



Gifted and Talented Education — AE Wright Middle School

## Happy Fall!

Hello A.E. Wright GATE Community!

We hope you are having a great start to the school year. The AGP Board is working on organizing the fall calendar of events which will include the AGP Fall meeting and Parent Education Night (date to be determined) and separate GATE class level get togethers. Please look out for information from your class representative for those events.

### **GATE social event (All Grades)- Agoura High School Football Night-October 21st at 7 PM**

GATE students and their families are invited to attend a Charger home game. Come out and cheer on AHS Charger football! This is a special game to attend as AHS honors all of the seniors on the football team, cheerleading team, Sports Medicine KASMA group and Dance Team. We will have an area marked off in the bleachers for our GATE group. Here is the link to the game tickets - [Agoura vs Thousand Oaks 10/21/22 Football Game](#). ***\*Please note that this is not a drop off event, parents/adults must accompany our kids (per Agoura event rules).\****

### **Social Action - Poverty Encounter - Date TBD**

The poverty encounter includes a 75 minute guided tour through four immersive exhibits. These exhibits are designed to give visitors an in depth look at what living in poverty looks like in different areas of the world. After the tour, visitors are invited to participate in a service exercise that helps bring food to those in need. ***\*Please note that while all GATE students are invited to attend, they can only accommodate groups up to 35 people at a time. We will plan to go at different time slots on the same day.\**** More info to come!

Please scroll down for the first classroom updates of the year from our amazing GATE teachers.

If you are interested in being involved this year, have ideas for our class get togethers and/or Parent Ed night topics, please email [agpaew@gmail.com](mailto:agpaew@gmail.com). And, as always, if you have GATE-specific questions, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Thank you all for your support in keeping our GATE program strong!

Cheers,

Susie Ming  
AGP Chair

## Classroom updates

### **8th Grade Update**

#### **Mrs. Tepper & Ms. Miller 8th grade ELA/SS:**

The year has taken off to a magnificent start in 8th grade. We began with some get-to-know each other games that highlight the importance of communication and discussed how they relate to real life via group projects and working collaboratively in class. In ELA, we are currently reading & discussing Jacqueline Woodson's *Brown Girl Dreaming*. We have been analyzing this poetic text from various disciplinary lenses (historians, linguists, psychologists, sociologists, and philosophers). We have reviewed the importance of annotating and put our skills to the test with poetry from Langston Hughes & George Ella Lyon and George W. Bush's 9/11 Speech to the Nation all the while reviewing plot elements, poetic devices, and figurative language. Students are working on their own creative poems that connect to our discussion of all the factors that make up one's identity. In social studies, we began the year reviewing the key themes of history that will be an underlying focus of all future units and have been studying how to evaluate online information using a very timely curriculum created by Stanford professors, Mediawise, and John Green. We are currently doing a close read and analysis of the Mayflower Compact as we discuss the challenges of setting up a new government. This leads into our study of early America and our own class compacts as we mimic the New World colonists. It's going to be a jam-packed year, and we are enjoying every moment with these eager learners!

#### **Mr. Bostrom 8th Grade Science:**

What an exciting start to the school year we have had! Students have begun our initial unit of chemistry by exploring experimental design and properties of matter. So far students have designed their own experiments and collected their own data. They then shared their findings with the class in a mini science fair.

In addition, students completed a lab where they had to collect and gather data to determine the optimal length for their barbies bungee cord. They then put their skills to the test by dropping their barbies from the second story to see who could get their bungee to stretch as close to the ground as possible without actually hitting. The lab was a blast and lots of fun for all! Looking forward to more exciting updates as we move along with our year in science!

### **Fun With Science!**





**8th graders learning to communicate without the use of all 5 senses!**





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## **7th Grade Update**

### **Mrs. Paik-7th grade ELA/SS:**

We started off the school year with an exploration of the universal concept of order (and its reciprocal, chaos) by defining it, seeing if generalizations about order ring true, and creating our own versions of it. We also used it as a lens to analyze a short story, "The Interlopers." We've moved on to a new unit in which we examine what it means to be on the inside and on the outside. We will read various short stories and nonfiction articles as we lead up to our first class novel, *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton. This text is rich with literary elements to learn from as readers and writers as well as rich fodder for discussion about relationships, social rules and hierarchies, and the complexities of being "in" or "out."

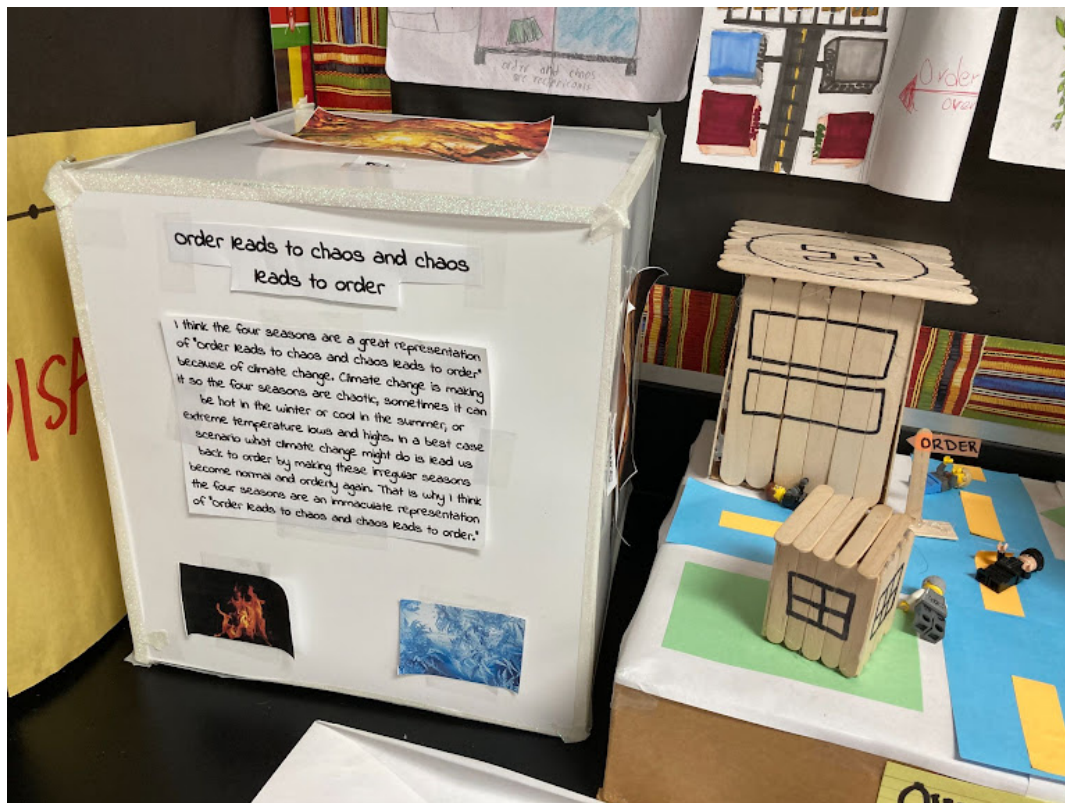
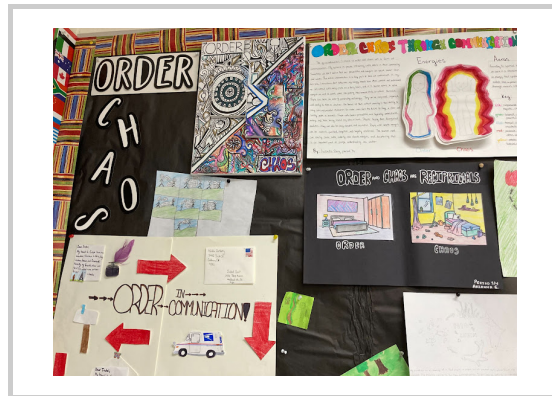
We've also dug right into medieval Europe with students working both individually and collaboratively in their manor groups to understand what life was like for the various levels of society in Europe from about 1100-1400. We started with castle designs and defenses, and will continue on with a study of chivalry, the religious influences of that time period and location, geography of medieval and modern Europe, and much more!

**Students Brainstorm Ways to Express The Depth & Complexity of Various Objects!**



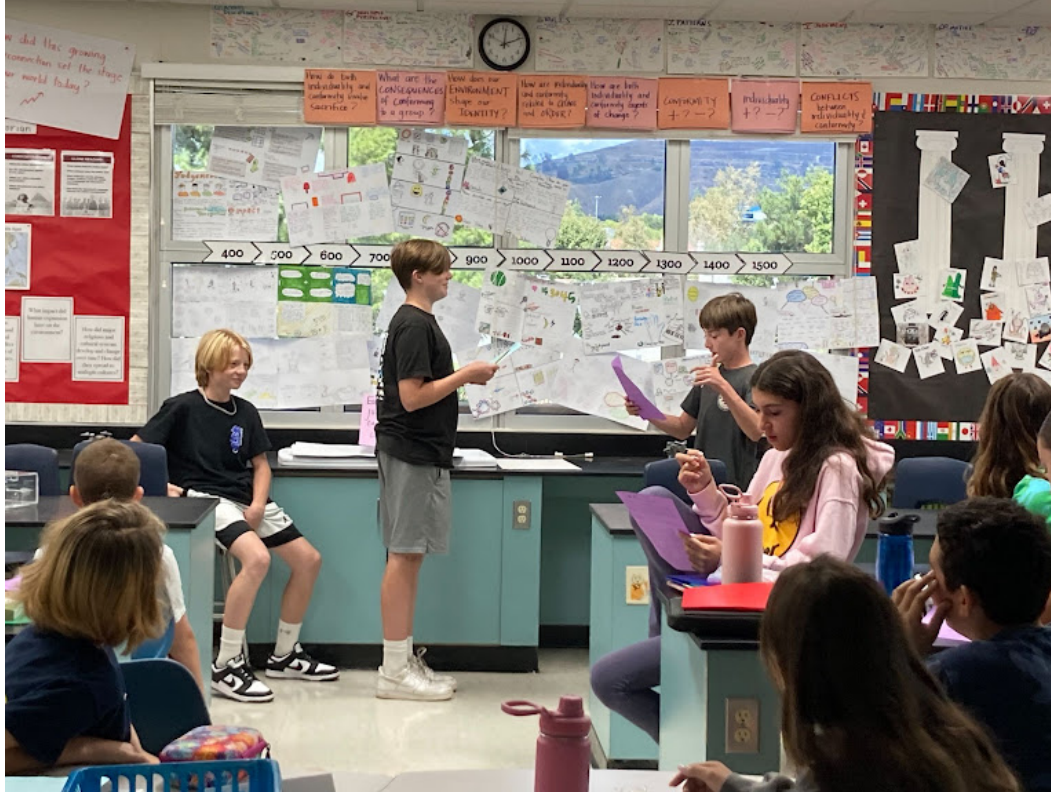


## Some Students Projects Creating Order or Chaos!



## A Feudal Contract Negotiation Between a Lord and his Vassal!





### **Mrs Servin' 7th Grade Science:**

At the start of the school year, students were challenged to answer the following question: "Is fire alive or not?" As we discussed this question, students soon realized that they needed some agreed upon criteria to scientifically evaluate fire. Students have been learning to think like a scientist for the past month in order to definitely answer this question. We started by learning about the Cross Cutting Concepts, different lenses scientists use to view scientific problems. Recently we have been focusing on developing observation skills and making inferences. Students have observed a wide variety of living things in the A.E. Wright Garden, Monterey Bay Aquarium Webcams, and their own local communities. Currently students are analyzing their data in order to identify various characteristics that can be used to define life. I am excited to see how they categorize fire once we revisit the question next week!

### **Students Working Together to Visualize the Cross Cutting Concepts!**





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## 6th Grade Update

### Mrs. Rinaldi 6th ELA/SS:

It has been so wonderful to get to know all the new 6th graders this 2022-23 school year! We will continue to have a blast learning this year. We have learned about the Depth and Complexity Icons which we will continue to explore and use throughout the year. Through concept attainment, we discovered our Universal Theme for semester 1: CHANGE. Currently in ELA, we are reading *Counting by 7s* which is about a gifted middle schooler who is navigating life and overcoming challenges. We are learning about indirect and direct characterization, character traits, point of view, author choices, inferences, text connections, and will culminate the book soon with our first Socratic Seminar discussion. We recently finished our Geography unit in Social Studies, and we created and presented map projects. We learned so much about each other, and the questions students asked were just as wonderful as the presentations. While we studied Geography, we also learned various types of note taking strategies. We learned how to make outlines, Cornell notes, webs, process charts, thinking maps, double bubbles, and triple bubbles. Next, we will be starting our narrative writing unit in ELA and our Early Humans unit in SS.

\*\*\*\* As mentioned at Back to School Night in August, we will have Walk through the Ancient World coming up 10/26 for period  $\frac{3}{4}$  and 10/27 for periods  $\frac{1}{2}$  and  $\frac{5}{6}$ . This is a fun 2.5 hour on-campus special interactive storytelling of the history of the Ancient World. A detailed parent email will go out on Monday 10/3 with specific times for each class. We would love for you to join us. Students will determine their character parts and start creating skits the week of 10/3. I will answer their many questions in class. :)





### **Mrs. Herrera's 6th Grade Science:**

We kicked off the school year by participating in some friendly competitions during our classroom Spartan Olympics! The students focused on varying skills such as team building, grit, perseverance, being prepared, leadership skills and also the importance of having fun while learning! In science, the students spent the first week getting to know one another by creating a classroom banner. Each scholar created an "All About Me" pennant which focused on making connections using the depth and complexity icons. The following week we spent time as a class getting familiar with the new Acer computers, set up our Google Classroom accounts, and practiced using MLA format. We weren't quite ready to let go of summer, so the students wrote about their favorite summer memories and conducted some research to discover how their experience related to science. Together we learned the science behind roller



coasters, how the arch of Cabo was formed, the driving force behind waves and much more! Over the last few weeks the classes practiced making qualitative and quantitative observations while visiting the A.E. Wright garden. This week we started conducting experiments to practice the scientific method. Students started to "Think Like A Scientist" while designing paper helicopters to test how shortening the rotor length will affect the drop time. The focus of this first lab was to practice writing a hypothesis using an if/then statement, collect quantitative data, identify trends, conclude and share results, which ultimately led to further questions to investigate!



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