

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

- Please drop off your child(ren) **between 8:45 and 9am** - class begins promptly at 9:00! .
- All formatives have been sent home. Please let us know if you would like to schedule a conference to discuss your child's progress in more detail.
- We are **in need of some items for the classrooms:** new 3 ring binder with pockets and a set of dividers (if you have not already sent those items in) as well as pencils.
- If anyone wants to donate an electric pencil sharpener, we are also in need of a new one for the portable (or perhaps a handy parent that may be able to fix our broken one?).

Reading and Social Studies

In Social Studies this week we focused on the concept "As a nation grows and changes, the various points of view also grow and change."

The younger Walnuts started off the week creating a cooperative brain map of everything they had previously learned leading up to the Civil War. They recalled concepts they had investigated related to the northern states, southern states, economics and the Underground Railroad.

They then wrote down the questions they had formulated over the past few weeks and looked at which ones had not yet been answered. The class worked together to research the answers. We moved on to discuss the divide caused by the North and South disagreeing about slavery. The students studied a map depicting free states in the North and the slave states in the South and color coded blank maps based on their findings. We watched a video clip about the Dred Scott Decision which was followed up by a class discussion. The students looked at primary photograph documents of factories in the North and plantations in the South. They discussed similarities and differences and recorded their findings in a Venn

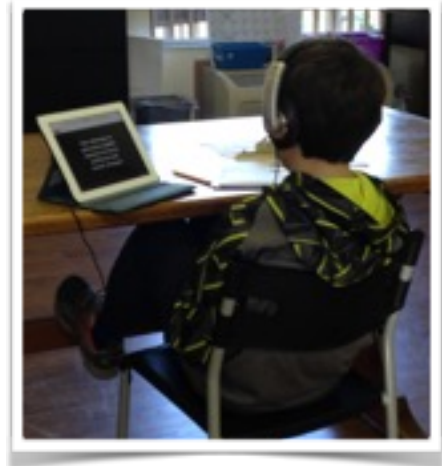


Diagram. From there, students investigated the abolitionist movement and how it was made up of leaders who fought to end slavery. Students researched essential leaders by watching video clips and reading primary documents and bringing their findings back to the group to share and discuss. We

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!



followed it up with a match up game where students matched important leaders, like Sojourner Truth, to their role in the movement.

The older Walnuts focused on the essential question "To what extent was slavery a cause of the Civil War." The group began the week by defining civil war and finding other examples of civil wars to connect their learning to various points in history as well as current day.



Through group and independent reading, online research, video clips, and timeline activities, the group investigated and analyzed the Missouri Compromise, Kansas-Nebraska Act, Compromise of 1850, South Carolina's Declaration of Causes, and John Brown's famous raid on Harper's Ferry. They also put the 10th amendment in order, read it, and discussed what it meant, with a focus on its relation to the succession of Southern states and the formation of the Confederate States of America. They ended the week by using what they had learned to answer the essential question both in writing and through discussion.

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

Writing and Language Arts

In Language Arts the younger Walnuts focused on phonics and sight words by playing games like "Be The Teacher" and "Sight Word Snow Ball." We worked on reading fluency by reading through our DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment) leveled books and answering comprehension questions. Our spelling lists come from words we are misspelling in our writing. We made rainbow writing cards for our fly swatter game next week. Writing reviewed sentence structure leading up to paragraph writing review next week.

In writing the older Walnuts worked on comparative essays in which they read and analyzed text, sorted the information learned in their own words, and then began putting this information into a complete essay. The essay length and specifics varied on the ability of the child, but overall it was a great way for each student to show off various elements learned throughout their civil war studies to date and help them connect learning. The oldest Walnuts will be editing and completing additional drafts of their papers next week. Each student also completed activities with their individual spelling words, created from misspelled words found in their own writing.

Reading and Social Studies

- Connecting events leading to the start of the war and exploring leaders, sides, and battles
- The “cost” of the civil war

Science Lab

- Heat energy
- Gravity, motion, physics

Writing

- Proper paragraph form
- Informative/Explanatory

Math

- Algebra and time review
- Measuring angles
- Fractions
- Ratios

Creative Arts

- Play development
- Period Music and Visual Art Study

Physical Literacy

- Basketball

Math

The younger Walnuts started off the week reviewing measurement by initially measuring various objects around the room with nonstandard items, like paperclips, and recording their finding on white boards to share with the groups. We moved on to measuring specified objects around the room with a ruler to the quarter inch. They finished up the review unit by working collaboratively to complete a measurement assessment worksheet that included measuring images and answering critical thinking questions. The group moved on to reviewing money by first organizing coins and dollars into groups and identifying each coin and bill. Students then totaled up the value of each group. Finally, we used our mini white boards along with our knowledge of place value and carrying to add up the different values of pennies, nickles, dimes, quarters and dollars to find a grand total. Finally, we rounded up our money review unit by buying fun items from *Miss Mollie's Store*.



The older Walnuts reviewed geometric vocabulary through picture and definition sorts and also by drawing shapes based on attribute clues. Some of the group began a short unit on symmetry by exploring shapes in real life, on GeoBoards, and on paper. The oldest Walnuts completed a unit on coordinate grids (some students working in one quadrant, others working in all four) by reviewing how to read and plot ordered pairs, completing mystery pictures by plotting pairs in various quadrants, and creating their own mystery pictures for a friend to solve. The students also reviewed multiplication in a new way this week by playing the game of “Multiplication War,” (that they LOVE) and which helps strengthen their skills

and promote faster fluency.

Students are continuing to practicing and learn math skills on an individualized basis through the online Khan Academy.

Science Lab

In science lab this week the younger Walnuts put on their lab coats to begin an exploration of minerals. We watched a short clip on minerals before visiting a Mineralogy4kids.org where they clicked on various household items to match them up to mineral stones in our collection boxes. We did a mineral "gallery walk" where we walked around the room looking at various minerals and discussing different ways scientists identify, classify and organize minerals, like Mohl's Hardness Test or color markings. The junior laboratory scientists then performed an experiment to create their own salt crystal! Later in the week, we suited back up to look at different types of dirt and whether or not they hold water the same. We sampled sand and topsoil from the campus, discussed and recorded observations. The Walnuts explored how soil is made of both living and nonliving materials. The class made educated guesses on whether sand or topsoil could hold water best. They then helped create an experiment that would test their hypothesis.



The older Walnuts explored the forces of gravity and air pressure through the exploration of sky diving. They watched skydivers in action explain the various ways they use these pressures to change and control their position in the sky, discussed connections to skydiving and laying on a raft in a pool (something all Floridian's can connect to, lol), and then experimented with their paper skydivers to see if they could replicate the actual skydivers actions in the video. By folding their skydivers, dropping skydivers in different positions, and even taping skydivers together to mock group skydives, the students were able to see gravity and air pressure in action and had a really fun time doing it!

Creative Arts and Physical Literacy

In creative arts this week the Walnuts reached for the stars in the New Year! The students came up with an achievable goal for themselves for 2015 and practiced some technology skills by typing it out on a computer. Next, students traced their arm and hand, cut it out, drew a design with a sharpie, decorated it with water colors, and then glued on their goal. We made a class collage of each student reaching for the stars. The students also created individual flower presses on Thursday and picked some flowers and leaves to begin pressing.