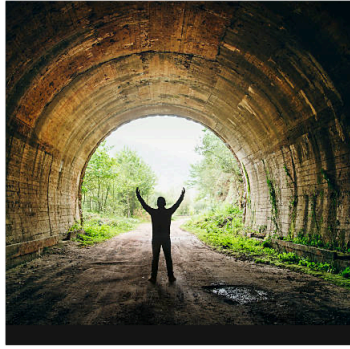




CTL CORNER

Center for Teaching & Learning | 10431 Hufsmith Rd., Tomball, TX 77375 | 832-474-8214



Important Dates

February 12 - Valentine's Day Celebrations

February 26 - Go Texan Day

March 11 & 12 - Student-Led Conferences

March 15-19 - Spring Break

Important Reminders

* School begins at 7:55 a.m.

* Tennis shoes on PE days (M&W).



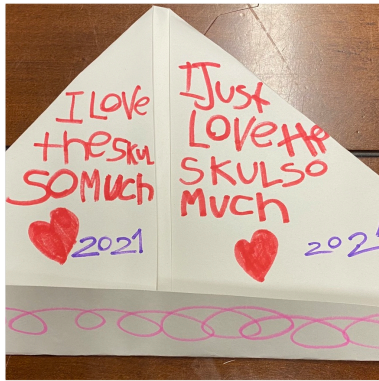
2021 Vision!

We begin 2021 with many things to celebrate and with exciting plans for the future. With COVID vaccinations on the rise and with many students rejoining and joining us, with a new location with room to grow our dreams and with a fabulous team working together for the children, we move forward with energy and excitement. This week we experience another historical arctic blast with temperatures unlike any in the last 120 years. We will get through this too, and I am sure we'll learn many lessons from the experience.

We have been fortunate that even though a few of our students and faculty members have had to quarantine because of exposure to COVID-19, none have been exposed at CTL. Thanks to our parents, students and teachers for being diligent in your precautions in and away from school. We cannot let our guards down and must continue to follow CDC Guidelines until this pandemic is under control which we all hope is soon.

We are also fortunate that to date we have been spared economically. I am excited to announce that our first Payroll Protection Program (PPP) loan has been forgiven, and we have received our second PPP loan. We are thankful for these forgivable federal loans that have helped and will continue to help the school operate during these tough economic times. Since last spring when the pandemic began to affect our school,





we have watched our fiscal budget very closely and adjusted accordingly. Even though enrollment has been down, we have functioned well, and all faculty and staff members have worked together to insure the best experience for your children.

Our current students and families are our most precious commodity. Although 2021-2022 re-enrollment officially ended Friday, we encourage you re-enrollment before classes fill. We love your children and hope all can return next year. Enrollment is slowly increasing, and we expect to be back to previous levels by the start of the 2021-2022 school year. We will be hosting open houses during non-school hours from March through the summer months and will provide private tours by appointment to prospective families. Please invite your friends to join us!

We have begun a new marketing campaign which includes increased visibility on Facebook, Instagram, and Google searches. Our Facebook ads received over 12,000 views in our first month, and we receive new student leads every day from this program. Please follow CTL on Facebook and Instagram if you have not already done so and share our posts.

Phase 1 of the buildout is complete and has been relatively problem free. Our teachers and parents worked hard to make our new facility feel like home, and it is exciting to see the changes each week. We are currently in the bidding process for Phase 2 which will add three larger classrooms for our grades 5-11 students. We are committed to moving along with this project with a goal to be ready to begin this summer if our enrollment numbers and financials demonstrate that we can.

Currently, we are preparing for the renewal of our accreditation by Cognia (formerly AdvancED). This audit and accreditation helps us keep our commitment to you that we follow strong educational standards. This accreditation is scheduled to begin April 12, and we are busy preparing for the visit.

We all enjoyed Valentine's Day celebrations on Friday, February 12 with parties and Valentine exchanges. On February 26, we will be celebrating our Texas heritage with Go Texan Day. Please have your child wear western duds to school that Friday. It is a great day for traditional BBQ, and even though we aren't able to host our usual BBQ family gathering because of COVID restrictions, we have arranged with Dickey's BBQ for a Go Texan spirit day. Dickey's is located at 10700 Kuykendahl Rd Ste A, The Woodlands. You may call ahead for curbside pickup or enjoy dine-in with your family. Tell them you are from the Center for Teaching & Learning, and they will



return 20 percent of the proceeds to CTL. Flyers are being prepared for you to take with you.

End of trimester student-led conferences will be March 11 and 12 followed by Spring Break March 15-19. This is a special time of the trimester. You will receive a SignUpGenius on March 5 to choose a time to attend your conference.

I want to thank the faculty and staff for all they do each and every day. We have a fantastic team that has given extraordinary measures to bring this new campus to life. Each teacher has given many personal hours to make their classrooms unique and special for our students while also dealing with personal challenges the virus has brought to their own families and lives. Please remember that everyone here at CTL is here for you and your child. We welcome your input and we are happy to meet with you to discuss any concerns you have and/or ideas for improvement. The virus has taken a toll on our face-to-face interactions and your interactions with the teachers. Know that you can always schedule an in-person or ZOOM meeting with me or your child's teacher(s).

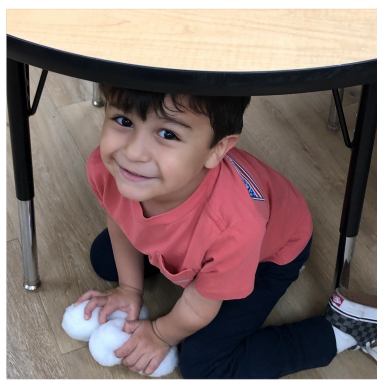
It is hard to believe, but we are currently solidifying the CTL 2021-2022 academic calendar. We plan for the CTL Board to approve our school calendar before Spring Break so you may make plans accordingly.

While this school year has been one of the most challenging, we see the light at the end of the tunnel. I give you my commitment that the school will continue to thrive and grow with the same caring and nurturing spirit you have seen delivered since our first day.

Linda Ellis

Pre-K Class

Happy New Year! Pre-K welcomed in 2021 with festive hats and party horns. Everyone was excited to be back to school and seeing their friends after the holiday break. This month's focus was about winter, polar animals and snow. One of our favorite books to read was *Squirrel's New Year's Resolution* written by Pat Miller. We learned that resolutions are a promise you make to yourself to be better or to help others. Pre-K class made a resolution to be kind to their friends. Another favorite book was the *Emperor Penguin*. The children loved learning the facts about unique Antarctic animals. A few other favorites are *Little Penguin Gets the Hiccups*, *Sneezy the Snowman* and *Penguin Pete and Pat*. For everyone who did not travel north earlier this month to see the snow, Pre-K and



Kindergarten had our own Texas-style snowball fight with indoor snowballs— all the snowball fun while staying inside and warm.

In the writing workshop, Pre-K has been busy writing about their adventures. Their imagination and creativity yield exciting stories. They are such talented authors and love to share with their friends their favorite part during the author's chair.

In math we have been working on one-to-one correspondence and writing our numbers. A few of our favorite math books were *Ten on a Sled* and *P. Bear's New Year Resolution*.

Our first topic in science we discussed was how winter animals stay warm. We also had a classroom project-based learning assignment. The children had to design and set up two environments, the northern hemisphere and southern hemisphere, with our water bead sensory center. They had to put the polar animals in the correct hemisphere and set up habitats for their animals, all the while keeping the predator animals away from their prey. We also discussed the life cycle of a penguin. One interesting fact in our studies of the Emperor penguin was how it is the father's responsibly to care for the egg until it hatches. We discussed how other animals differ in the raising of their young. Pre-K also enjoyed some fun snacks related to our topics we were learning. The fun snacks included glacier iceberg fishing and a yummy snowflake tortilla covered in snow.

In social studies we learned about strategies we can use to solve problems including calming down, listening to each other, coming up with possible solution and trying another solution if our first choice did not work. We also celebrated Martin Luther King Jr. 's birthday and talked about how he had a dream that everyone could be friends. That is our dream also.

Looking to February we are discussing Groundhog Day, Chinese New Year, Valentine's Day, Presidents Day, 100 days of school and Go Texan Day.

Beckey Billings

Kindergarten Class

Kindergarten leaped into the new year without skipping a beat. It is truly amazing how much growth they have already made. In reading workshop they are now able to choose their own books from a selection on their level. They love to read and get so excited to get new books. They continue to enjoy buddy reading, and they have become good role models to the Pre-K students.



In writing workshop the authors are learning to focus on details so they can expand their stories. We have been discussing how stories have titles and how we can choose a title for our stories. We know that if we can speak about something, we can write about it. We continue to share our stories in the author's chair. We love asking our friends what they like and hear in our stories.

In math workshop we enjoy doing our daily math talks. We know there is more than one way to solve a problem, and we love to participate in mental math. We know how to compare numbers and have a clear understanding of greatest and least. We continue to count by 2s, 5s, and 10s. We use various math manipulatives to help us with addition and subtraction. We have been learning how we can use a hundred chart to add and subtract. We are excited to start learning about money in the month of February.

In science workshop we had fun learning about pushes, pulls, speed and direction. We tested various objects to observe how a push or pull can change the direction of the objects. To wrap up the unit we learned about the engineering design process and built our own ramps. I have a feeling there are some future engineers in this class.

In social studies we rang in the new year with a celebration. We read the book *Squirrel's New Year's Resolution* then wrote our own resolutions. We learned about Martin Luther King Jr. and his famous speech, "*I Have a Dream*." Then we wrote about how we could make the world a better place. We discussed Groundhog Day and learned that Punxsutawney Phil saw his shadow, so according to Phil we have six more weeks of winter.

As we look into February we will spend more time talking about kindness and what it means to be a good friend.

Gina Brown

1-2 Class

Bye Bye 2020!! Hello 2021! Our class was back in full swing. We celebrated the new year with new ideas and class collaboration as we added new things to our learning.

Reading workshop started off with a new author study. Through the read aloud time each day, we enjoyed and studied the works of Marcus Pfister and Peggy Parish. The class was inspired by these authors as they learned about their writing styles as well as their wonderful illustrations. They continue to grow as readers as they devour books during their independent reading time.

Writing workshop focused on re-reading their pieces and looking for



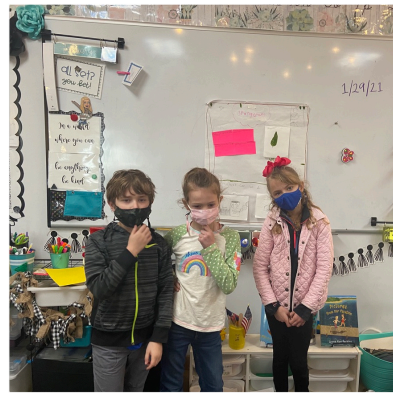
ways to enhance or stretch their ideas further. We discussed "shades of meaning" and how we can use "juicy" words in our writing to spice it up. The class also focused on punctuation and capitalization as well as looking for words they may need to add to their spelling inventory. The personal spelling inventories are made from their own personal writing and have helped them practice words they don't know so they will be able to correct their spelling in future pieces.

During math workshop the class has been continuing to use the math vocabulary they have learned in or math talks so they are able to apply it to their independent practice. They know when to use strategies like counting on, counting back, looking for a landmark or friendly number and revising their thinking. I have seen so much growth with respect to cooperative learning within the workshop. The students are able to problem solve collaboratively and share their thinking with each other. They have been working on making doubles, halves, thirds, fourths, sixths and eighths, adding ten more/less and one hundred more/less, making and comparing 4 and 5 digit numbers, looking at the parts of a whole and finding the place value to one thousands. They completed a mid year math assessment to check progress as well.

Science labs were focused on our unit on Patterns in the Sky with a focus on the sun and its relationship to the four seasons. Students also learned about the rotation and revolution of the earth and its role in the changing of the seasons. We are finishing our study of the solar system as we move into February. The class will continue to do weekly STEM challenges as well.

We researched and wrote about historical figures as we read a variety of biographies. Each student presented their biographies (research) to the class, and they are hanging in the hallway. They studied a variety of people—presidents, inventors, scientists and astronauts, civil rights activists and artists. We will finish our unit on historical figures with one more presentation in February, and then we will move on to government functions and citizenship roles in the United States.

As we move into February, we will review some of the curriculum from January and move on to new units in all subjects. We will continue our daily reading to improve and use skills taught. Our goal is to keep moving on to more challenging books throughout the rest of the year and to make great choices in book selection. In writing we will strengthen our writing by focusing on punctuation, rereading our pieces for understanding and clarity, adding on to extend our ideas and sharing our pieces weekly. We have added spelling inventories to our writing folder to focus more on spelling within our pieces. Each child's focus is unique to his/her writing. In math



we will continue to work with fractions, money, time and place value. Our science unit will cover seasonal patterns and continue with a deeper study of space. Social studies will shift to the basic understanding of the US government.

I am excited to continue exploring with our enthusiastic learners in first and second grade! I am also happy to wish our newest student Mika Gezalov! He is returning from last year to finish out second grade with us after a long time at home. We welcome him with open arms.

Lisa Lipar

3-4 Class

After a wonderful holiday break, I was excited to get back to learning and growing with my class!

For the month of January we continued to dive deeper into the writing process. Students have been writing narrative and fiction pieces. They take it through each phase of writing. Some of these pieces will be formally published. We have introduced informational writing. The kids have written many books on things that they are “experts” on. We have so many incredible writers. I can’t wait to watch and guide them as they continue to grow in writing. For reading we will focus on different genres of books. We will continue to explore the various genres and then explore in depth in the following months. We completed our read aloud, *Insignificant Events in the Life of a Cactus* and will begin *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry, a wonderful historical fiction book. Students are completing their third book project on recent books, and they are choosing creative ways to share their books with the class.

In math we continued our division unit. The students enjoyed learning the various strategies they can use to solve long division including area model, box method, partial products, and the traditional algorithm. At this point all the students need to know their multiplication facts. They should continue to practice these facts weekly. We began learning fractions this week. We will learn fractions of a whole, fractions of a set, fractions on a number line, simplifying, equivalent fractions, and adding/subtracting of fractions. The students are doing a great job and really enjoyed exploring fractions using a Hershey bar. We continued to do number talks every day, as this is the best way to continue the spiral review of math concepts.

In science we have been studying endangered and extinct



animals and the factors that affect them. They each researched an animal then created a poster and presented it to the class. They enjoyed teaching the class about their animals. We will move on to study fossils in our next unit.

In Texas history we have been learning about the Texas Revolution. We showcased our famous Texans by hosting a living wax museum. We continued learning about the battles of Gonzales, Goliad, San Antonio, the Alamo and San Jacinto. We will move on to study the Republic of Texas as our new unit. The student work in groups, partners, and independently to learn about our state's history.

On Fridays many students have been enjoying desk pets for passion projects. I am blown away with their creativity. They are running a hotel, school and store for the desk pets to attend. Other passion projects include reading books, crocheting, sewing, drawing and playing music. They all love sharing their passions with the class.

After a wonderful holiday break, I was excited to get back to learning and growing with my class!

Melanie Welsh

5-8 Reading-Writing Workshop and English I/II

Reading, writing, presenting, oh my!

In Grades 5-8 reading workshop, we just finished our second read aloud book of the year, *The Strangers* by Margaret Peterson Haddix. The book is based on the idea of an alternate world where a mother goes missing while her children left behind must uncode messages to find her and save her. We wondered how the story would end up until the very end, and we were left with a huge cliffhanger! This is our second Bluebonnet read aloud for this school year. The Bluebonnet Awards is a showcase of the best and brightest newly published books for students in 3rd through 6th grades.

For grades 5-6 we have now moved on to *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* by J.K. Rowling as our new class read aloud, and the students have been loving it! Her description and character building is a fan favorite. The book has encouraged our creative minds to create our own new world in our fiction writing.

Grades 7-8 students have moved on to *Divergent* by Veronica Roth, for their read aloud has kept us all gripped. I have to keep my copy under lock and key as students are trying to sneak it out so they can speed read to the end. I think I can safely say they are enjoying the book. It has opened up lots of interesting conversations about what it



means to be human.

We have also had our second round of fabulous book projects for the year. We've been presented with podcasts, animated stories and playlists just to name a few. The students have definitely outdone themselves this time! I just love having the children share about the best book they have read recently. It really fosters a love of reading within our students and grows a community of readers. It is always fantastic to see students becoming animated about their recent book discoveries. My favorite thing is to see students picking up the books their friends are recommending. This shows me that book projects are helping to build our community of readers.

In 5-8 writing workshop, we have just enjoyed working on our short story flash fiction pieces. We have picked a new spot in the classroom called Conference Corner, and the students have been so excited to share and conference with their drafts in our new, cozy spot. One-on-one attention to each student's work is the highlight of my day.

Our third Publishing Day is coming up in February! This is the best day for me, as students get to share their work with others and have lots of their friends read and give feedback on their stories. This turns the writing process into something real and meaningful. Stories aren't written to be filed into portfolios. They are written to be read and enjoyed by others, and Publishing Day provides this opportunity.

Kristy Moreno

5-8 Math Workshop

In January we returned from the holiday break and the 5th and 6th graders continued their work in the Proportional Reasoning Unit. We discussed **rates and ratios** using multiple real-life examples of sharing items equally with a certain number of people. These examples helped introduce fractional amounts in a concrete, relatable way that we often refer back to. Students also found out how to use a **unit rate** and we reviewed division strategies to help students compare two quantities given different rates.

With a solid grasp of rates and ratios, students were challenged to extend the number line to include negative numbers, fractions and decimals. We created a life-size number line from -5 to +5, or "**the big boy number line**" as the students like to call it, using a roll of paper towels in the hallway. Students collaborated to determine what intervals to use and what numbers would go where on the number line. This process helped students visualize the mirror image of the negative part of the number line to the left of zero in relation to the



positive part to the right of zero.

Integers were introduced by discussing **opposites** of numbers, their location on the number line and **absolute value** or distances from zero. **Improper fractions** and their **opposites** were given to the students and they had to place them on “the big boy number line” in the correct place leading into discussions of how to change improper fractions to **mixed numbers** and ordering fractions. Students applied their knowledge of fractions to transition into **decimals** using tenths, hundredths and thousandths grid models and examples involving sharing 10, 100 or 1000 servings of food with a certain number of people.

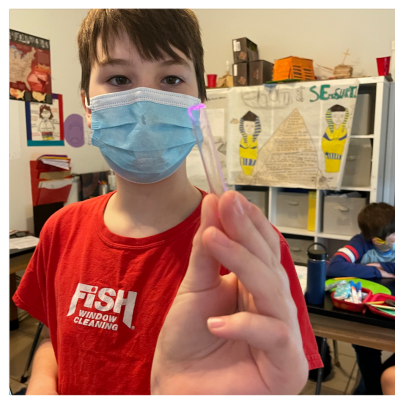
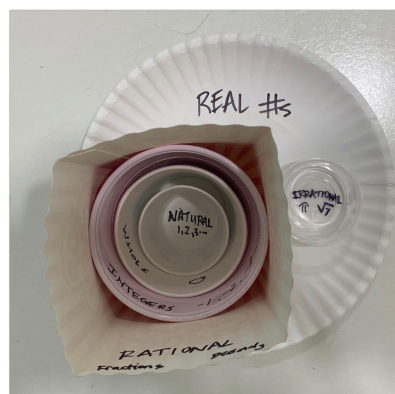
Making connections between equivalent fractions and decimals helped students compare and order **rational numbers** using number lines and other strategies. Students practiced these skills using a **digital interactive number line** which is posted in Google Classroom for students to access at any time.

In February, **percentages** began to be introduced using sports statistics as a common way to compare players and teams. Connections are being made between fractions, decimals and percentages using **percent bar models or strip diagrams** from the benchmark fraction strips we created earlier in the year. We will continue to practice converting between **equivalent forms of fractions, decimals and percentages** as we close out the Proportional Reasoning Unit by the end of February.

In 7th and 8th Grade Math, we learned and applied the **Pythagorean Theorem** to determine side lengths of **right triangles**. Before the holiday break, students investigated and found the requirements for the lengths of three sides to make *any* triangle. With that foundation we began exploring how to use the side lengths of squares to form right triangles. This led into discussions of **perfect square numbers** like 1,4,9,16, etc. as the area of squares with whole number side lengths. Finding the **square root** of a number came from these discussions as we tried to find the length of one of the sides of a square if the area was given.

Irrational numbers were introduced from this concept as the square root of non-perfect square numbers like 2,3,6,7,8,10,11, etc. This was the students first introduction to the set of irrational numbers so we created models to demonstrate how the set of irrational numbers relates to the set of **Rational Numbers** (fractions, decimals, integers, whole numbers) within the set of **Real Numbers**. The models helped students understand the 2-D Venn Diagram that is commonly used to classify real numbers.

With a solid understanding of square roots and irrational numbers,



we discovered the Pythagorean Theorem by creating squares from tiles and determining which squares could be arranged to form right triangles. We generalized these findings and proved the Pythagorean Theorem $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$. Students then completed a mini-project and found a real-life application of the Pythagorean Theorem, which they created a word problem for, with visuals and did all the calculations to find a solution and interpret their solution in context of their application scenario. Students also learned how to use a calculator to find the square and square root of a number.

In February 2021, we shifted focus to ***Rational Numbers calculations*** which includes completing decimal and fraction operations by hand without the use of a calculator. Most students learned these concepts in previous grade levels; however, review and practice was needed to become proficient at these once again. Multi-digit whole number multiplication using the standard algorithm was reviewed and practiced and then multiplication with decimals.

Next we will review long division and decimal division before reviewing fraction operations of adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing proper and improper fractions and mixed numbers. After reviewing rational number calculations, students will work on real life applications of fractions and decimals problems.

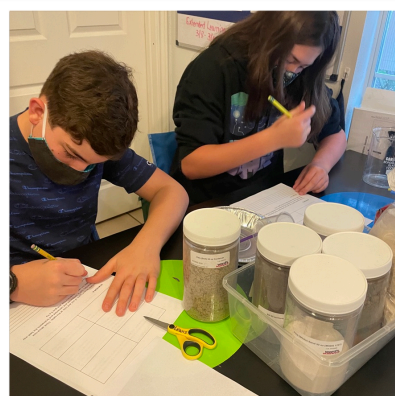
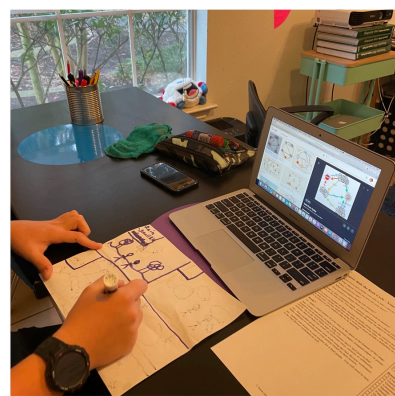
As you know, I was teaching from home for a few weeks in January due to COVID exposure and I was very proud of all my students who were flexible and worked diligently during that challenging learning situation. Please make sure your student replenishes their supplies as needed and feel free to reach out to me with any questions or concerns via Remind Direct Message for the appropriate class:

Grades 5-6 - (Remind App - Class code @56mathctl) or by email.
Grades 7-8 - (Remind App - Class code @78mathctl) or by email.

Rachelle Petrovic

5-8 Science Workshops

The grades 5-6 students have been incredibly busy since coming back from winter break. We finished our goofy putty experiments that we used to explore chemical reactions by expanding the original experiment to answer their questions that came up in class. Things like *I wonder what would happen if we froze the goofy putty?* or *I wonder what happens if we leave it exposed to air for a long time?* We continued the experiment and found the answers to their questions and more. This is truly what science and learning is all about, creative thinking and finding answers to our own questions through experimentation. From there we learned about how energy moves in chemical reactions with a glow stick lab that was easy to



see and understand. Watching the reaction and energy movement was exciting and lots of fun for the whole class.

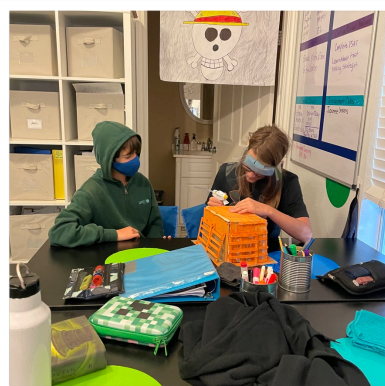
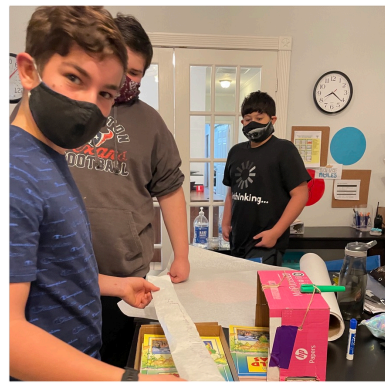
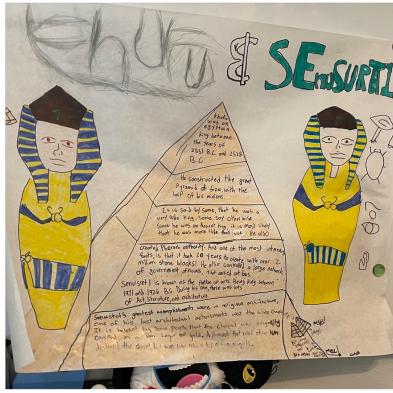
Next we learned about the Law of Conservation of Energy that tells us that energy is never lost but can only be transferred from one form to another. Since energy can only be transferred from one form to another, we needed to learn about other forms of energy besides chemical energy. The next type of energy we studied was thermal energy. The students reviewed thermal energy concepts and temperature scales and went through stations to learn how heat energy is transferred. They started creating an energy game with a partner to share with classmates by adding a part to the game after each form of energy studied. As we grow and expand our energy knowledge we will grow and expand our game.

In February we will explore kinetic and potential energy and electrical energy. Again these forms of energy will be added to our game. Once the games are finished we will have a Game Day in class. They can not wait for Game Day!

In January the grades 7-8 students finished creating their chosen project for the Natural Disasters Unit. In small groups they created a seismograph, a news report on volcanoes and an earthquake safe house. They presented these to each other and reflected on the project. The rock cycle and rock types were explored with stations that included an interactive web page, identifying types of rocks based on certain characteristics and designing an experiment to create their own sedimentary rock. They monitored their experiments for several weeks shared the results with each other. Each group worked hard and had wonderful ideas that applied what they had learned about rocks and how they are formed. Next they created a *Ride on the Rock Cycle* by either writing a cartoon or creating an animation or stop-motion video. These were creative and fun to see when they were complete. I am proud of the time and effort they put into these projects. Last week took us to absolute and relative rock dating or how we tell the age of a rock. By researching, reading scientific articles and experimenting, we are exploring both types of rock dating and learning so much about both. Frosty the Snowman met his demise for this, but investigators are on the case to find out when and how it happened!

In February we will explore waves and currents of the ocean and how these affect weather and climate. We will also learn about the weather and how predictions are made culminating with their own weather report video.

Amy Kiddy



5-8 Social Studies Workshop

For social studies the grades 5-6 students started January off by learning that the area on the map they had created where most of the ancient civilizations were located was called the Fertile Crescent and why that makes sense. Our first civilizations began there and grew and prospered tremendously. Civilizations such as Mesopotamia, Egypt, Persia, and Nubia and Kush grew there, and we learned details and information about each by researching and sharing what we learned in round table discussions. We collaborated on posters, wrote letters to family members living in these civilizations, created charts, played games, wrote news reports, compared maps then to modern-day maps, had gallery walks of sharing and more to explore what life was like there. Each activity and interaction brought students a little more information and understanding of the life and culture of these ancient times. Next the students with a partner will create a travel brochure for one of these fertile crescent civilizations to convince people to travel there and will create a booth with food, clothing and information about their chosen civilization to share in an international festival.

In grades 7-8 social studies we have immersed ourselves into the era and what was happening by assuming a colonial identity, job, salary and political view. They have gotten paid each day in class, wrote about their families and life in the colonies, and learned about common jobs at that time. They experienced life during the French and Indian war by writing creative stories or models from their colonial viewpoint. As British colonists from one of the thirteen original colonies they have experienced life when the Stamp Act was passed and how colonists reacted to the taxes imposed by this law. They have felt the injustice of taxes imposed under the Townshend Acts that led to the Boston Massacre and saw how perspective can change how someone sees the results of events. They have felt the outrage incurred from the Tea Act that led to the Boston Tea Party but were also able to see the cost of such actions by everyone involved. They have changed political views and protested because of the Intolerable Acts. They have debated the issues at the First Continental Congress. They have had their salaries cut off and have been sent to Britain for trials because of crimes against the king. They have lived through the battle of Lexington and Concord and read Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*.

In February we will continue this journey to the forming of our nation with the Second Continental Congress, the writing of the *Declaration of Independence* and what it meant, and reenactments of significant battles of the revolution. They are enjoying this and looking forward to all we have planned.

Amy Kiddy



Pre-K-2 Music & Movement Workshop

I am excited to be joining CTL's program as the PK-2 Music and Movement teacher! I am ready to teach a fun and engaging classroom centered around an appreciation for music. This past month we focused on personal expression through music. It is exciting for me to get to know the personalities and musical taste of each student. In February we will continue our study of music notes and their rhythms within a measure, so be sure to ask your student to demonstrate when they bring home a note sheet!

Victoria Rodriguez, Play It Right Music



3-8 Music Workshop

I am loving working with the grades 3-4 students to teach them ukulele. They are progressing well and are excited about demonstrating their skills at the end of Trimester II and at our spring talent show in May. We were excited this month as they began learning the *CTL Sunshine* song on the ukulele. They will continue to learn the G-scale as they learn to play in 4/4 timing.



In Trimester I, I worked with grades 5-8 students in drama. After they presented their play, the *Big Bad Musical*, in January, we provided students with an option of music or drama on Tuesdays. I am teaching ukulele to the music group. They are super excited, and I am too. It's a joy to work with them!

Troy Bennett, Play It Right Music

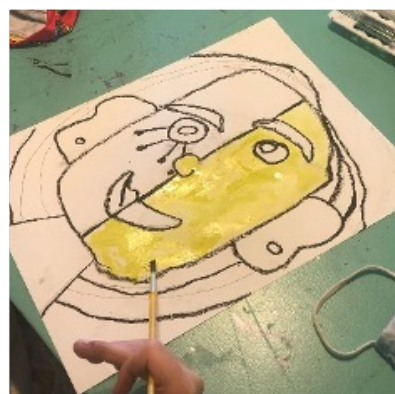
5-8 Drama Workshop

The 5-8 drama students did an excellent job with the January presentation of *The Big Bad Musical* and many were excited to immediately jump back into drama again. They have chosen two plays—*A Murdered Mystery* and *In Memoriam*, have chosen parts, and have begun practicing for presentations prior to the end of the trimester in March. I am excited to work with the drama students while Mr. Bennett works with those who chose ukulele this trimester.

They are excited about their choice of plays and are getting ready for their future performances.

Troy Bennett & Amy Kiddy





PK-8 Physical Education Workshop

All students have been working on their aim by throwing bean bags, frisbees and balls. Pre-K and Kindergarten students continue to participate in tag games and activities associated with throwing bean bags at a target while also doing their locomotive warmups and stretching. Grades 1-4 students have been learning how to properly throw frisbees and balls to a target. They played different games and activities that helped them improve their aim, and grades 3-4 also participated in a team building exercise to help them learn how to work together, communicate clearly and think creatively.

Grades 5-8 learned how to properly throw a frisbee to prepare them to play frisbee golf. We also played "capture the flag," flag football and yoga. We are currently working on team building exercises and learning how to become a better team player. We will continue these exercises to strengthen communication and recognize how to become a better team player.

Next month we will be jump roping! When the weather does not permit us to be outside we will do yoga inside. Yoga increases flexibility and balance and teaches techniques to breathe and relax the mind.

Sarina Eckhardt

PK-8 Art Workshop

During the month of January, art students were busy using a variety of mediums such as watercolor and tempera paint, oil pastels, paper, yarn, markers, and sharpie markers.

After returning from the winter break, students studied the art of Pablo Picasso and painted "mixed up faces" in the Cubist style with oil pastels and watercolor paint. In another art lesson, they discussed point of view and tints and shades of colors. Students then used the subject of the familiar snowman and those concepts to create their compositions. At the end of the month, students used yarn to weave straight and round weavings. It was a great lesson for building fine motor skills.

In the month of February, students are studying the art of Pop artists- Keith Haring, Jim Dine, Peter Max, Romero Britto, Chris Uphues, and Burton Morris. They discovered that many of these artists used hearts as subjects for their artwork. Students then used their choice of medium to create their Pop Art masterpieces.

Also, during the months of January and February, all students in grades 5-8 will have art with me on Thursdays. They enjoyed discussing Japanese Anime and created their own Anime portraits as well as creating Pop Art Hearts.



It is truly a joy to teach the student's at CTL! They are all unique, creative individuals. Getting to know them and to see them create art is a magical experience.

Pam Mayo

CTL High

9-10 English I & II

In Grades 9-10 English, we have entered the world of Journalism. Students have learned what it means to be a good and ethical journalist and what makes news newsworthy. We discussed bias and how to spot it and what it means to listen to all sides to form your own conclusion.

We finished our second read aloud, the classic fantasy tale, *The Hobbit*, by J.R.R. Tolkien. The students gobbled up the classic writing and story-telling and would love to now view all three film adaptations of the novel. We have moved on to a new genre of sci-fi to read *Jurassic Park* by International Best Seller, Michael Crichton. The students are loving the technical writing and science woven into the suspenseful story of a biolab creating dinosaurs in today's modern society.

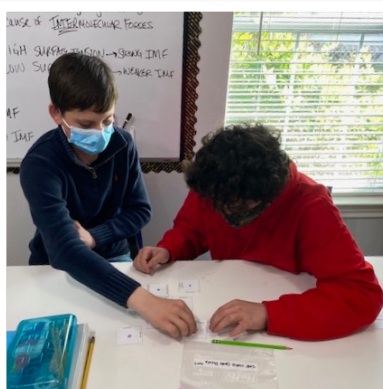
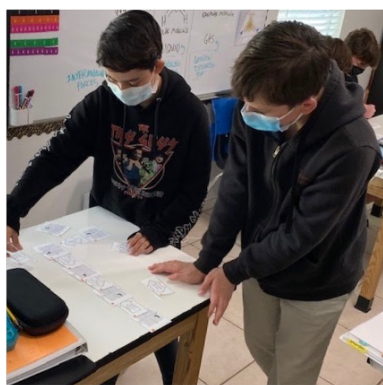
We have also enjoyed listening to our second round of book presentations of books the students select to read in their independent reading time each day. Students script out their presentations in essay format and provide a 'sparkle' to keep their audience engaged and interested. My favorite part of these presentations is listening to the quotes students select. They are often perfectly chosen and illustrate a deep understanding of the themes being tackled. Their books cover a range of themes, genres, and topics. It is great to see students exposing themselves to books that might not otherwise be on their radar and then sharing those books with their classmates in a creative and engaging way.

We have much to look forward to in the month of February with Publishing Day of our short stories, round three of Book Projects, and digging into more books. What a wonderful month of kindness we have to look forward to!

Kristy Moreno

9-10 Geometry

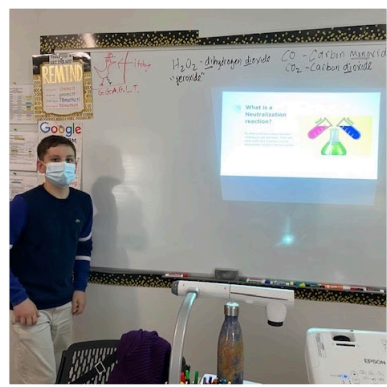
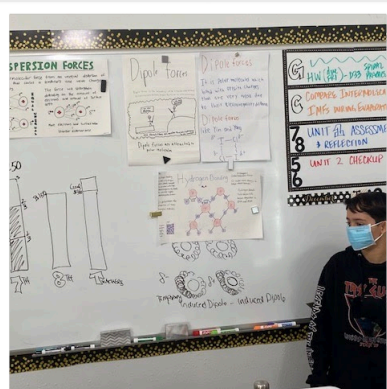
In Geometry, the 9th and 10th graders continued their work in the Transformations unit when we returned from break in January 2021.



Students analyzed ***rigid motion transformations*** such as ***Translations*** (“slides”), ***Reflections*** across various lines and ***Rotations*** about various points within the coordinate plane. We utilized Desmos, a graphing website, often to visualize these transformations and investigate properties such as reflectional and rotational symmetry. Students also used simple aids such as dry erase markers and sheet protectors to trace images and perform these transformations. They were then challenged to perform a ***composition of transformations*** which included two or more rigid motion transformations to reach a desired final image from a pre-image. Students became familiar with justifying their transformations through coordinate notation descriptions showing how each point of the pre-image mapped onto the final image. In the above images, they worked to complete a “transformation maze” where they had to find rigid motion transformations that connected 6 different images in some way.

Students work with rigid motion transformations transferred into the next unit on ***Congruence and Similarity*** in February as they investigated what specific criteria makes any two images have the same size and shape. This introductory activity led into a deep discussion of the meaning of ***congruence*** and how we can determine if two figures are congruent. We began with triangles and through an interactive Desmos activity, determined the specific minimum criteria (using sides and angles) needed to prove two triangles are congruent. They then learned how many of the properties and relationships within triangles are formalized into ***postulates, theorems and corollary statements***. Students are now using these to write ***triangle congruence proofs*** in a two-column proof format using the ***logic and reasoning*** concepts developed earlier in the year. Geometric proofs can feel like learning a new language, but I am happy to see that students' confidence and proficiency is growing in this area as we apply proofs to additional concepts. Next, we will investigate the ***properties of parallelograms*** and apply previous knowledge of angle relationships within parallel and perpendicular lines to these 2D figures. ***Similarity*** will then be introduced using the non-rigid motion transformation of ***dilations*** which create smaller or larger images while maintaining angle relationships and proportionality of side lengths.

As you know, I was teaching from home for a few weeks in January due to COVID exposure and I was very proud of all my students who were flexible and worked diligently during that challenging learning situation. We utilized Google Classroom during this time on a daily basis, and students have agreed that they would like to continue to use Google Classroom for the remainder of the year for posting and submitting homework assignments and course materials. Please make sure your student replenishes their supplies as needed and feel free to reach out to me with any questions or



concerns via Remind Direct Message (Remind App - Class code @geomctl) or by email.

Rachelle Petrovic

9-10 Chemistry

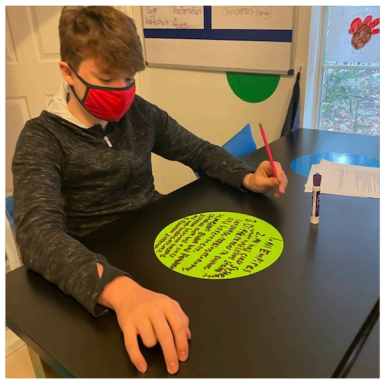
In Chemistry when we returned from the holiday break, the 9th and 10th graders began focusing on chemical reactions by first learning about how chemists use the concept of **the Mole** as the unit for the amount of a chemical substance. In order to begin using the Mole to convert between grams of a substance and moles of the same substance in a chemical reaction, students needed a review of **scientific notation** and an introduction to **dimensional analysis**. Students became familiar with using conversion factors and dimensional analysis using real life examples like calculating how much money is needed for a road trip given gas mileage of vehicle and price for gasoline. These non-science examples helped transition into calculating mole conversions between grams, moles and number of molecules. Using a PhET simulations from STEMscopes, students learned how to **balance chemical equations** and determine **limiting and excess reactants**. All of these concepts culminated in stoichiometric calculations using mass of reactants and products and **percent yield** based on the chemical equation. To learn about reaction types, students each researched one of **six different types of chemical reactions** and presented to their classmates and created anchor chart posters. Chemical nomenclature was used to write chemical formulas and **name chemical compounds** for both ionic and molecular compounds. Our next project will involve students selecting a reaction in which they will design an experiment from beginning to end. They will have to source the chemicals and equipment needed, identify chemical storage requirements and safety measures and calculate the amounts of each reactant required to produce a specific amount of all products, then create a plan for disposal.

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Rachelle Petrovic

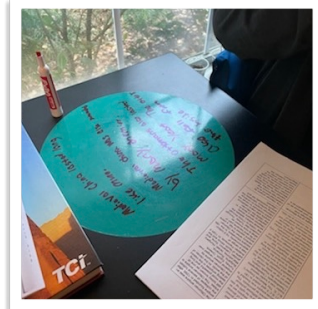
9-10 World History

In World History the students continued on their journey of researching and learning about medieval civilizations. After much rich discussion about all of the medieval civilizations studied in



December, January saw the students in 9th and 10th grade look back at the information gathered about their two chosen medieval civilizations and compare and contrast them with other civilizations discussed from the time period. Then each student created a photo album or photo collage about their civilizations to present to their classmates. The photos they discovered and shared were both historical and beautiful to see. This was really enjoyable and added to our body of knowledge about each civilization.

From there, the students formed a medieval newspaper publication company in order to create and publish a *Medieval Historical Global News* newspaper. One student was elected editor and the other students are journalists writing articles about events that happened in their chosen civilizations in medieval times. Once written they are being formatted by the team of journalists and submitted to the editor for final approval. This will be published over the next week or two so be looking for a copy of our *Medieval Historical Global News* soon!



While this is being edited and published our students have become the head of their civilizations state department and are analyzing international relations for their civilization. This knowledge and information will be consolidated into a governmental report by the head of the state department, and CTL will host a world summit of medieval nations where delegates from each civilization will come together to negotiate and discuss issues with their neighboring countries. They are most excited to dress up in their civilizations native dress for that day. We will also hold a medieval civilizations festival to share our vast knowledge and culture of our civilizations with each other and the school sometime soon.

Amy Kiddy

9-10 Spanish

The great Spanish students at CTL started 2021 with their right foot, with a positive mindset and with powerful New Year's resolutions. During January we focused on learning about everyday activities, describing what others do and places they go, mastering the speaking skills such as providing personal information with fluency and great pronunciation as well as expressing likes and dislikes .



I really love their creativity and how they enjoy their foreign language class every day. For a hands-on activity they created a poster with their “Propósitos de Año Nuevo” (New Year’s Resolution), so by the end of the school year we can go back and check how many they were able to accomplish so far.

February is the month of love! As a hands-on activity for Valentine’s Day, my amazing students spelled out what love is for them in Spanish with a powerful phrase AMOR ES, ESPAÑOL which means Love is Spanish.

Patricia Padraza

9-10 College & Career Readiness

In December the 9th and 10th graders had taken a full PSAT practice test. With PSAT on our minds in January, the school began the process of getting permission to hold PSAT tests on campus for our students. This is in the works and we will know soon if it will be allowed. The students looked back at what they struggled with the most and section by section learned strategies for success on the PSAT. We are now applying those strategies weekly with a 10-minute PSAT question warm-up at the beginning of class. Already the students feel more comfortable and confident in their test-taking skills and have seen an improvement in the number of correct answers chosen. We will continue to do this in class.

We are also excited about our collaborative with Lone Star College for the dual credit program and shared information last week at an informational meeting with parents. On Fridays students who are interested in the dual credit program for next year will have the opportunity to complete the application process and prepare for the TSIA2 entrance exam for that program.

We have also started learning about budgeting and money management in our life skills unit. Students have chosen a career path and were given an average salary after college. With that information they are researching and planning a monthly spending budget by finding affordable housing, cars, insurance and all other necessities and expenses a person would incur. Next they are creating a resume and interviewing for internships to experience this process as we delve more into the life skills unit.

All of them are really enjoying our Friday mornings together.

Amy Kiddy

