

April 17, 2009

5H News

Class Meeting

To make Confucius more relevant to children's lives today, Ms. Vachani and I completed an activity about

Confucianism and ethics in our class meeting on Monday April 13th. Children were gathered in a circle and asked to pretend that our "rules" are changing.

"The teacher is going to step back and the children have to decide what to do." We then observed the conversation.

After a few minutes we asked children to describe, "what would happen with no rules?" Students talked about how there as a lack of unity in "what to do," disagreements over what "should" be done or how to establish rules. Children describe feeling "strange" or annoyed. Something felt amiss. Different

personalities emerged and disagreed over how to run a class meeting.

We then related this experience to what happened at the end of the Zhou Dynasty in Ancient China. There were many different states in China all vying for control, and there were years and years of chaos. A man emerged with new ideas – Confucius. He had "crazy" ideas about treating others the way you want to be treated and the importance of respect in relationships being the foundation of a well-functioning society. He spoke of how people should spend time learning about and practicing the essential relationships, (parent-child, ruler-subject, sibling – sibling, friend – friend.)

Upcoming Dates

April 27	Grace Lin visits China Podcast Project begins
April 30	visit Wellesley Middle
May 4	Wayne Ross – disabilities speaker
May 5-8	Thompson Island
May 12	Parent Info Session Puberty -8AM Library
May 13,14,15&20	MCAS
May 18	Concert 8:45AM
June 1	Men Read at Hunnewell
June 10	Field Day 10:45AM
June 11	Field Trip Peabody Essex Museum
June 15	5 th grade celebration 6:30PM
June 23	Clap Out 11:45AM

5H read some of Confucius' analects and talked about how they still apply today. Children discussed how much work it takes to develop and maintain relationships based upon respect, and why they are so crucial for a group to function. For homework, children came up with their own code of ethics and relationships for getting along in a classroom, and in a larger society.

Science

Soon after vacation 5H will begin the study of microscopes and small things. We welcome any expertise that you may have!

5H

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Mathematics

Our next math unit begins April 27th. It is called Growth Patterns. The focus of the unit is patterns, functions and change. Children will be looking at ways to express patterns of change using algebraic notation. Children will use line graphs to plot change and examine the relationships between two variables. We will examine both linear and non-linear change.

5H China Podcast

5H students will be creating a podcast on an area of expertise about China. Each student will be assigned one of the following topics.

Part I Research – April 27 – May 1

You will research important facts, statistics, details and background about your topic. All notes should be in your SS journal.

Generate questions about your topic

- *What is important? – people, places, time, dates*
- *Who would you interview? What would you ask?*
- *Facts? Stats? Did you know?*

Part II Writing – May 11 – 15th

You will be writing a script for your podcast. It will be narrated by you and include music clips, interviews and “special reports.”

Part III Recording - May 18 – 29th

POSSIBLE TOPICS

- *Great Wall*
- *Confucius*
- *Silk*
- *Silk Route*
- *Qin*
- *Han*
- *Zhou*
- *Shang*
- *Geography*
- *Art (bronze, jade, colors, symbols, calligraphy)*