LIBRARY AND TECHNOLOGY

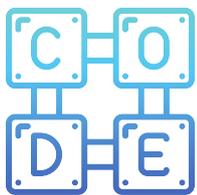*November and December 2021*

BOOK FAIR

A huge thank you to everyone who supported the library with their purchases from the Fall Book Fair. It was our best year ever! Because of your support, the library will be able to purchase about 60 new books and materials. The books to be purchased will be student favorites including new nonfiction animal books for all reading levels, adventure and survival chapter books, STEM materials, graphic novels, and delightful new picture books.

BOOKMOBILE

The Bookmobile or Book Car will be returning to Amsterdam starting in December. If it is the book car, please help your children place holds on items they would like delivered.

HOUR OF CODE WEEK: DECEMBER 6–12

An Amsterdam favorite, Hour of Code week is the kick-off for computer programming units. Students in every grade will participate in coding lessons the week of December 6-12. Computer programming not only teaches important 21-century computer skills, but it also develops problem-solving, teamwork, and resiliency. Students should be ready to "Make beautiful mistakes!" all unit long.

K–1

In Library, kindergarteners and first-grade students will be engaging in seasonal stories during November and December. Fiction stories will be paired with nonfiction books as students explore the special science, weather, holidays, and traditions that make this time of the year so wonderful.

In November Technology, both grades will continue to develop their Google Tool skills. Kindergarteners will be expanding their Google Slide skills to include adding colors to charts and early typing skills. First-graders will be creating Google Docs and Slides about autumn. In December, both grades will be coding all month long as they develop and enrich their early computer programming skills on Kodable.

2–3/4

In Library, cultural stories take a focus in November. Second-grade students will be enjoying folktales from American Indians of Montana. Third-grade will continue to explore Cinderellas from around the world. The Third/Fourth combo is enjoying Animal Heroes from different countries and regions and they will continue with this unit into December.

In November Technology, second grade is reviewing and enhancing their abilities to create well-crafted Google Slide presentations. They will also be doing some research on Montana Tribes. Third and Third/Fourth will be learning how to annotate a Google Map by creating pins for the countries we visit in our stories and adding pictures and information to each pin. In December, all these grades will be coding using Code.org to learn increasingly more sophisticated coding skills.

FOURTH

November will be full of research for the fourth-grade class in both Library and Technology. The students decided to do a Geo-Inquiry investigation for their National Park research unit this year. In the coming weeks, they will be developing a high-quality question, collecting information, and creating a presentation including visual elements.

While the research will continue in Library in December, students will be coding in Technology throughout the month. I always look forward to the fantastic snowflakes this grade creates with code. Though the process is quite a struggle, even the simplest mistake in code can create beautiful unique snowflakes. By the end, students are often creating "mistakes" on purpose just to develop more intricate snowflakes.

FIFTH

Fifth-grade students will become archaeologists in November as they investigate the 1880 claim by Yellowstone National Park superintendent Philetus Norris that American Indians were seldom found in the Park. As part of their investigation, they will examine detailed drawings of artifacts, learn about Ice Patch archaeology, conduct online research, analyze primary source documents, and create a persuasive letter about the truth or error to Mr. Noris' claim.

In December Technology, they will take a quick break in order to participate in Hour of Code week. Then they will become history detectives again as they search for the truth of American Indians in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

SIXTH

The sixth-grade class has become quite the world travelers. Throughout October, they researched destinations in North America and South America or Africa, edited a spreadsheet to track the expenses of flights, hotels, food, and excursions at their destination, and created a blog to share their travels. I am very impressed with their work so far! A simple project though it might sound, students have infinite ways of making it more complex as they ask me questions like, "Can we save money by going to the grocery store instead of a restaurant?" (The answer was yes, if they were willing to research the price of the food they wanted in a Vancouver grocery store.) In the coming months, they will continue their travels to the remaining continents and "fix" increasingly less pre-developed spreadsheets.

They will take a quick break from their travels during Hour of Code week to participate in the event.

Ask your sixth-grader to show you their travel blog from their Google Drive. They are amazing and I am very impressed with the quality work from this class!