**James W. Smith**

**November AIG Newsletter**

Starting October 28th I will only be at JWS all day Wednesday and Thursday mornings until mid-January. Since I am not at school on a regular basis, the easiest and fastest way to contact me is through email. (t[ina.west@cravenk12.org](mailto:Tina.west@cravenk12.org) )

Each of my classes has a Google classroom. If you would like to see what your student is working on in AIG, please ask your student to login to his/her Google classroom at home.

Please visit my website at<http://jwswest.weebly.com/> . It is a work in progress.

\*\*\*\*\*\*November 11th and 24th are holidays (Veterans Day and Thanksgiving). Both of them fall on a Wednesday. I will only get to see my students at JWS on November 4th and 18th.

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| **Reading Scholars:**  Both 4th and 5th grade reading scholar groups are working on selections from Junior Great Books. The Junior Great Books (JGB) program uses a method of interpretive reading and discussion known as Shared Inquiry. Students explore each selection through a sequence of activities that includes two readings, directed note taking, Shared Inquiry discussion, and writing. I will elaborate more on each of these individual activities in future newsletters.    4th Grade Scholars is working on “Thank You, M’am” by Langston Hughes  (The next story will be “The Gold Coin” by Alma Flor Ada)    5th Grade Scholars is working on “The No-Guitar Blues” by Gary Soto.  (The next story will be “Kaddo’s Wall”, a West African folktale.) | **Socratic Scholars:**  Socratic Scholars started what I thought would be a quick project in September. It grew into something much larger than I had planned. Students went to<http://wonderopolis.org/> and selected a topic they wanted to learn more about. Each of them selected a different topic. Students knew they were going to present their topic to the class. I created a Google slide template they were to use for their presentation. Once I realize how little the students knew about creating a presentation, the project really grew. Students have learned how to insert text boxes, pictures, background, video clips, transitions words and whole slides. This is just a partial list of what they have learned while completing their presentation. Getting the students to edit the slides has been the biggest challenge. Once their presentations are complete, I will TRY to upload them to my webpage (<http://jwswest.weebly.com/>) so you can view them.  Our next project will be *The Attraction is Obvious: Designing Maglev Systems.* This isan engineering unit from the National Center for Technological Literacy. In this unit, students will explore the connections between the properties of magnets, the technological innovation of the maglev train, and the field of transportation engineering. |

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| **4th Grade Math Scholars:**  In 4th grade math scholars we use No Problem! Taking the Problem Out of Mathematical Problem Solving. Students cover eight problem solving strategies. They are:  1. Guess and check 5. Act out or use manipulatives  2. Make a table 6. Use logic  3. Make an organized list 7. Simplify or work backwards  4. Look for a pattern 8. Make a diagram or drawing  Students are presented with six problems for each strategy. The problems get progressively more difficult as they work through them. Students have to share how they solve the problems with the class. The students have completed the first two strategies and are almost finished with the third strategy. The problems they are currently working on are posted on the AIG 4th Grade Math Google Classroom.  Below is an example of a problem from *make and organized list:*  In the Chinese Checker tournament, Mark Able, Anita Break, Jack Jumper, Ping Pong, and  Chubby Checker all still need to play each other before the champion is announced. If each player plays all other remaining contestants, how many matches will be played altogether? |
| **5th Grade Math Scholars:**  In 5th grade math scholars we use Advanced Common Core Math Explorations Number and Operations. We are finishing up Exploration 2: Torran Math. This exploration explores place value systems built on groupings (bases) other than Base Ten.  Below is **part** of the introduction on the Student Handout for the Torran Math Exploration. The entire handout and questions are posted on the 5th Grade AIG Google Classroom.  *You are part of an expedition to the planet Torr. The Torrans have only two fingers on each hand! Because of this, their place value system uses groups of four instead of ten. Your job is to figure out how they write their numerals. So far, your investigations have turned up the following mysterious relationships between our numerals and the Torran numerals.*  **Our Numerals Torran Numerals**  **8 20**  **11 23**  **15 33**  **19 103**  Below are just two of the questions that go with the Torran Math Exploration.   * *Our numeral for the number eight is “8”, which means 9 ones. But your investigations have shown that the Torrans write the numerals for eight as “20.” Draw eight x’s and show how the Torrans would group them. Use your diagram to explain why the Torrans write eight as “20.”* * *Our smallest whole number place values are the ones and the tens. The next place value is hundreds. The Torrans’ smallest whole number place values are the ones and the fours. What is the next place value? Explain.* |