



CONFERENCES

[repeated until conferences]

If you missed the PTSA meeting last Thursday (10/17) then you did not get first crack at signing up for a conference. Parent and teacher conferences are:



- Thursday, Nov. **21st** from 4pm-8pm
- Monday, Nov. **25th** from 8am-8pm
- Tuesday, Nov. **26st** from 8am-4pm

Please call the **da Vinci front office** (503-916-5356) to schedule a conference. I do not have the conference sign-up sheets, nor do I know which slots are available. It is easier and better for the front office to handle the conference scheduling. I am sure I would mess up my schedule somehow.

There are a few notes regarding the scheduling of conferences. If you have met with me once or several times prior to conferences you might want to consider whether you need more face time. I am not trying to dissuade you, merely asking you to reflect on the limited time available for conferences and whether someone else could use the time with me.



"He keeps invading other children's space."

Additionally, if your student is doing very well you might want to reflect on needing time with me. I love my overachieving and brilliant students. They deserve lots of compliments. All students deserve lots of compliments. If, however, you are only coming in to get a pat on the back and a "good job" from me...another family might need that time.

Again, in either situation (prior meetings or successful student) I do not want to scare you off from a conference time. I love meeting with all families. I am just asking you to think about the purpose and intent of the time you want with me.

CONFERENCE PREPARATION

Please come ready to discuss specifics. I generally find myself spouting the same message—[insert your student's name] needs to use his/her class time better, use his/her planner more effectively, read and follow the directions, and give him/herself enough time with the work to be successful. There...that part is done.



Now what I want you to do is focus on an assignment, project, or aspect of the curriculum as related to your child's educational, emotional, and social development. How comfortable are they with reading? Can they make an

independent and age-appropriate choice? Can they summarize what they read? Can they make connections, inferences, analyze, synthesize, recognize use of a variety of literary devices, etc.? Do they know the parts of speech? Do they have a grasp of how words work together to create engaging and effective sentences? Can they write for a variety of purposes and audiences? Do they know how to read a textbook for information? Can they understand and relate the significance of a historical period? Do they know where places are in the world? Do they know their name?



The list can go on and on, but I think you get the point. Please come prepared with specific questions or you will get the generic experience instead of the individualized one. If you are unfamiliar with the work of your student or what we are doing in class then you have some homework before conferences. Ask your student about their work. Look it over with him/her to determine what s/he did well and what s/he needs to work on. Additionally, read the newsletters and handouts for assignments. Good luck...there will be a quiz.

READING READING LOG #3



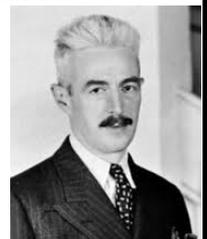
Students are expected to average twenty or more minutes of reading each night. The goal is at least **ten** pages a day. It is not an unrealistic goal and it is something that has been discussed many times in class.

A good number of students were not able to meet the first or second installment of their reading log goal simply because they had not taken the time to read or because they did not complete the summary with full and honest effort (missing the author, two sentences to summarize two hundred pages of reading, etc.). Please help to provide a structured time and encouragement for students to meet this goal.

Thank you in advance for whatever you can do.

SHORT STORIES

This week we will be reading "One Hour" by Dashiell Hammett. The story is posted to the "READING" page on my web site.



Samuel Dashiell Hammett (May 27, 1894 – January 10, 1961) was an American author of hard-boiled detective novels and short stories, a screenplay writer, and political activist. Among the enduring characters he

created are Sam Spade (*The Maltese Falcon*), Nick and Nora Charles (*The Thin Man*), and the Continental Op (*Red Harvest* and *The Dain Curse*).

In addition to the significant influence his novels and stories had on film, Hammett "is now widely regarded as one of the finest mystery writers of all time" and was called, in his obituary in *The New York Times*, "the dean of the... 'hard-boiled' school of detective fiction." *Time* magazine included Hammett's 1929 novel *Red Harvest* on a list of the 100 best English-language novels published between 1923 and 2005.

"One Hour" is a fast-paced story in which the gritty (and somewhat worse-for-wear) detective must solve the crime in the aforementioned...one hour.



WRITING VOCABULARY #4

The quiz is Thursday (10/31). The quiz will be a bit bigger than normal—it is the end of the quarter super quiz. It will not be ginormous, but it will be a little more involved than the average quiz.

Regular vocabulary students will have the fill-in-the-blank sentences for the current list (#4), as well as a review of a select group of words from lists #1-3 (it could be a crossword puzzle, matching, synonym matching, etc.). Students will be given a review list (for lists #1-3) and we will practice for the "other" portions of the quiz; not including the fill-in-the-blank section.

Word Within the Word students will have the stem definition and mystery questions sections, but will also have other sections. Depending on what list the student is studying (list #4, 12, or 19), the "other" portions could include antonyms, synonyms, math, odd-one-out, labeling cartoons, etc. We will practice for the other portions of the quiz, but students should organize their flash cards into categories.

DETECTIVE STORY

We are continuing the process of writing our first significant piece, a detective story. We have worked through the first seven of thirteen steps. Over the next couple of weeks we will be progressing into and through the others. Students have created the protagonist (their detective), antagonist (criminal), crime and setting, as well as the solution and the clues to embed in the story. Students should have a



finalized version of the exposition by Thursday of this week (10/31).

We will be working on how the story is started this week. How should the setting, character(s), and conflict be introduced to the reader? The pace and scaffolding provides students time and space to mentally edit, revise, and evaluate their initial story ideas before writing and developing their stories.

We will be working on:

8. Begin writing. Start with an introductory paragraph or two, to introduce the characters and setting. Then make the crime scene happen.
9. Introduce the suspects and witnesses. (eg. Annie entered the office. She was a tall woman with thin legs and hands. Her face looks like a diamond...). Be sure to give the reader a vivid picture of each one.



HISTORY CURRENT EVENT #4

Missing or make-up presentations will take place next Monday (10/28). The individual current event quiz is Friday (11/1) and it will contain questions about our short stories.

The quiz will contain questions about the most significant/interesting news items presented in the last two weeks. The quiz is multiple choice. Students read and select the answer to the question. I bold the key phrases in the question to help the students (ie: **what country**). Included with the quiz, but scored as a "Reading" grade, will be questions on the short stories we have been reading.

EXPLORATION OF THE AMERICAS

Most of the week will be spent finishing our research. Students need to bring in research materials to help supplement our meager library stock and computer access. Students do need a variety of sources—reference books, online resources, and other print media. Students are required to have a minimum of 5 bibliography sources of at least three different types. Students should also be take, at minimum, 50 categorized notes about their explorer.

Later this wee we will talk about and review the "paper" that students will be writing—a 2-3 day vivid diary entry from a fictional member of the exploration team. A draft of one day will be due next Wednesday (11/6).

Please review the research paper guidelines that were distributed to students or access it online at my HISTORY web page.

