



CHARLES OTT ACADEMY

A Stafford Learning Center Program

Quarter 1 2020-2021

Pursuing Freedom

What is freedom is a question that has both plagued and driven Americans throughout our short history. It is also something that weighs on our minds as individuals as we try to navigate our world and have the best experience possible with our time on Earth. This question is also a driving force in US History class too, as we look at the Pursuit of Freedom from the discovery of the American continent to the American Civil War. Learning everything from Native American culture, setting up to build a wigwam, to the different revolts in early US History, we are beginning to put together the bigger picture of how America became a country and how different people's needs clash in their pursuit of feeling free.

Similarly, in English class, we are focusing on what skills are most needed to function in the adult world. So far, we have been focused on successful story-telling with a focus on detailed and descriptive writing. We have also had a large focus on how to explain things in writing, making the writing clear for the reader.

- Mr. Corkery



COA students experiment with writing and brainstorming new story ideas for the question, "what is personal freedom?"

Innovative Problem Solving

As the world around us rapidly changes, it is important that we seek solutions to problems through innovation and design. We are focusing on problem solving this year and are working together to find solutions to everyday problems that will make a difference. Students have been tasked with the challenge of creating an innovative way to make a positive difference in the lives of others. These inventions will be on display during our Invention Convention in January.

In Science, through our curiosity and exploration, we have been able to experiment with slimy substances and blowing up balloons with gaseous mixtures. It has been fun guessing the outcome of our experiments and testing a hypothesis. Economics has been full of great discussions and debates that have allowed students to explore the importance of our economy and their role in it. We have been discussing the differences between consumers and producers while exploring the possibilities of what could come of marketing their inventions. In Math, students are using the problem solving method to work through real world problems that could occur while running a business. Building upon basic math skills and breaking down multi-step problems are helping us have a better understanding of the math skills we need to be a successful professional.

- Ms. Picard

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WINTER WEATHER

Snow Days, Delays and Remote Learning

Winter weather is here and according to the trusty Farmers Almanac– it's going to be a wicked one. Please remind your student to dress appropriately EVERY day (boots/shoes, jacket, hat) regardless of the activities planned or weather report. This is New England, after all. *If your family needs help with winter clothes/supplies this year, please reach out and let Amanda know!*

When winter weather is incoming and we can plan ahead, we will be sending the students home with the Chromebooks for remote learning. Whenever we can plan ahead, we will do this so that we don't have to make up the day in June.

Sometimes, as we all know, there will be storms that get worse overnight and we can't plan ahead. On these occasions we will have a traditional snow day.

Keep your ears and eyes peeled for "Charles Ott Academy" on television or radio announcements. I suggest downloading the WMUR app, because is reliable and easy to use.

If your sending school district, or transportation provider is closed, your student will not have transportation and will stay home. This will not count against their attendance. They are welcome to, but not required to, work on their online assignments.

From Amanda's Desk..

The COVID Pandemic has changed a lot about our lives but when I walk in the doors of the Canal Street Mill, I know that the people I work with (staff, students, team members, parents and families alike), work so hard to try to make the best of a very difficult thing.

A lot has changed, yes. We wear masks, we point out "smiling eyes," and we sit six feet apart. We get frustrated with the "new normal" and are truly sick of the word "unprecedented."

However, a lot has not changed. We still laugh every day, we high five (then sanitize), we ask questions, we debate (and argue). We share meals and stories, we care about one another, and we give a little grace.

I truly love the community I work in, and for that I cannot express enough gratitude. Thank you all for everything you do to make this school the place it is.

Amanda

The Walt GRITman Award

Grit: noun. courage and resolve; strength of character

Walt Whitman was an American poet, essayist and journalist who lived during the 1800s. He's most well known for his poems such as "O captain! My Captain" and collection of poetry called "Leaves of Grass."

Yes, we study poetry here at COA, but that's not what we find most important about Walt. Instead, what we want for our students to recognize about Walt Whitman is his focus on perseverance. Many of his poems and articles are about seeing yourself among the world, being a good person and working hard.

In his honor, the staff decided to have a weekly award for our students. The Walt GRITman Award is given to a student who the staff members feel worked hard in the face of something that could have held them back. This could have been a personal hurdle or an academic one. It doesn't mean the student had perfect attendance, or got great scores on their assignments. It might be awarded to someone who has really been struggling, but we've seen the glint of hard work and determination. It might be awarded to someone who has been consistently working hard. It might be awarded to no one at all.

The Walt GRITman award is announced on Friday afternoons to the student body. The award recipient chooses lunch to share with the group on Monday, receives a custom Walt GRITman t-shirt at the end of the semester and is awarded a \$10 gift card of their choosing.

Congratulations to our Walt GRITman Award recipients so far this year!