

Back to School Night

Mr. VanZant

PEN

Room A103



Overview

- ❖ Who I Am
- ❖ Units by Grade
- ❖ Other Points of Interest



**Be the change you
want to see in the
world.**

-Mahatma Gandhi



History, Current Events, and a bit of Philosophy

- ❖ Post Grade-School Career
 - Temple (BA), Chestnut Hill (MS), Wilkes, and Neumann (current)
- ❖ CB in 1994
- ❖ 22 years in CB (6th grade, 3rd grade, 4th grade, PEN)
- ❖ Preparing students for an unwritten future (timeless skills)



**Continuous effort-
not strength or
intelligence- is the
key to unlocking our
potential.**

-Winston Churchill



(Some) PEN Goals

- ❖ Problem Solving/Higher-Level Thinking
- ❖ Technology
- ❖ Leadership
- ❖ Communication
- ❖ Creativity
- ❖ Project Management
- ❖ Inquiry



**Play is the
highest form of
research.**

-Albert Einstein



2nd Grade

Animation

- ❖ History and types
- ❖ Creating multiple types

Bridges

- ❖ Types and construction
- ❖ Building multiple types
 - Marshmallow + toothpicks, etc.
- ❖ Virtual experimentation
- ❖ Trip
 - Bridges Tour of Bucks County (spring)



3rd Grade

Architecture

- ❖ Architectural features
- ❖ Styles of architecture
- ❖ Experimentation in structural basics
- ❖ Building a PEN facility
- ❖ Trip
 - Walking Tour of Doylestown (October 20th)

Game On!

- ❖ History of gaming
- ❖ Game mechanics
- ❖ Intro to game design
- ❖ Creating working prototype of a (student-designed) game



**Jazz is about
freedom within
discipline.**

-Dave Brubeck



4th Grade

- ❖ Understanding how the mind works
- ❖ Understanding different personality types
- ❖ Collaboration and problem solving activities
- ❖ Understanding the creative process
- ❖ Creating an invention
 - Identify a problem that can be solved by a student-created invention
 - Build a working prototype of the invention
- ❖ Trip
 - Invention Convention (spring)



5th and 6th Grade

Editorial Cartooning

- ❖ Drawing
- ❖ The art and science of editorial cartooning
- ❖ A look at world events both current and past
- ❖ Creating a editorial cartoon portfolio

Law

- ❖ Understanding the judicial system
- ❖ Understanding legal processes
- ❖ Preparing for a mock trial
- ❖ Trip
 - “Mock Trial” at Doylestown Courthouse (spring)



What Am I Working On?

- ❖ Current graduate course:

Neo-Cortex Development: Developing Higher Order Thinking Through Problem Solving, Creativity, and Play.

- ❖ PEN Curriculum
- ❖ Interactive PowerPoint “modules”



Supplies

- ❖ Tissues (requested)
- ❖ Small/Medium Sized Sketch Book
Grades 5 and 6



Conferences

- ❖ Individual GIEP at annual date (6th grade also in spring)
- ❖ At parental request – phone or in-person meetings
- ❖ Because we are meeting individually for GIEPs this year, I will likely not be attending 1st and 3rd marking period conferences with your child's homeroom teacher (they have a lot to discuss)- however, I am always happy to meet with you, upon request, as needed.



Communication

❖ E-mail:

dvanzant@cbsd.org

❖ Voicemail:

Butler x1490

❖ Sharepoint



**Nothing in life is to be
feared, it is only to be
understood. Now is the
time to understand more,
so that we may fear less.**

-Marie Curie



What can parents do?

- ❖ Gifted children often get immersed in a particular field of study.
 - creating with a certain media
 - reading about and researching a topic of interest
- ❖ Do what you can to fuel their pursuit in this area- within reason. 😊
- ❖ Know that they often run their course and the child will move on to something new.



Final Words: Growth vs. Fixed Mindset

- ❖ Growth Minded Students...
 - ❖ are **willing to work hard**.
 - ❖ **seek challenges**.
 - ❖ are **intrigued by mistakes**.
 - ❖ see **failures as opportunities** to grow and improve.
 - ❖ believe their **brains** are like muscles, the more they exercise them, the **stronger** they become.
 - ❖ are not concerned with **how smart they look**; instead,
 - ❖ they are concerned about **learning and improving**.
 - ❖ **outperform their classmates with fixed mind-sets, even when they entered with equal skills and knowledge (regardless of intelligence)**.

