

Mrs. Wilson's Fourth Grade Newsletter

Volume 15 Issue 8

206.935.0651 X110, or cwilson@guadalupe-school.org

October 19, 2020

Science!

By now you know, our science study is Energy. In the early days of distance learning I made a commitment to continue hands on science experiences. Yes, we still use the book and online resources that include tutorials and interactive activities, but the bulk of our science involves investigations where we are called to figure things out. We do this as we practice putting things together, prediction, discussion, trying again, observation, discussion, recording our experiences, and thinking. We have already looked at energy and built electric circuits powered by D-cells (flashlight batteries). In the weeks ahead we explore electromagnetism, light, collisions, and waves. All our experiences will build an understanding that energy is evident when there is motion, electric current, sound, light, or heat, and that energy can travel from place to place.

You can increase your child's understanding and interest in energy and electromagnetism by asking him or her to talk about the investigations we are doing in zoom or through videos. Also, look for ways the whole family can look more closely at energy, energy conservation, and the uses of electricity and magnetism around your home. You may find energy at work running different appliances, magnets holding notes on the refrigerator or securing cabinets doors, and electromagnets in motors and speakers. It can be lots of fun to make inventories of magnets and electric appliances. We will also be finding out about alternative sources of energy such as wind power and solar power... we look to our own OLG gym for real life application.

One thing we will stress in our study of energy is safety. You may want to review your home safety rules, such as never put any object other than a certified plug into wall sockets. Keep magnets away from magnetized credit cards, old watches and computers. I look forward to continued engagement through our investigations with energy and electromagnetism.

Zooms, Breakout Rooms:

My afternoon zooms have naturally fallen into a routine with a full class lesson, discussion and task and then smaller group work. The smaller group work is done in breakout rooms where 3-5 students share, discuss and work together. I jump from room to room. This virtual independence allows students to take the lead with an awareness that I pop in to ensure all is well. Students sometimes finish the zoom lesson but stay to complete other tasks. They have learned to share their screens and sometimes watch my videos together, pausing, rewinding and discussing. At the point where some students are done, I invite them to leave the zoom. Some students typically stay late and talk becomes casual.

I realize there are many ways to learn. Some students work best on their own, others alongside a peer. Some students respond well to my videos, pausing me, speeding me up and viewing according to their own schedule. Others need the zooms, where questions are asked and discussion is key. At the fourth grade level independent work and communicating understanding through writing is also key. True in person, true remotely, many ways to learn.

Nuts and Bolts

VFW essay contest:

VFW rough drafts will be returned to students on Friday, 10/23. Along with that rough draft you will find a stamped, addressed envelope to the VFW chapter for easy submission. I ask but do not require students to take their rough draft to final draft, follow the instructions and submit essays and participation form on their own. Thank you, parents for supporting your children in this process.

Also on 10/23 pick up, families will find a "Party Bag" for their child to be put aside until our Halloween Zoom, scheduled for Tuesday, 10/27. Part of the fun is opening our party bags for the first time, all together, in zoom. Thank you to our new room parent, Elicia Howell, for organizing this project.

Look for an all school email regarding conference sign up. Conferences 10/28-10/30.