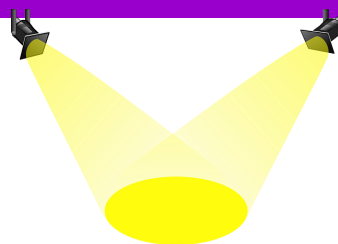




Friends of Johnston ELP

Winter 2020 Newsletter



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Third graders at Lawson Elementary wrote a short piece about the parts of speech in the style of *Grammar Island's* author Michael Clay Thompson. Here is **Quinn H.'s** winning entry:

Five friends got together and discussed something to do.

"Let's jump!" said Verb who loved action

"Out of a plane!" said Preposition

"Oh gosh no." said Interjection, who was always emotional.

"No, on a bed," said Noun.

"And into a pile of pillows," said Conjunction who just wanted to keep his friends together. So off they went to jump into a pile of pillows!

UPCOMING PARENT PROGRAM—7:00PM-8:30PM—JMS MEDIA CENTER

Tuesday, March 31, 2020

2019-2020 ELP Staff			
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Tips from the ELP Coordinator

Molly McConnell

Want to Increase Your Child's Creativity and Productivity? Take a Break from Tech!

As parents, one of our goals for our children is that they become creative and productive members of society. Rapid and constant advancements in technology promise that they will make our lives better, easier; that we can create almost anything and do ALL THE THINGS with our digital device. And it is true that technology has done many things to improve our daily lives. But, as a result we have begun to fall victim to some unhealthy technology habits. Now don't get me wrong. I love technology. I have near immediate access to anything I could want or need with the press of a button on my iPhone. However, I can also admit that I have spent hours "down the rabbit hole" that is Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram.

Back in November I had the privilege to attend the National Association for Gifted Children conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico. While there, I attended a session by Dr. Brian Housand where he discussed the problems with the promises of technology. Here are a couple of them:

Promise #1: Technology will make our lives better and easier!

Problem: We have become so attached to our digital device that it has become habitual to check it. In fact, we are likely spending twice as much time as we think we are on our digital devices. We think social media is a means to build relationships, but we are not having real conversations with real people.

Promise #2: With technology we can create and do ALL THE THINGS!

Problem: Instead of producing with technology, we are consuming. We are keeping ourselves busy and constantly doing things, but only 2% of our digital time is used productively. Multi-tasking is a myth and has been found to increase cortisol (stress), decrease IQ, and make you feel more tired more quickly.

So what do we do about this? Dr. Housand outlines some simple tips and solutions that we can use to defeat distraction from technology and increase our productivity.

- ⇒ **Track how much time** you actually spend on your digital device and what you are doing with your screen time. Apps like ScreenTime (apple devices) and Digital Well Being (Android devices) will track how often you are on your device and which apps you are using the most
- ⇒ **Create boundaries** with your digital device: Turn off your notifications, declutter your digital life by deleting your most used app for one week (or start with one day). See what happens and how much more time you have!
- ⇒ **Use your screen time productively.** Explore higher quality activities to fill in the time you are spending on social media. Find thought-provoking podcasts—Bored and Brilliant is a great book and podcast filled with practical activities that demonstrate how boredom is crucial to being more productive, more creative, and happier.

By just changing one thing when it comes to our technology use, we can become more creative and productive with our time.

For more information from Dr. Brian Housand, check out his website at www.brianhousand.com

News from Johnston Elementary Schools

Submitted by Mitzi Hetherton, Nikki Paradise-Williams, Kristen Hartman, Kate Florer

Some things you might see when visiting the elementary schools....

Kindergarten

- ✎ Whole-class lessons are wrapping up in classrooms. These lessons are designed to help identify gifted and talented behaviors in young children

First Grade

- ✎ Whole-class lessons in classrooms to help identify gifted and talented behaviors in your children are coming to an end
- ✎ Try-A-Tiles
- ✎ Logic Puzzles and Perplexors
- ✎ Analyzing the book *The Eleventh Hour* for clues to solve a mystery

Second Grade

- ✎ Sumoku
- ✎ Coin Clue Puzzles
- ✎ Bananagrams
- ✎ Word Puzzles
- ✎ Logic Links—Puzzles that use a series of clues to instruct a player where to place colored chips to solve the puzzle; this requires deductive reasoning—and determination!
- ✎ Perplexors—students sharpen their deductive reasoning skills with these challenging logic puzzles
- ✎ Study of Milton Hershey and chocolate
- ✎ Deductive reasoning skills
- ✎ Insects & Spiders Challenge

Letters About Literature

A reading and writing contest where students are asked to read a book, poem or speech and write to the author (living or dead) about how the book affected them personally.

Third Grade

- ✎ Literature Circles
- ✎ Real World multiplication scenarios
- ✎ MoLi Stone—gifted curriculum where students explored our numeration system in depth while examining other numeration systems, such as Egyptian, Chinese and a mystery system
- ✎ Geometry and spatial reasoning
- ✎ Math Path Puzzles
- ✎ Pascal's Triangle
- ✎ Mondrian Art Challenge
- ✎ Designed and built tiny houses while applying area, perimeter, and geometry skills

Fourth Grade

- ✎ Caesar's English—a study of Latin stems and advanced vocabulary
- ✎ Peter Pan novel study
- ✎ Chasing Vermeer
- ✎ Letters About Literature
- ✎ Word puzzles
- ✎ Math Olympiads
- ✎ Problem-solving Strategies

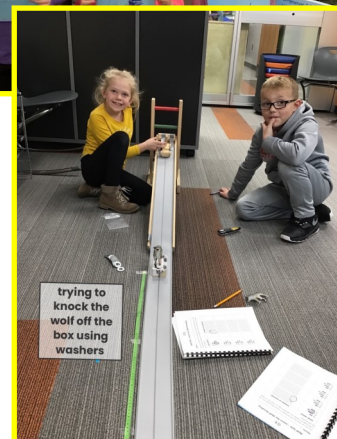
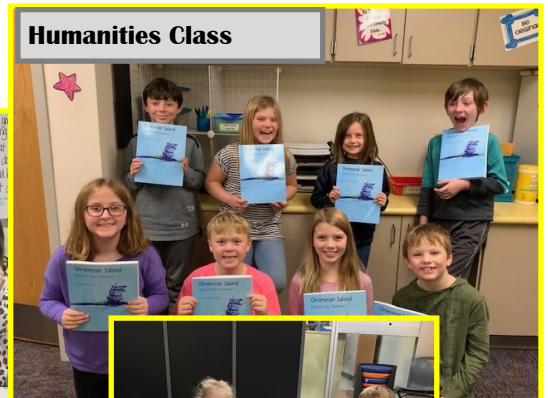
Fifth Grade

- ✎ Caesar's English—a study of Latin stems and advanced vocabulary
- ✎ Math Olympiads
- ✎ Stock Market Game
- ✎ Letters About Literature
- ✎ Studying the Fantasy genre
- ✎ Determining what makes for a good podcast in preparation to participate in NPR's Podcast Challenge this sprint

Happenings at a few of the Elementary Schools



5th Grader visit to the
Local Food Pantry



Wallace and Lawson activities

Johnston Middle School News

Submitted by Molly McConnell

ELP Class

ELP students finished up first semester on January 14th. JMS ELP students turned in some very impressive quarter projects that included novel/story writing, board game creation, card tricks/magic show, as well as research projects on climate change and the water crisis. Students ended the semester with a final activity that tested students skills in non-verbal communication. Students were asked to work with a group to design and build a product without using any verbal or written communication. Students then reflected on how well they worked as a team and what strategies they used to communicate to each other.

ELP Students doing Great Things!

On December 11th 8th grade ELP student Courtney Sweet spoke at a press conference with Governor Reynolds regarding the increase in vaping among middle and high school students. Governor Reynolds shared that she is working with ISTEP- a group created to increase student awareness of the dangers of vaping. ISTEP has two chapters in the Johnston school district and Courtney is on the ISTEP advisory council. Courtney became involved in vaping awareness through an independent study project that began when she was in 7th grade at Summit.



Johnston Middle School News

Submitted by Molly McConnell

The following students have been nominated to participate in the Junior National Youth Leaders Conference in Washington D.C.

The following students have been nominated to participate in the Belin-Blank Summer Institute at the University of Iowa:

Akshara Eswar

Courtney Sweet

Owen Ferguson

Jake Gragg

Maxwell Deacon

Rahul Santharaam

Lauren Wessling

Audrey Allen

Reagan Zierke

Jackson Zimmerman

Abigail Wharton

Mikel Braddy for Advanced Science

Caroline Throener for Invention and Innovation

Lauren Wessling for Leadership

Luna Ceradsky for Visual Arts

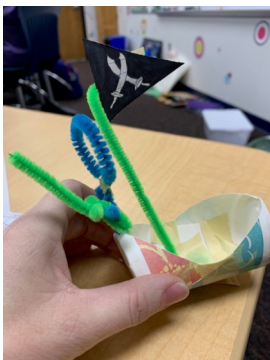
JrNYLC is a program that uses hands-on activities and experiences to help middle school students develop leadership skills.



JMS ELP students using non-verbal communication to create a product out of given materials

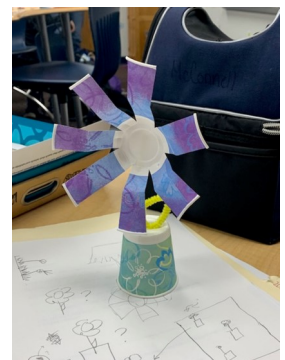
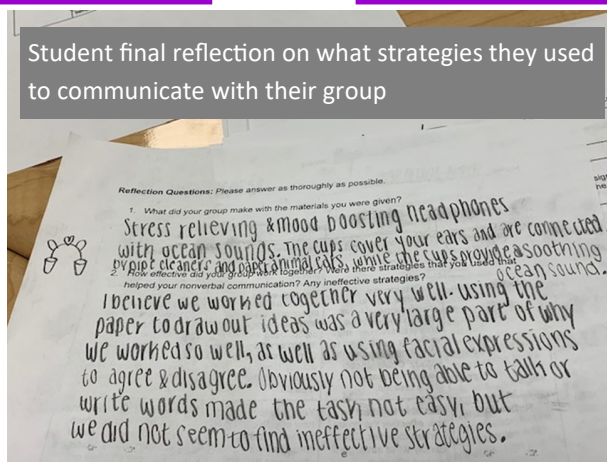


GOOD WORK



Final product example: pirate ship

Student final reflection on what strategies they used to communicate with their group



Final product example: flower

High School News

Submitted by Sue Cline

The first semester wound down with a fun activity designed to allow ELP students to explore the topic of geography. Options included planning a trip, playing geography trivia, dating undated maps, and doing research about a country a student was interested in. We had a great time sharing during the final exam period - each person talking about what they did, with an accompanying visual representation of some sort. I've included a photo submitted by a student to illustrate the concept that her trip was to the creepiest forest she could find. It had deer with fangs and huge crocodiles, etc.



Second semester began with a day to play games, as a way to start getting to know each other. Here are Dylan, Vivian, Tenna, Eric and Joanne learning how to play Fitz-It, a great thinking game.



Academic Decathlon Regional Competition Team members. Check out competition results on the next page!



High School News

Submitted by Sue Cline

Academic Decathlon Regional Competition Results

Congratulations to the Johnston Academic Decathlon teams for a great performance at Regional competition on January 20 and 21. Our three teams garnered a total of 29 ribbons and 2 of the overall top scores after competing in speech, interview, and seven different subject tests related to the theme of Wellness and Disease. We will be competing at State Competition in Waterloo on March 6 and 7. Great job, folks!

All competitors are listed below with their individual awards. Students who qualified for the State team are noted with an *.

Team A	
Honors	
*Adam Ehler (10)	2nd in Speech, 2nd in Economics, 2nd in Social Science
*Morgan Dunn(11)	3rd in Math
*Owen Smith (12)	1st in Music, 1st in Literature, 1st in interview, 3rd in Economics
Scholastic	
Cole Meyers (12)	1st in Economics, 1st in Science, 2nd in Art, 2nd in Social Science
*Will Anderson(10)	3rd in Economics
*Fanuel Akakpo (10)	
Varsity	
*Alex Heron (10)	3rd in Literature
*Payton Blahut (11)	1st in Interview, 1st in Speech

Team C	
Honors	
Phoebe Smith (10)	
Sara Lastine (10)	1st in Social Science
*Matthew Ding (12)	1st in Economics, 1st in Math, 1st in Overall Honors

Team B	
Honors	
Elise Henrichsen (10)	2nd in Literature
Kristin To (10)	3rd in Social Science
Kidan Girma	
Scholastic	
*Fabiola Casteneda (11)	2nd in Speech
*Sam Dolde (12)	2nd in Economics, 3rd in Interview, 3rd in Music, 3rd in Science
Varsity	
*Jacob Knox (12)	
*Emma Renaud (12)	1st in Literature, 3rd in Music, 3rd in Interview

Alternates
Bea LaRota (10) - 1st Overall among alternates

