



January 2017

21st Century Learning @St. Aloysius Academy

4th graders rang in the New Year with a forensic unit – “Missing Money Mystery”. Over the course of 4 weeks, they learned about the importance of observation and the careful recording of data. After finding evidence, they mapped it using triangulation. They became a toxicologist and tested properties and reactions of various powders. After finding fiber as trace evidence, they determined if it was natural or synthetic using the microscope. Students learned that physical evidence can also be class evidence – a shoe print or tire track cannot lead to a conviction because many people might have the same shoe or tires. Another example of class evidence is an encoded message which students had to practice decoding. On the other hand, a lip print is a unique evidence like a finger print. Putting on a new hat, they became geologists and examined soil types. After looking at the “means, motive and opportunity” of each of the four suspects, the class solved this mystery.



Our “lunchbunchers”, boys and girls who are in their 3rd year at the Clockhouse, come to the “Big School” for science, art, music, Spanish and Mandarin Chinese. They team up with our



kindergarteners for science class. They learned facts about what makes a reptile a reptile. They even made their very own snake puppets. Then they moved on to mammals and painted these warm-blooded, furry animals.

Speaking of hands on STEM projects, our 8th graders participated in the Future City competition. This year’s theme was publicly owned land use. Students presented their solutions via a virtual city design using SimCity; a 1,500 word essay; a scale model using recycled products only; a project plan and a very creative skit presentation to judges at Regional Competitions on January 21. They were awarded the “Thinking Outside the Box” award for their underground transportation system and the “Institute for Electrical and Electronic Engineers, Philadelphia Section” award. This certainly gave our students a feeling if a career in engineering is for them.



Creative writing can be fiction, poetry or creative nonfiction and any other format where the purpose is to express thoughts, feelings and emotions rather than to simply convey information. Beginning in kindergarten, our students are assigned creative writing pieces.

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Our primary grade students have terrific imaginations. First graders wrote about what they would do if they “were a snowman at play”. They would “make a dipping hill for belly flopping”, “go sledding and drink cold cocoa”, “play snow football all night” and “make a snow cake”.

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In second grade, students are learning about snow. They are exploring the unique-ness of snowflakes, and then writing about how they are as unique as a snowflake. Students dip into creative writing explaining what they would do if they were stuck in a snow globe. Everything from hockey to snow angels

to igloos to looking for football playing penguins was mentioned. Carrying the snowball theme into math, the boys are using marshmallows to create "snowball arrays" to illustrate the commutative property of multiplication.

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No, Santa Claus is not coming to town, the British are! 7th graders re-wrote song lyrics to demonstrate facts and comprehension of a period of time, an event or battle that led to or occurred during the Revolutionary War.

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Our 6th graders are blessed with having a class dedicated to public speaking. They have been working on fractured fairy tales which they will present to the class using lots of expression in their voices.

Our 5th grade class teamed up with the young ladies at Villa Maria Lower School to begin the 5th annual Reading Olympics. The event encourages students to read more, to read a greater variety and learn to enjoy discussing books they have read with others. They are divided into teams of ten and reported on books they have read and enjoyed. One of the books they all will read by the May competition is "Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes" by Eleanor Coerr. In keeping with that theme, each student made an origami item.P



We honored the memory of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. as 4th grade did a presentation about what they learned about his life. The video of the presentation can be seen on our facebook page – facebook.com/StAloysiusAcademy. 1st graders wrote what they could do to be like Martin Luther King Jr. They would "help others, pray to Jesus, not judge others, be peace agents and help make the world a better place".

4th grade continues their in-depth study of Pennsylvania. They are now aware of the natural wonders like Pine Creek (AKA.....the Grand Canyon of Pennsylvania) to the human-made wonders like Chocolate World in Hershey Park. They are in awe of what resources our state has to offer beyond the Philadelphia boundaries.

During January, in preparation for Catholic Schools Week, every student during art class created their own imaginative "helping hand." Each grade level was given a specific medium and style to work within. The results were equally striking and amazing. While each hand was distinctly and individually unique, the end result demonstrated that even when appearing different, we are truly all the same members of God's family!



"I believe in God, the Creator Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. . . " 3rd grade learned about the Apostles' Creed and understand that a creed is a statement of beliefs, and that the Apostles' Creed is just that, a statement of the Apostles' beliefs. They deconstructed every line of the creed to gain an in-depth understanding of the foundation of our Church.

Our 8th graders and some 7th graders journeyed to the Penn Museum as the first step in The Student Diplomat Program / Jr. Model United Nations, a five-month journey introducing middle school students from around the Greater Philadelphia area to the world of international relations and cultural diplomacy. With an emphasis on developing students' research, writing and communication skills, The Student Diplomat Program meets a growing demand for international affairs curricula in area middle schools. The program offers students an exciting opportunity to examine global conflicts and trends while working together to create promising solutions to some of the world's greatest challenges. Additionally, it is designed with an emphasis on building cultural competency and diplomatic skills; expanding knowledge of world geography, cultures and political structures; and increasing understanding of how national and international institutions tackle key global issues.

6th graders spent January wrapping up their study of Africa. Ms. Goode, one of our 8th grade teachers shared pictures from her travels through the southern part of the continent. A study of Nelson Mandela's nation building inspired all of us. The boys are now engrossed in their Africa projects. These projects include everything from African tribal masks, ecosystem dioramas, Jeopardy games to commercials for an imaginary resort in Africa.

5th grade social studies finished up the Midwest region of the USA and is heading into the Southwest and Rocky Mountain regions. Videos showing the awe-inspiring beauty of the Grand Canyon have led to a study of the reasoning behind creating our National Parks. The 5th graders agree with Theodore Roosevelt when he said, "...keep it for your children, your children's children, and for all who come after you..."

In Spanish class, kindergarteners and 1st graders have learned about farm animals while 2nd graders now can say members of their family in Spanish. 3rd graders have focused on fruits and vegetables and 4th and 5th graders are practicing how to order breakfast in a Spanish speaking country.