



PINNACLE PREP SCHOOL NEWSPAPER

September 1, 2022

Welcome Back!

We've been getting back into the groove at Pinnacle Prep and enjoying every minute of it! We want to thank you all for a wonderful first month and look forward to partnering with you this 2022-2023 school!

Dates to remember:

- **September 5th:** Labor Day- No School
- **Sept 7th:** Picture Day
- **Sept. 12-16:** Spirit Week
- **Sept. 23rd:** Teacher Workday/No School



Inclement Weather Policy

Keeping you informed is always our priority. We will notify you about school closure due to inclement weather via Remind 101 on or before 7 a.m. on the morning of closure.

Follow us on social media!

You can find us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube!

You will be able to keep up to date with everything that is happening at Pinnacle Prep!

REMINDE 101 is our preferred method of communication for everyday activities and reminders.

- If you have quick questions, feel free to send a remind message.

ELA

Mrs. Hill

Penguins:

Welcome to ELA class!

- We will be strictly focusing on letters and their corresponding sounds, beginning with the short vowels: a, e, i, o, and u. Soon, we will be using our phonemic awareness to begin READING words! My class will work in tandem with the work they are doing with Ms. Alma and Mrs. Hozie.
- Reading Log (M-Th), Please read with your child a minimum of 20 minutes each day, and initial the reading log in their purple folders.
- Treasure Chest will be every Friday...ONLY for those students who have completed reading homework (including reading log) & class work ON TIME
- Please let me know if you have any questions! I'm looking forward to a great year together!

Thank you, again, for your support and partnership in education from home!

Giraffes:

Welcome back to ELA class!

- Reading Log (M-Th), a minimum of 20 min. and must be initialed DAILY by an adult... This is your child's responsibility
- Treasure Chest will be every Friday...ONLY for those students who have completed reading homework (including reading log) & class work ON TIME
- We will be beginning our first novel study, *The Chocolate Touch*, by Patrick Skene Catling on the Tuesday after Labor Day, as well...PLEASE SEND BOOK to school on/before Tuesday, Sept. 6th.

- Spelling will begin after Labor Day. Students will receive practice packets on the first day of the week, and they will be turned in on the last day of the week, usually Fridays...tests are also on Fridays
- Grammar Practice Books have begun...students are responsible for completing two pages each day, getting it checked, and if time allows, they may go to the computer lab to work on IXL—kids will be responsible for working at their own pace doing the 2nd grade Grammar section AT SCHOOL ONLY! I will be checking their progress on a daily basis.
- Please encourage our Giraffes to practice handwriting—especially forming the letters the correct way, and making letters the correct size!
- Please let me know if you have any questions! I'm looking forward to a great year together!

Thank you, again, for your support and partnership in education from home!

Pandas:

Welcome back to ELA class!

- Reading Log (M-Th), a minimum of 20 min. and must be initialed DAILY by an adult... This is your child's responsibility
- Treasure Chest will be every Friday...ONLY for those students who have completed reading homework (including reading log) & classwork ON TIME
- Spelling will begin after Labor Day. Students will receive practice packets on the first day of the week, and they will be turned in on the last day of the week, usually Fridays...tests are also on Fridays.

ELA Cont.

- We will be using the Winston Grammar Program for our main resource regarding grammar...As a supplement, kids will use any extra time on IXL Grammar; Each student will be responsible for working at their own pace doing the 3rd grade Grammar section AT SCHOOL ONLY! I will be checking their progress on a daily basis.
- We will be beginning our first novel study, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, by Roald Dahl, on the Tuesday after Labor Day, as well...PLEASE SEND BOOK to school on/before Tuesday, Sept. 6th.
- Please let me know if you have any questions! I'm looking forward to a great year together!

Thank you, again, for your support and partnership in education from home!

Lions:

Welcome back to ELA class! A lot of what I normally do with the Lions will remain the same, however, I am implementing some new changes this year...I hope everyone will be excited about all the cool things I have in store for my Lions!

- I will NOT be sending home reading logs, homework folders, or Abeka workbooks. Yes, it's true! Each student will instead have a 1 1/2 inch binder, that will have a section each for: Spelling, Winston Grammar, Cursive, Writing, and their novel notebook. The students will be required to record daily, weekly, and even monthly assignments on their planner pages. The only homework they will have is any work that was not completed during class, to study for tests, or do work on an upcoming project. (Students are welcome to bring in their own binder if they like—please bring in by Tuesday, Sept. 6—or I will happily provide one).

- Spelling word lists will still go home on the first day of the week, and tests will still be on the last day of the week; I will not require the Lions to turn in any additional work...it is now up to each individual student to work out for themselves how they wish to prepare for the tests. If I see that someone is struggling, at that point I'll make a decision whether to require him/her to complete daily spelling assignments.
- We are definitely continuing to have high-intensity novel studies! We will begin with a brief introductory unit on Greek Mythology before we begin our first novel, *Percy Jackson & the Olympians: The Lightning Thief*, by Rick Riordan. Please make sure your child has brought this book by Monday, Sept. 12.
- We will be using the Winston Grammar Program for our main resource regarding grammar...As a supplement, kids will use any extra time on IXL Grammar; Each student will be responsible for working at their own pace doing either 4th/5th grade Grammar section AT SCHOOL ONLY! I will be checking their progress regularly.
- The Lions have already begun their cursive handwriting unit...this will be 15 minutes of daily instruction and practice.
- We will be completing approximately one writing project each month, which will mainly be completed at school with only the final copy being done at home. I will send home more information when we are ready to begin the first one.

I know this is a ton of information—please email me if you have any questions...Thank you, again, for your support and partnership in education from home!

Math

Ms. Jaya

Penguins:

The school year started off great with getting to know the amazing kids. We are working on reading and writing numbers from 1- 10, learning days of the week and continue to work on counting and writing numbers.

Giraffes:

It was a wonderful start for the Giraffes this year. They started the year by reviewing their addition and subtraction concepts. They started working on place value in which they mastered writing numbers in standard, expanded and word form, figure out the place and value of given numbers up to hundreds place. Kids are now working on rounding/estimating numbers to the nearest tens and hundreds and solving problems. They will continue to learn to compare and order number from least to greatest and vice versa. We will continue to practice adding and subtracting facts.

Pandas:

Pandas had a wonderful start by learning place value up to ten-thousands place. They learnt to write the numbers in standard, expanded and word form. Pandas also learnt to fill the missing number in the number chart, compare and order number from least to greatest and vice versa. Pandas are now learning working with money in which they are learning to calculate the change from the given amount. They will continue to work on multiplication concepts.

Lions:

Lions started this wonderful year by learning place value up to billions and decimals, estimating sums, differences, products and quotients and problem-solving strategies. Some of the lions will continue to work on fractions, in which they will cover all the operations of fractions (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division). They will start learning to multiply two- and three-digit numbers, short and long division, and order of operations.

Tigers:

It was a great start this year. Tigers worked on place value, estimation, decimals, real numbers, expressions, and variables along with exponents, scientific notation and solving problems using integers. They will continue working on integers, and then move on to coordinate planes followed by simplifying variable expressions and solving equations using addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Few other tigers are working on relations and functions, graphing linear equations and Pythagorean theorem. They will continue to learn slope- intercept form, distance, mid-point formula, writing linear equations and matrices. The other tigers are now working on lines and angles, polygons, circles, congruent and similar polygons, symmetry and problem- solving applications. On completion, they will start working on ratio, proportion and percent's in which they will work on solving proportions, relate fractions, decimals and percent's.

Upper Humanities

Mr. Troxel

Welcome back for another exciting year. Every year presents new and exciting challenges, but it is so nice to be back with all the children in the classroom. For those new to our school let me start by sharing a bit about my background and core educational philosophy. I spent 28 years in Texas education both in the classroom and as a school Principal prior to joining Pinnacle Prep. I'm here to teach humans, not subjects. In all I seek to help every learner discover their power to develop excellence and succeed in any role life places before them. Ask your child to share our core class values (the 6 BE's) and you'll understand my beliefs concerning success. I look forward to learning how your child thinks, determining which skills require perfecting, and working beside them to create tools which will build success in any endeavor.

I am here to teach independent thinking, not what to think. As parents you are your children's first and most important teachers. I am an extension of your desire for learning, so it's important to understand the learning goals and activities in place at school for your child. Allow me to share some of my key practices for all classes.

- We are using Interactive Student Notebooks (ISN's) as a method of recording and organizing key concepts. They take the form of reflective written journals as well as important notes for content. Occasionally I will have students bring their ISN's home for you to review. Ask them questions about what you read there.

- We will write every day and will be learning to analyze our own work product critically. This will be accomplished through peer writing workshops, class discussions, debates, and public speaking. We will be learning and perfecting these as the year progresses, but the core principle for all is reflective self-analysis as vital for quality work.
- We will be learning specific communication skills from small groups to public speaking and learning to be purposeful in sending and receiving messages for improved accuracy.
- The Lions will be studying American History from the beginnings of civilization in North America up to the Civil War. The Tigers will be studying Texas History from our time under 6 different flags till the industrial age of the 20th century.
- In both classes we will write reflective and persuasive essays, and deliver presentations about historical events, causes, important figures, and their relation to the world today.

For the Tigers in ELA

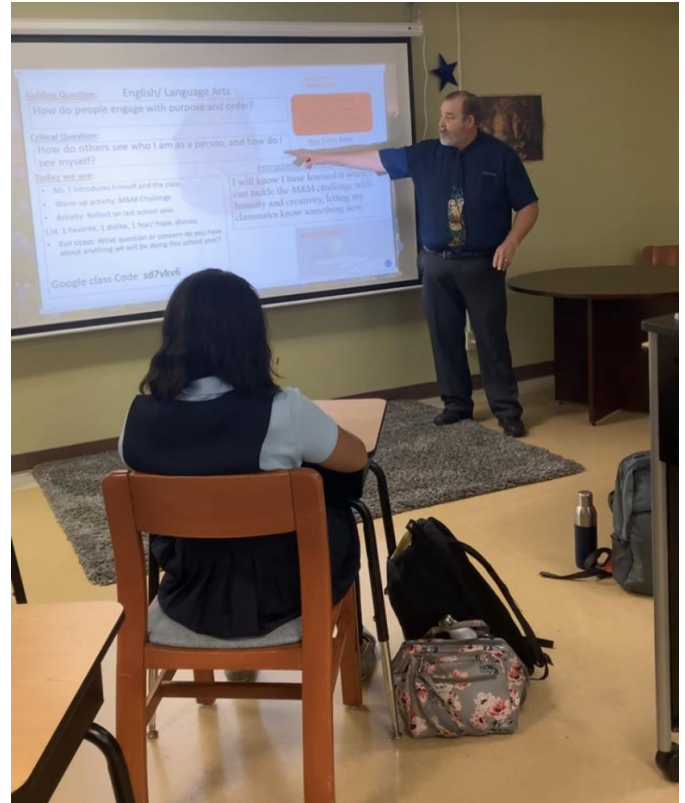
- We will practice grammar in class interactively as students write for a variety of purposes. A cornerstone is the analytical practice called Writer's Circle where we share and analyze essays.

Upper Humanities- Cont.

- We will read classic and contemporary literature in the form of novels, short stories, plays, poetry, and nonfictional prose. Students will analyze and respond to each in writing, public speaking, debate, and theatrical performance.

As the year progresses, we will incorporate social, governmental, economic, and historical studies throughout our curriculum. I use the classic term *Humanities* to describe the instructional focus because history, literature, and art all interplay to give meaning to our experiences. The Tigers will be starting the novel *The Rebels: Sons of Texas* by Elmer Kelton (ISBN:1410403165) in the upcoming weeks. The novel follows the experiences of immigrants to Texas during its early days. This historical fiction will dovetail into our study in History in the coming weeks.

I look forward to your children's discovery of these and a variety of other topics as we grow together throughout the new year. As a quick final note, I ask for your patience as I get to know your child's strengths, teach my basic routines and expectations, and create the best learning environment to meet their needs. Great structures start with solid foundations, for which time is essential to construct. Thank you in advance for your support, and thanks for sharing your amazing child with us here at Pinnacle Prep school.



Science

Mrs. Hozie

This month in science, we began the first few days going over expectations and procedures. All students designed a composition notebook that we'll use to take notes and publish science assignments. Students found magazine pictures that depicted their science interests. Personalizing notebooks boosts confidence and ownership. This strategy also helps students make connections between their interests and science.

Penguins and Giraffes

Our first week's theme was "What makes a great scientist?" Students discussed the characteristics that make a great scientist. Next, students matched their "observations" (using their 5 Senses) to the characteristics of a great scientist. Next, we went over our environment's living (biotic) and nonliving (abiotic) things. Learning to observe is one of the most important skills of science. Observing is more than looking with the eyes – all over our senses play a part in making careful observations. By observing and keeping careful records of what is observed, scientists can remember what they have done during an experiment and draw conclusions about what they have observed.

Tip: To encourage the ability to observe carefully and accurately, walk with your student around your home and choose one thing for your child to observe closely in each room. Please encourage your child to use as many senses as possible to describe the things they observe.

We are learning about plants to round out August and lead into September. Students are doing activities that identify the parts of a plant, how a plant grows, and what a plant needs to live and grow.

Tip: Soon, students will bring home their "Greenhouse" containing seeds they germinated. Plant your seed and set it in a window. Help your child observe and record the changes the plant undergoes as it grows into a mature plant. Encourage your child to draw the plant every few days and help them record how much water is given, the height of the plant, and so on.

Pandas

To start the school year, Pandas discussed and noted the characteristics of a great scientist. We discussed famous scientists as well as scientists the students might know personally. Next, each student wrote a paragraph and diagram of "What makes a great scientist?" We have reviewed the scientific method and learned how scientists classify living things. One of the skills of science that is especially important to the study of living things is classifying. The earliest scientists recognized the need to develop a uniform classification system to describe different kinds of living things. These classification systems are being perfected as better tools such as DNA analysis become available.

Tips:

1. Talk to your child about the traits of many things, both living (biotic) and nonliving (abiotic).

Science Cont.

2. Find ways of dividing things into groups according to similarities (compare) and differences (contrast).

3. If possible, go through a garden catalog with your student. Several plants may have the same "first name" (genus), but there will be only one plant for each second name (species).

4. See if you can discover characteristics in plants of the same genus (compare) and the differences that make them different species (contrast).

Lions

Our Lions are kicking off the school year by reviewing the scientific method and learning about precision vs. accuracy and measurement methods. Whether preparing to do experiments or reviewing how scientists approach testing questions, students must know and use the scientific method. The scientific method offers a set of steps that help students understand the process of asking a question, doing research, forming a hypothesis, and then putting the hypothesis to the test with an experiment. In learning about the scientific method, students learn about independent, dependent, and controlled variables; the importance of doing multiple trials; what to do when an experiment doesn't go as planned; and how to analyze data and evaluate whether a hypothesis was supported or not supported by the data.

Tip: Learning to gather and record data is an important skill in science.

To encourage your student to practice gathering and recording data:

1. Find objects around the house and predict whether the object will sink or float.
2. Help your student record their predictions.
3. Test the objects and record what you have observed.
4. Help your child understand that recording data makes it easier to remember what has happened and talk about observations with others. It also aids in drawing conclusions about what has been observed.

Tigers

To begin our year together, Tigers reviewed the scientific method and other important skills of science. They began the chapter dealing with atoms, elements, the periodic table and chemical reactions.

Tips:

1. Talk with your student about how hard it is to determine the structure of the atom. Have your child relate this process to a situation when they could not see something, but still had to figure out what it was.
2. Go on a household rust hunt. Look for chemical reactions on metals in the kitchen, garage bathroom, and other rooms of your home. For each rusty item you find, try to determine where the moisture came from that formed the rust. After you identify the source of the moisture, talk about what, if anything, could be done to keep the objects from rusting.