



Voyager News!

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Edition #1

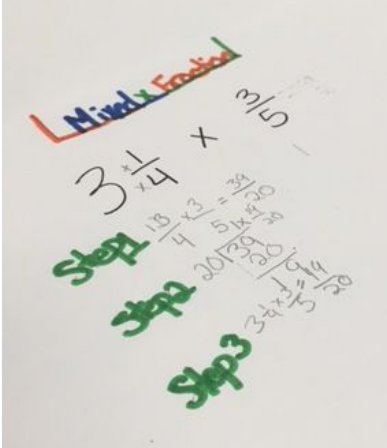
March 2019



By Voyager Teachers

Welcome to our first edition of Voyager News! Our aim is to keep you aware of news and events that impact Voyagers and the SLAMS Community. We hope our teacher and student-created publication is helpful and informative.

Fragments, Snippets, and Smatterings

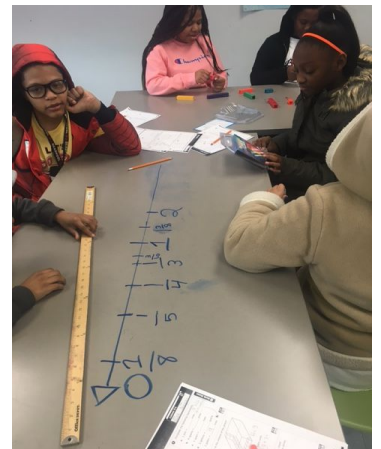


by Monique Carter

Voyagers continue to work, investigate and inquire about fractions. We continue to practice operations with fractions. With our last math project, Cooking with Fractions, multiplying fractions and mixed numbers was at the foundation of our work. In the coming month we will dedicate a *fraction* of our time to further operations with

fractions (addition, subtraction, division).

Understanding charts, tables and graphs is another focus of our next unit. Over the past few weeks students have constructed line and box and whisker plots and will learn more about bar, histograms, and broken line graphs. Students may need a great deal of assistance with our next project, so please look for an email from myself concerning our new project and its requirements.



As with Pathfinders, Voyagers are too working on collaboration and accountability in math. Recently students were introduced to a rubric where they are asked to consider and then rate their

participation, involvement, and inquiry in class. This practice, we hope, will assist in creating a participation grade for students and allow them to have further conversations surrounding their role in math class and their math learning. Our rubric is in its initial stages and we hope to keep parents

Core Value	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	COMMENTS
INQUIRY. Student asks meaningful questions about the task to prepare. Questions asked while working enhance the investigation.					
Collaboration. Student listens when others speak, both in groups and with individual class work. Student incorporates or builds off of the ideas of others instead of putting others down.					
Process. Individual/Group gets started on the problem without assistance or redirections from the instructor. The group has a plan of some sort before calling the teacher over. Groups persevere through problem solving. Class time is used wisely and the student and/or group is not a source of disruption/distraction for others.					
Research. Student is almost always prepared for class with assignments and required class materials. Uses chromebook appropriately (in research of facts or to complete a lesson).					
Knowledge. Student appropriately applies skills learned in class, other groups methods and previous knowledge to the problem.					

updated as to student reflections and goals students may begin to set for themselves on a weekly basis.

Lastly, we also plan to dedicate our next month toward more explicit practice for the upcoming Pennsylvania System of School Assessment. Students will practice interpreting the stories within word problems and utilizing their calculator to provide solutions for the problems presented within those stories. Families will also find great use in the resources from the Pennsylvania Department of Education website. The PSSA resources found there are useful for in preparing for the upcoming assessment. Families are encouraged to review the PSSA material to get a better handle of what students are asked to know by the end of fifth and sixth grade. For a direct link to the website, click [here](#).

Humanities Updates

By Hilary Hamilton

The second half of the school year is off to a great start in Voyager Humanities. Following our Unit 3: Current Events in Communities, Voyagers reflected on our seven museum topics and voted on that they wanted to learn about more in-depth. Student chose the fight for LGBTQ rights in American History - and so our winter study began!

This transition began with a personal journey where Voyagers narrated their own 'single' and 'other' stories, inspired by "The Danger of a Single Story" Ted Talk by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

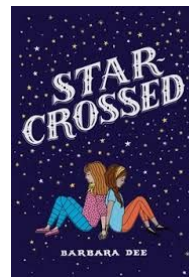
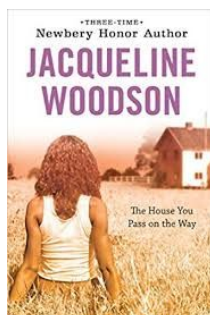
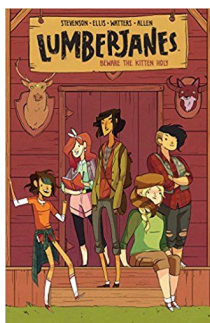
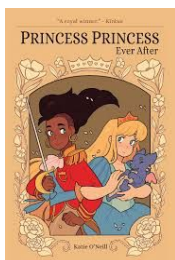
This writing provided an opportunity for students to recognize assumptions we often make of others and others of us. Using the power of words students fought against these single stories and crafted what they hope others will see them as in the future.



Currently, Voyagers are participating in book groups focused on one of several LGBTQ middle school novels and practicing specific reading comprehension skills while discussing the book with their group. Specifically, students are working on summarizing, making predictions, asking questions, making connections, and doing close-reading and passage analysis. For their project in these book groups, students are also researching and building annotated book list of other texts they want to order for our classroom libraries. Each group has \$60 to spend with the goal of promoting the visibility of underrepresented groups as we work to be inclusive and push against the assumptions and single stories people hold.

We're excited to see what books students choose to purchase!

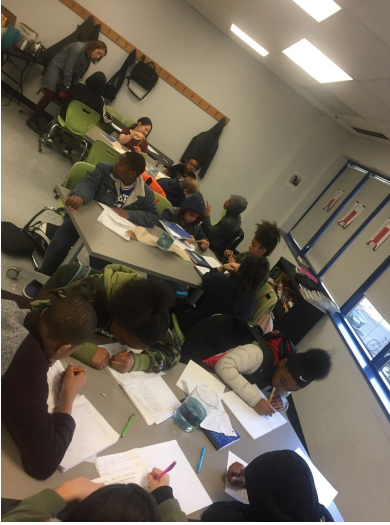
Want to hear more about what students are doing? Ask your Voyager to tell you about their book group book and show you their written work in the book group folder on google drive.



Science Updates

by Shannon Stones

Voyager scientists have been learning about the Earth's atmosphere. This is a special unit written by Ms. Potts as a part of her PhD studies. I'm excited to say that our students are among the first to be receiving instruction in this way. Through this research, other schools will be able to benefit from the learning tools which we are implementing at SLAMS.



This unit will explore how the atmosphere keeps us alive and the convection currents that maintain a climate where we can survive. The focus of the atmosphere unit is to develop scientific writing skills through claim, evidence, and reasoning. Students are exercising the core value of research through lab activities, videos, and readings and presenting their knowledge through writing.

What we think or assume may not be true: through this unit, our goal is to see students using facts and data to prove their point of view to others. This is an important skill for communicating with others, but for students to start making claims about their opinions and perspectives on real-world problems.

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Mini-Course Experiences

by Matias Barreto, Jaelynn Fields, Lucia Raboteau

This month in Mini-Courses, as always, there are a lot of interesting varieties of Mini-Courses to choose from! In this article, brought to you by Matias, Jaelynn, and Lucia, we are going to be sharing with you what we're doing in our Mini-Courses, what we're learning, what we're exploring. There were so many Mini-Courses this session that at the Mini-Course Fair, I know I had some trouble deciding which Mini-Course to pick, because all of them seemed, as always, top-notch and amazing! The Mini-Courses we will talk about in this article are only a few of the wide variety there are. We hope you enjoy this article!

Matias: One Mini-Course is Arts and Crafts with Ms. Lucy and Ms. Jessica. It's a Mini-Course where you can do different cool crafts, such as Papier-mâché, or making sugar skulls. Last year it was called Pinterest Arts and Crafts because many of their ideas came from Pinterest.com. This Mini-Course is totally recommended, in case there's a student reading this, and even if you're not, you should know, it's very fun. This time around, our project for this Arts and Crafts Mini-Course was making a Papier-mâché mask, or, if we didn't feel like making a mask, just a Papier-mâché something, such as a small figurine. I chose to make a mask. I started

off with a base—a pre-made mask, and then I had to apply tape and things to it to make it stand out once I coated it with Papier-mâché. But, see, the thing is, by the time we had to apply the coat of Papier-mâché, I didn't really know what the heck I was making, so I did the logical thing: stuck a cardboard knife into one of the mask's eyes, gave it a thick duct tape mustache, and gave it a wine cork cigarette. There! Perfect! Looks like a morbidly injured and unhealthy butler with fat cheeks and a thin-looking thick mustache! Then I masked everything with multiple layers of tape, and finally I coated it all with a nice, thick gleaming coat of Papier-mâché. Week after that, I painted it all white—in the artist world, that is known as *priming*. Next week, as of writing this article, I'll paint it all different colors! (Now that'll be something.) Then, we might parade around the school grounds at night with our masks on and scream horrible curses. Or, of course, we could show them off at the upcoming Mini-Course Showcase, which you should *totally* come to, even though it's not that that big of a thing. So this is what we did this Mini-Course in Arts and Crafts with Ms. Lucy and Ms. Jessica, and what this Mini-Course is generally about. Hope you enjoyed reading this as much as I enjoyed writing this!

Lucia: I am in a weaving mini-course. Weaving is pulling thread under and over many other strings. I chose weaving because I like arts and crafts and I've never tried it before. There is way more weaving techniques than I thought such as straw weaving, foot floor looms, hand floor looms, and back strap looms so I've learned a lot. I've also learned about other cultures because weaving is common in many cultures. Mini-courses is a lot of fun but at the same time we learn a lot. For instance we learned about a tribe in Mexico and got to try out a new type of weaving loom. So far I have made a mug rug, a key chain, a bracelet and yarn. At the end of mini courses there is a mini course show case. This is when the performance based mini courses show what they know! Of course weaving is not performance based, but I had fun watching other mini courses such as hip-hop and capoeira.

Jaelynn: What do we do in Mini-Courses? What Is my Mini-Course? Whats my experience in my Mini-Course? So many questions shall I answer them all? Let's start with "What is my Mini-Course?", My Mini-Course is the Excite Center. At first I was so confused on to what it was, as I filled out the Mini-Course sheet. Sooner or later, I of course found out that that was my Mini-Course. And that it was based off of robotics and tech, an so I was cool with that. Now let's bring our attention to the present day, which is | 2019 February 26th, Tuesday 2:58 pm (which

is the time I'm writing this) and focus on the fact that we have to present our robots tomorrow, and I'm a full on coward. But enough about me being scared, and more about the Mini-Course. So I bet you're thinking, "What really is her Mini-Course, because at this point she's just wasting my time." SO.. let me explain, My Mini-Course is where you can express your love of music, and so your love of robotics. In my Mini-Course we are doing an assignment on putting both motors, and and instruments together. My Instrument was an tamborine, I believe.

Rover Explorations

by Mason Crawley and Raven Waring

What is a Rover Exploration?.....Well it's a time where people get to research and learn about cool exciting topics. Of course, we get to make a project about each topic we choose like, when someone did a project on the Vietnam War, and someone else made a project about global warming, or a project on video games. Overall rover time is a great time where we can learn about new things that can make our learning way more exciting.

Raven: My very first Rover project was about the curiosity rover.....I know it's sort of ironic but it turned out to be a great project. I worked with Narayana Weld and Matias Barretto. For our presentation we created a slideshow on google slides and I made a rover model out of thick paper, I was going to make it out of clay but that didn't really work so I ended up just using extra thick paper. In the end we presented a great rover project! We talked about the intelligence on the curiosity rover and how the NASA space program made this amazing machine we also had a slide that showed a tracking system for the curiosity rover. Honestly this project was really fun and I'm really excited to make more!

Mason: One of my rover explorations was about Pompeii and Mount Vesuvius I worked on it with Zafir Miles. I wrote about how Mount Vesuvius erupted. "Mount Vesuvius is an active volcano , it will erupt again. The oldest dated rock at Mt. Vesuvius is about 300,000 years old. It was collected from a well drilled near the volcano"(quote from project). Mount Vesuvius buried pompeii in ash and you can see the people trying to escape. It killed over 16,000 people. This project was also really fun and I'm really excited to make more.

Questions or Comments?

Please reach out!

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Be sure to check out our second edition of the Voyager Newsletter, coming out in April!