

WALDEN WEEKLY

Educating the whole person is our commitment. Focusing on social, intellectual, emotional, and physical aspects of learning ensures each student reaches his or her highest potential, need for self-fulfillment and self-actualization. Our ultimate goal is accomplished when our students invest in and take ownership of their education and their futures.

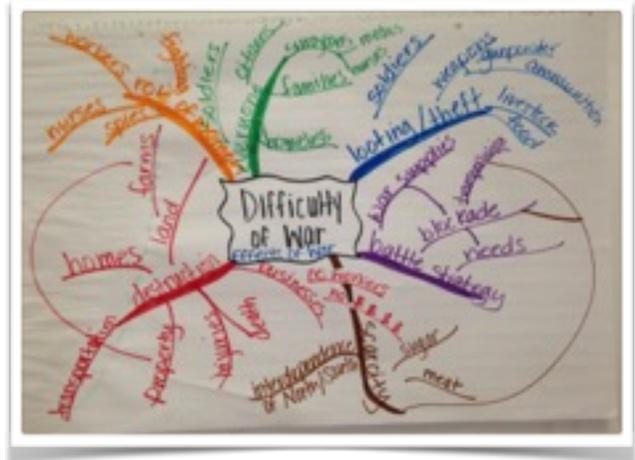
Announcements

- The door is always open for any and all parents who would like to schedule a meeting to discuss your child's progress at WCS!
- Surf Club will be restarting in the Spring. More information soon to come!
- Parent vs Walnuts basketball game date will be announced soon! Make sure you are practicing ;)
- We are looking to add some Spring **seedlings** to our current garden. Any and all donations will be gratefully accepted!
- Please mark your calendars - we have added a teacher work day and the students will have **no school on Friday, February 13th.**

Reading and Social Studies

In Social Studies, the younger Walnuts discussed whether or not slavery was the only cause of the Civil War. They researched other causes of the Civil War online and illustrated this in graphic organizers.

The students went on to explore effects of the Civil War, including what was gained and what was lost. The students passed

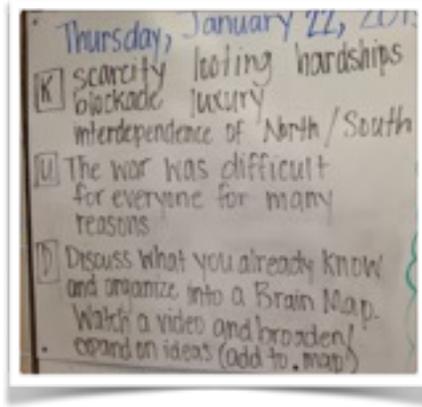


around primary document photographs that they used to infer possible effects of the war. They built on this by watching a research video on causes of the Civil War and organizing their ideas in a graphic organizer. After reviewing the causes and effects of the Civil War as well as looking at the cost of war in lives, money, and property, the class split into pairs to formulate alternative endings to the war. We asked, "What if the Confederate States had won the Civil War?" The students designing a *What If* chart illustrating how changing a variable changes the result.

The older Walnuts, through the use of leveled interdisciplinary reading (including Civil War era historical fiction novels), independent research, BrainPop videos, discussion, personal reflection, and collaborative combining and organizing of ideas, all expanded on the theme of "cost" by exploring the difficulty of the war for everyone involved. They began the week

Announcements

- It is not too late to send in your testimonial for the WCS website! We thank you in advance for your contribution :)
- Don't forget to check out our Facebook page for even more pictures!



many noteworthy ways that life changed (be sure to check out their brain map photo on the page above). They ended the week by reflecting on war itself and critically discussing these essential questions: “Could America have ended slavery in a different way? What would our country be like today if we hadn’t had the Civil War?”

As always, all students worked on individual reading skills each day.

Writing and Language Arts

In Language Arts, the younger Walnuts continued with reading basics through daily practices like *Phonics Bingo*, *Sight Word Hunt and Write* and leveled reading fluency books. In addition to the daily social studies comprehension readings, the younger group did a differentiated close reading about Groundhog's Day. Spelling included *Rainbow Spelling* on note-cards, alphabetizing their word lists and playing a game of *Spelling Concentration*. Writing for the younger Walnuts this week focused on ABC Books where they identified expectations laid out in the rubric and explored online resources to find interesting facts before writing a proper paragraph including an intro and conclusion.



The older Walnuts recognized the birthday/holiday of Martin Luther King Jr. and spent the early part of the week both learning and sharing ideas about this important man and discussing things that MLK Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement had in common with the Civil War. Students organized ideas and wrote the rough drafts of their essay this week. They explored some similarities such as both “fought” for the rights and freedoms of African Americans and the word Civil, contained in both, - meaning *citizen* in Greek. Some differences discussed were the method of fighting (non-violent vs violent), choice of “weapons” (voice/protest vs muskets/cannons), and time period in history (slavery vs equal rights).

Reading and Social Studies

- Concept of "Movement"
- Reconstruction, Westward Expansion (cowboys, African Americans, immigration to America)

Science Lab

- Designing an Experiment
- Forms of Energy - Mechanical

Writing

- Opinion piece - leader of Reconstruction/Expansion era
- Informative - leader of the Civil War

Math

- Multi-Step word problems
- Fractions
- Statistics

Creative Arts

- Play development
- Period art study
- Review of coordinate grids (math) with drawing the "grid" method

Physical Literacy

- Basketball



water could mix. She introduced her experiment to test this question which included oil, water, food coloring and Alka-Seltzer to create a homemade lava lamp.

Math

In math, the younger Walnuts explored representing and interpreting data through differentiated, hands-on graphing activities. They explored an M&M graphing lesson focusing on tally charts, bar graphs, line graphs, and pictographs. In addition, they discovered line plots through the measuring and cutting of various sized strings to construct a giant, whole-class line plot. These unit activities were accompanied by the daily work which included addition, subtraction and multiplication facts, doubles and word problems.



The older Walnuts worked on fractions and ratios. One group explored equivalency and ordering fractions using fraction strips. Another fine-tuned their ability to add and subtract fractions with different denominators and moved onto multiplication and division of fractions. Our oldest Walnut finished a unit on ratios by applying his understanding to multi-step math equations and word problems involving the concepts learned.

Science Lab

The younger Walnuts reviewed minerals before performing a second crystal making experiment. The students gathered a small bowl, hot water, Epsom salts and food coloring before measuring out and following the procedure for creating salt crystals. They explored liquid measurement conversions by watching the Gallon King video and learning the accompanying drawing. To introduce the concept of questioning the natural world and designing your own experiment, Ms. Mollie introduced mixtures and her question of whether or not oil and



The older Walnuts turned their focus to energy this week and explored different forms of energy. On Tuesday, they learned that the acronym MELTS can help you remember **M**echanical, **E**lectrical, **L**ight, **T**hermal, and **S**ound. They then worked collaboratively to sort pictures showing examples of each form of energy, discussed the general definitions of each, and organized their learning into a chart. On Thursday the older Walnuts expanded their understanding of electrical energy by exploring positive and negative charges, flow of electrons from negative to positive, open and closed circuits, and static electricity through two experiments. The first (which failed), attempted to use static electricity, collected by hair combs, to light bulbs. The second required team work to build circuits, complete with on and off switches, to both light a bulb and play sound effects. After making a change in materials, the group will try the static electricity experiment one more time and is excited to investigate other forms of energy next week.



Creative Arts and Physical Literacy

In creative arts, the younger Walnuts chose an instrumental Civil War song. They created Civil War themed lyrics and dance movements to fit the rhythm and beat of their song of choice. The older Walnuts independently chose an instrumental Civil War song and wrote lyrics to the song. They integrated learning in social studies, reading, and writing through the choices of their words. They practiced and edited their lyrics and then shared/performed their song for their peers.

On Friday, both groups of Walnuts got together to share ideas and focus the theme and general plot of the play they will perform

sometime in the end of May. To support the students in the sharing of different ideas (in which both groups were very excited about), they learned a specific communication method (called Bounce) and practiced successfully and respectfully communicating ideas with each other (a “classroom” Walnut paired with a “portable” Walnut). It was exciting coming together to collaborate on a major project and hearing everyone’s ideas.

In physical literacy, the Walnuts discussed and researched basketball rules, team strategies, and dribbling techniques. They completed drills focusing on stealing, blocking, lay ups, jump shots free throws, and rebounds.

Casselberry Elementary ongoing food and clothing drive, starting NOW!

Walden Community School has initiated an ongoing food and clothing drive for Casselberry Elementary students in need. As you may remember, this elementary school has the largest population of homeless students in the area. The Walnuts responded so positively to gathering and helping wrap gifts for these students, we would like to begin a service project that will last the rest of the year. We will be collecting non-perishable food and clothing items and dropping them off monthly. Please send in items as you can!