

Arts & Letters

PARENT BLAST

Upcoming Events

April 3rd- April 13th- Spring Break (No School)

April 14th-16th NYS ELA Test

April 22nd-24th NYS Math Test

Announcements

Please complete and return the NYCDOE Parent Survey if you haven't done so already!

Our school is beginning a new partnership with Farmigo, which is an online farmer's market that delivers on a weekly basis to Arts & Letters (and gives 10% of sales directly to the school as a fundraiser). Deliveries are made on Mondays and pick is from 3-4 in the gym. Check out www.farmigo.com/artsandletters for more information and to sign up for next week.



Dear families,

Five weeks ago I had a meeting with two of our 7th graders and an educator from City Growers, one of our afterschool programs. The students, Yujin and Cecely, talked me through a Power Point proposal about bringing baby chicks to Arts & Letters for two weeks at the end of March. The presentation was very thorough, detailing how the chicks would get to Arts & Letters, how they would be contained and cared for, and where they would go after their time at our school (a cage-free farm upstate). The 7th graders also created a proposed schedule for

lower grades students to visit the chicks during their stay at Arts & Letters. I was poker-faced throughout the presentation, but they had me at "baby chicks."

Sixteen chicks (yellow, red, black and orange) arrived last Monday and we have had a lot of caregivers and admirers cycling in and out of Ms. Steiner's room and the main office. Apart from four years of college in a

somewhat rural town in Minnesota I have never lived outside of a city, so tending to farm animals is a very new experience for me. At their presentation, I asked Cecely and Yujin why we would only have two weeks with the chicks and they told me that during the fourteen days at Arts & Letters the chickens would probably double in size, quickly outgrowing their cage. Just during the days that they have been with us the chicks have grown a lot. Last Monday they were little puffballs and by today they were twice as big, beginning to practice using their wings and fluttering from one side of the cage to the other.

The kids, big and small, are really curious about these temporary visitors. They have been holding the chicks so carefully and clucking and crowing along with them. It is very sweet. I hope that you got a chance to visit with the chicks and see what the fuss is about.

Enjoy the break!!!

-John

CELEBRATIONS

8th: Kilyna Hernandez- SHoW
Jemari Morgan- Confidence, Creativity
Art Parola- Creativity
Mehana Placeres- Creativity

6th: Nicholas Marine- Creativity
Honesti Grant - SHoW

7th: Viveca Barnes- SHoW
Ilijah Simpson- SHoW
Caiya Laurel- SHoW
Allyn Irby- Creativity

Staff: Ms. Steiner- Creativity

Thursday's Book Talk with Ms. Ballantine

EVERY SOUL a STAR by Wendy Mass

At Moon Shadow, an isolated campground, thousands have gathered to catch a glimpse of a rare and extraordinary total eclipse of the sun. Three lives are about to be changed forever:

Ally:

Ally likes the simple things in life-labyrinths, star-gazing, and comet-hunting. Her home, the moon shadow campground, is a part of who she is. She refuses to imagine it any other way.

Bree:

Popular, gorgeous (everybody says so), a future homecoming queen for sure. Bree wears her beauty like a suit of armor. But what is she trying to hide?

Jack:

Overweight and awkward, Jack is used to spending a lot of time alone. But when opportunity knocks, he finds himself in situations he never would have imagined.

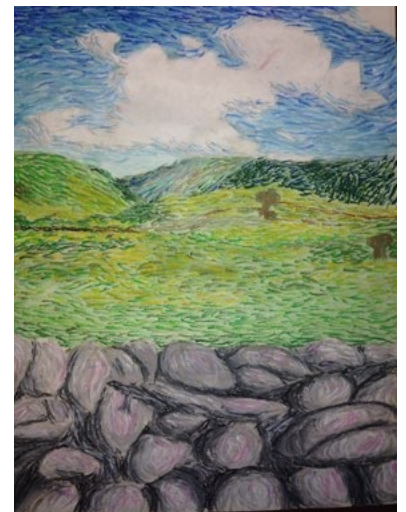
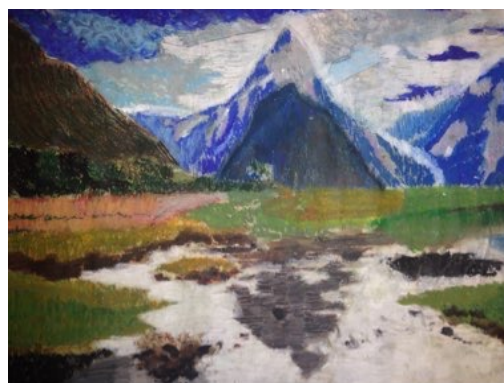
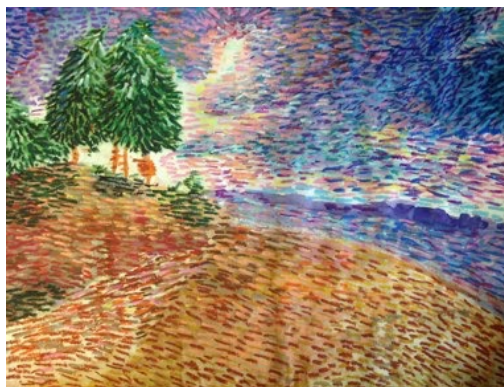
IN THE CLASSROOM

Visual Arts with Ms. Bennett

In 6th Grade General Art class, artists have just completed a unit on Surrealism and are creating a piece in acrylic paint entitled "What's Inside My Backpack". Imagine that one day you open your backpack to discover a surrealist scene inside. What would you find? Flying Pencils? Alter Egos? Swimming hotdogs? What would you imagine? They also learned about the Rules of Composition and how to create a strong, aesthetically pleasing image. Stay tuned for final draft pictures!



In 7th grade General Arts Class, artists are finishing up on their Van Gogh style landscapes, after learning about his life and work. This project involved various steps including sketching, a wash in watercolor paint, and then layer upon layer of oil pastel to create an effect similar to Van Gogh's heavy paintbrush style.



In 6th/7th Grade Elective artists are creating linoleum prints in the style of Andy Warhol. First, Ms. Bennett took photos of each artist and printed them, and then students transferred their portraits onto the printing plate and carved them onto the surface. Next they created their own original patterned paper by printing designs onto construction paper. Later, they will print their linoleum cuts onto their own patterned paper.



In 8th Grade Elective each artist is building two 2.5' tall cardboard sculptures. Each student had to choose an animal and an object that represent him or her. After they are painted they will be bonded together to create full size totem poles that will be on display at our Art Expo this spring!



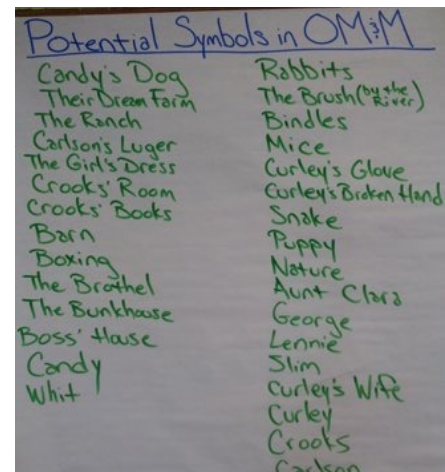
8th Grade Humanities with Ms. Casey

This week the eighth grade classes finished a close reading of John Steinbeck's novel *Of Mice and Men*. While reading, students tracked significant details, analyzed the story as it unfolded, made predictions for what would happen next, asked a slew of insightful and clarifying questions, and engaged in animated class discussions that demonstrated the many joys of traveling through a novel together as a class.

Students are now delving into the wide array of multifaceted symbols present in the novel. They have located a long list of symbols and are carefully dissecting each symbol to discover how that symbol functions in the novel and what it might reveal about characters, plot, themes, and Steinbeck's craft.

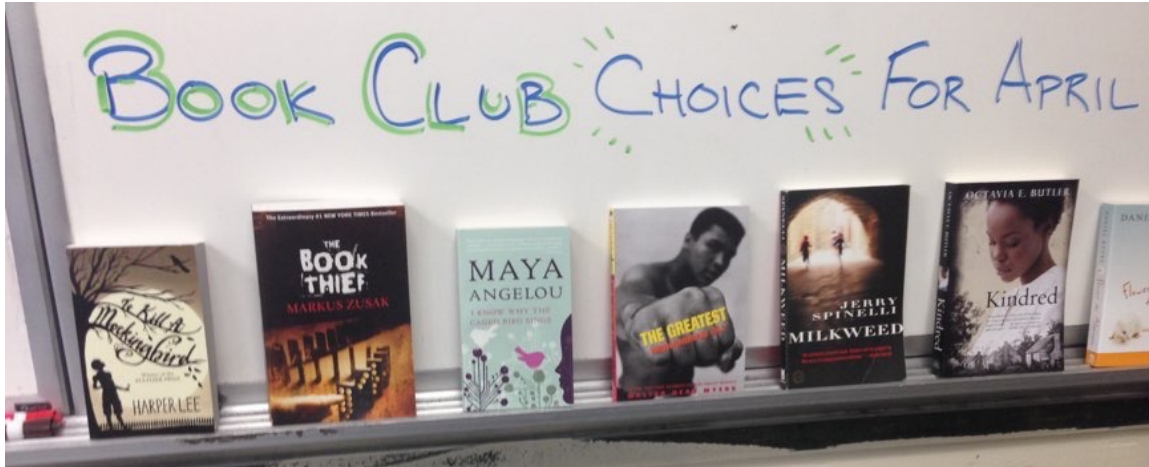
When we return from break, each student will hone in on one of the many themes that the class has identified (these include loneliness, ideas of masculinity/femininity, dreams, the American Dream, oppression/marginalization, the cruelty of the strong and powerful, integrity, the power of friendship, sacrifice, and entrapping circular paths) and will then reconsider their list of symbols through the lens of their chosen theme. This work will culminate in a literary essay that analyzes Steinbeck's use of symbolism to develop a major theme in *Of Mice and Men*.

It continues to be a true joy and honor to facilitate and witness the development of our eighth graders bright and beautiful minds. While I know that our June Roundtables are still a ways off, I am getting quite excited for them. I hope that you save the date of June 22nd to join us in celebrating what promises to be an impressive culmination of our eighth graders many years of hard work and sincere effort.

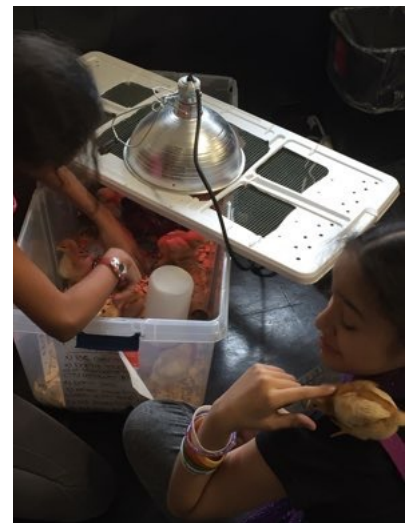


A&L HAPPENINGS

8th Grade Book Club Choices



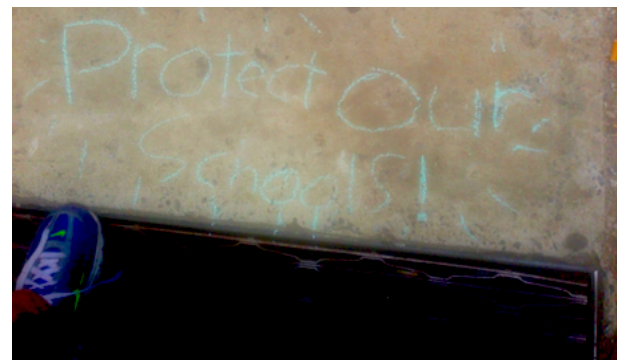
Baby Chicks come to A&L to roost



Lower Grade Sing 3.27.15



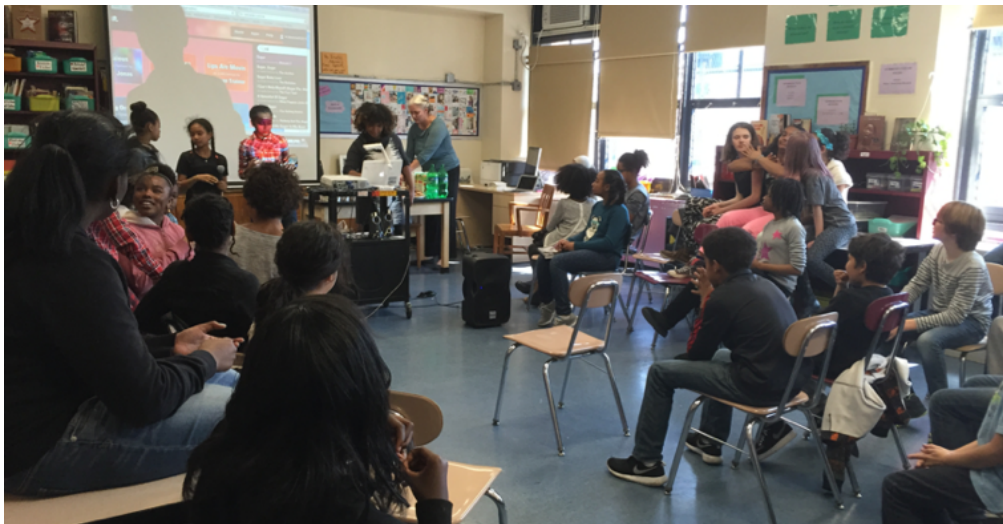
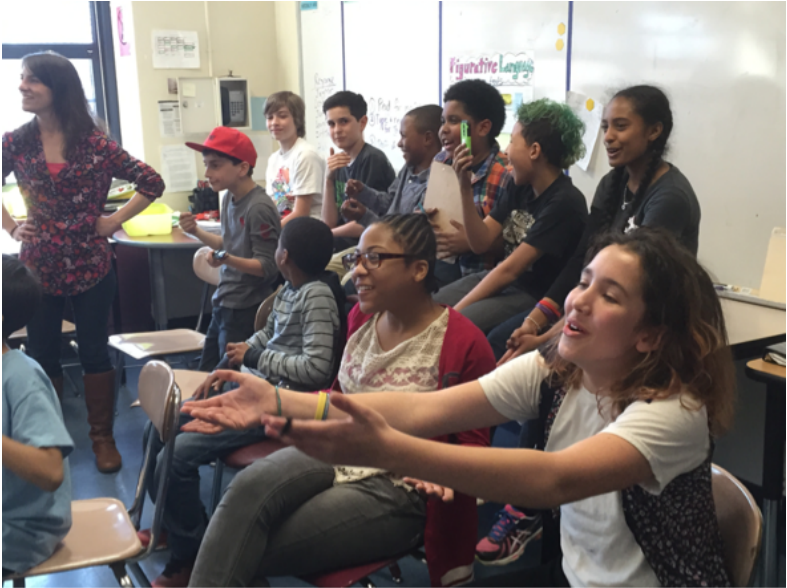
Demonstration at Cuomo's Office 3.28.15



Dekalb field trip to Ample Hills 3.31.15



6th Grade Karaoke Party 4.2.15



Parents "Show the Love" by donating treats to staff PD 3.30.15

