

January 26, 2019

Dear Parents,

I hope you are staying warm today! Yikes!!

We had a great week here! Please see below for a few highlights.

- On Tuesday we talked about where we had hung our Martin Luther King quote posters in our houses. We also wrote our own line that followed the same structure as his quote. Students wrote things like, "If you cannot be ice, just be a snowflake" and "If you cannot be a superhero, just be strong." They were so creative and really understood the message to be the very best you can be. On Tuesday we also visited Ms. Alex's room to see the state dioramas they have been busy making. This was a great way to learn from other students in our school and to see the creative ways information can be presented. During gym, the class was divided into teams. Each team was tasked with creating a chair with only a stack of newspapers and a roll of tape! It was not easy! We encouraged each other and talked about how it is important to keep trying even if we fail again and again!



- Throughout the week, we continued our math buddies with with Ms. Bia's class. We have been using Jo Boaler's *Mindset Mathematics* to learn about perimeter. On Wednesday we practiced quantifying perimeter by using graph paper to find the perimeters of various rectangles. Partners were then challenged to create as many different rectangles with a perimeter of 36. Students were encouraged to try whatever strategy they thought was best. Ideas ranged from changing each dimension by one (up or down) to guessing and checking! On Thursday we compared the dimensions of all of our rectangles to look for patterns and share strategies.



- Also on Thursday, we took turns pulling out a sentence strip and then wrote a story that somehow included that sentence. Stories included the sentence as a first line, as a character's exclamation, etc. They turned out great! This activity encouraged students to think outside of their typical writing topics or themes and be creative while taking on a challenge. In the afternoon, we practiced sketching a variety of three dimensional shapes with an instructional sketching video. This video prompted a great conversation about faces, edges, and identification of 3D shapes.

Hangman has become a → popular choice as a reading game!



- We finished the week with a paper building challenge. Using only paper triangles, students built structures that could hold weight. We tried to hold glue sticks, baskets, toys, pencils, etc. If it collapsed under the weight, we just laughed and started building again. I love these opportunities for students to try, fail, and then try again! This was a common theme for our class discussions throughout the week -- "The expert has failed more times than the beginner has even tried." With this mantra in mind, we tackled new vocabulary in our chapter of *Hugo*. Students shared what they thought each word meant. After rereading the passage that included the word, we decided on a class definition. I was so proud of kids shouting out that they had changed their mind from what they first thought. I hope we can continue to celebrate "failures" in this way! To wrap up our chapter this week, we had a great discussion on the morality of Hugo's decisions. I, again, was so impressed! The class was engaged and willing to disagree about whether Hugo was "right" or "wrong." I am looking forward to more excellent class conversations as we continue through the novel.

