

# Learning Adventures



## What are they?

Each month students will be given a list of topics to select from for their learning adventure assignment. Students will use books, magazines, and websites to locate information about their topic and prepare a small project and a speech. Students give speeches on the last Friday of the month. We will

participate in Learning Adventures September through April as a way to improve in the area of public speaking and independent research skills. I look forward to learning with the students as they share what they have discovered.


## Expectations:

- 1) You **MUST** present your chosen topic on the selected date. If you are absent, you must present the day you return. In case of emergency school closings, please note that we will present our topics the following day back.
- 2) Do not **READ** your information directly. You should be familiar enough with your topic that you can present the materials without notes.
- 3) You must provide a visual with your presentation. You can complete a poster, timeline, map, or PowerPoint (PPT). Please ask me for paper and time for PPT completion as needed. You may also invite a guest speaker to help present the materials. Be creative, if you have a different idea, discuss it with the teacher.

This activity should be an adventure in learning beyond the curriculum. Public speaking is often a tough challenge for many, but a grade level expectation and a 21<sup>st</sup> century skill.

## Schedule

| Month  | Topic Choices   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>September</b></p> <p><b>Presentation</b><br/><b>Sept. 26</b></p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Myths and legends are part of a group's heritage. Learn a Native American legend, and practice telling it like it would have been told by Native Americans years ago. Don't read it! Tell it with expression, emotion, and personality!</li> <li>2) Compare and contrast two of your favorite biomes using a graphic Venn diagram. Then select your top choice and research it to determine about how much of the earth is covered by your selected biome. What human or environmental factors could cause your biome to disappear?</li> <li>3) What is the history of schools (you might want to create a timeline)? How have they changed from colonial times till now? Do you think you would like learning more in a class from the past or now? Support your reasons.</li> <li>4) Where is the North Pole? What are the temperatures there? If you had to travel there, what type of transportation would you need to take? Has anyone reached the North Pole? Who is the first known explorer and who aided on the trip? What kinds of plants and animals live in the North Pole? Would you attempt a journey there to discover the North Pole for yourself?</li> </ol>                                   |
| <p><b>October</b></p> <p><b>Presentation</b><br/><b>Oct. 31</b></p>    | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Discover superstitions and/or "old wives" tales. Tell about one and its history (how it started).</li> <li>2) Many states have their haunted tales. What are some of the haunted tales you can find out about Missouri? Discover the spookiest tale and discuss whether or not you believe it could in fact be true. Be prepared to share the haunted tale with the class.(You might do a Missouri map with marked hauntings for your project)</li> <li>3) At what stage of the water cycle do rain, sleet, and snow form? How are these forms of water alike and different? Using a creative representation, show how each form. Be prepared to discuss the similarities and differences.</li> <li>4) Columbus was just one of the many explorers who discovered there was more to our planet than just one big plot of land. Other famous explorers include Magellan, Henry Hudson, and of course Lewis and Clark. Put yourself in the shoes of an explorer, your journey will lead you to Australia. Discuss how many miles you will travel, how you got here (including what you had to take on your journey), and what you saw when you got there. Discuss some fun customs or sights to visit.</li> </ol> |
| <p><b>November</b></p> <p><b>Presentation</b><br/><b>Nov. 21</b></p>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Why do we commonly eat turkey for Thanksgiving? What is the significance of the turkey during colonial times? What US symbol did it almost become? What do you think would be your reaction to such a symbol?</li> <li>2) What are the Salem Witch Trials? What happened during this time in history? Think about The Witch of Blackbird Pond, how easy was it for the colonists to accuse someone of being a witch? How has your idea of a witch changed in comparison to our social studies unit/novel and what you already knew from movies/books?</li> <li>3) What is the origin of Thanksgiving? Did the pilgrims and Native Americans really celebrate together? If so when? How has that changed your ideas about how we celebrate our own Thanksgiving?</li> <li>4) Many colonists arrived in the U.S. from England after a long, hard journey over the vast sea. Discover the country of England and plan relocation there. What kinds of jobs would you find? How would you dress? What is the money system they use in England? What do the English do for recreation? Describe exactly where in England you would live and what it would look like?</li> </ol>                                      |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>December</b></p> <p><b>Presentation</b><br/><b>Dec. 19</b></p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Discover how memories are preserved, past or present. What does your family do to preserve special memories?</li> <li>2) Discover the law of supply and demand. How does it affect the cost of your holiday gifts?</li> <li>3) What holiday traditions does your family have that come from other countries or cultures?</li> <li>4) Learning about world cultures is an adventure all in its own. Do you know much about Brazil? The Amazon rainforest is located there but is that all there is to learn about Brazil? Take some time to discover what Brazil has to offer if you were to visit? After learning about Brazil, plan a trip and discuss how you would get there and what you would do.</li> </ol>   |
| <p><b>January</b></p> <p><b>Presentation</b><br/><b>Jan. 30</b></p>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Fractions seem to be a hard concept for many people to learn. Think about the hardest part of the fraction unit (adding/subtracting, multiplying/dividing, equivalent fractions, conversion, or ordering fractions) and create a tool to help you remember how to learn or teach that fraction concept (you may create a game if you prefer)</li> <li>2) Who is Marie Curie? What special contributions did she give to the world of science? What major element did her and her spouse work with? What were the long term effects of that work? Did she receive any special awards for her work?</li> <li>3) During the Revolutionary period, some women colonists became politically active. They formed organizations and engaged in a variety of activities to lend their support to the cause of American independence. The Ladies Association of Philadelphia became the strongest and most well-known of these female organizations. Identify and evaluate two ways women supported revolutionary efforts through political activism (Use this website to help you out. <a href="http://womhist.alexanderstreet.com/teacher/DBOamrev.htm">http://womhist.alexanderstreet.com/teacher/DBOamrev.htm</a>).</li> <li>4) As we think about Westward Expansion and the way the United States changed during this time, we must recognize the importance of immigrants. For example, Irish immigrants helped build the Union Pacific Railroad. Find out about the country of Ireland to discover the heritage of these mighty builders. Take some time to discover what Ireland has to offer if you were to visit? After learning about the country, plan a trip and discuss how you would get there and what you would do.</li> </ol> |
| <p><b>February</b></p> <p><b>Presentation</b><br/><b>Feb. 27</b></p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Discover a famous African-American, past or present. Tell about his/her life and contributions.</li> <li>2) Discover pioneers. Make a map of the Oregon Trail, or make a model of a prairie schooner, or draw your favorite explorer or pioneer. Tell us about your project and how it relates to pioneers.</li> <li>3) Discover healthy eating. Plan a week's menu with your parent/guardian. Plan for 3 meals a day plus a snack. Do a shopping list. Go shopping with your parent to see how much it costs!</li> <li>4) Slavery was a dirty business. Many boat captains engaged in illegal slave trade. They would travel to the coast of Africa and capture natives of the country and force them in to the world of slavery. Many discovered ways to remember their own traditions in secret. But for those born in the states, they were never able to realize what their home country offered them. Do some research on the country of Africa – What is it like? What kinds for plants and animals are home there? What are special customs? What sorts of games to African children play?</li> </ol>  |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>March</b></p> <p><b>Presentation</b></p> <p><b>March 27</b></p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) What is the history behind St. Patrick's Day? What would it mean if you wore orange instead of green? Tell about Ireland's biggest ongoing problem past and present.</li> <li>2) Are you "lucky?" Teach a game or do a trick where the "odds" of winning may not be good. Learn about probability.</li> <li>3) During the Civil War, many slaves were able to escape their masters to start their lives over. One of the most famous was Harriet Tubman. Investigate and give at least two reasons why Harriet Tubman was known as a Freedom Fighter. You must support your answer.</li> <li>4) World War II affected the United States home front quite a bit, but the impact on the world is far bigger. Hitler's regime pushed into many countries and took over taking rights and privileges from many people, although the most affected were the Jewish community. Hitler and the Nazi's were from Germany. What is Germany like today compared to before WWII? What reminders of the war still exist in Germany today? How do the people feel about Hitler and the Nazi's? Is there anything special that the Germans do today to bring and remember peace to their country?</li> </ol>                            |
| <p><b>April</b></p> <p><b>Presentation</b></p> <p><b>April 24</b></p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Look at this pattern: 1,1,2,3,5,8,13,21. . . Can you continue this famous number sequence? It's called the Fibonacci sequence after the Italian mathematician who "discovered" it. Discover Fibonacci and his life OR find examples of this sequence in nature. (Hint: Count Flower petals in multi-layer flowers for starters.)</li> <li>2) The time has arrived for the MAP test. Do you feel prepared for the test? If you were the teacher, what are some ways you would prepare the students for the test? How would you help them relieve test anxiety?</li> <li>3) What is the Taliban? What role did they play in Afghanistan in our novel, The Breadwinner? Thinking about our own country, what impact has the Taliban had? Do we continue to fight them now? What other countries are affected by the Taliban?</li> <li>4) The war on terrorism has impacted several Middle East countries? Where are our military forces serving at in the Middle East? What do you notice about these countries? Focus on one of the following countries and discuss customs, plants and animals, and economics in that area. The countries to choose from are Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia.</li> </ol> |

