



Mattole Valley Charter School

Newsletter

To Share and Celebrate our Vision

Spring Edition

It's WASC Time! (Again 😊)

Believe it or not, a year from now we will be anticipating a visitation from WASC to review our Self-Study. This means we need to begin looking at our current report and make changes as necessary. The visiting committee commended the organizational structure for our first self-study, so I intend to follow that model of success. Here's what is needed for this round of the accreditation process:

- One leader from each learning center
- This can be a parent or a highly organized/energetic high school student.
- One leader to guide the Humboldt/Trinity Independent Study group
- This can be a parent or a highly organized/energetic high school student.
- One leader to guide the Siskiyou Independent Study group
- This can be a parent or a highly organized/energetic high school student.
- One leader from the support staff (Special Ed., counseling office, learning record checkers, test coordinator, office personnel, etc.)
 - *We need more input from this group
- Volunteers from each of the above categories to serve on the team but not as a group leader, particularly parents, students, and people from the community.
- These smaller teams will meet to work on the various tasks. The leaders of these teams will meet to share this input.
- **Our first task consists of several parts:**
 1. Refine our School/Community Profile,

2. Clarify the ESLRs,
3. Summarize progress made since the last self-study, and
4. Identify two-three critical academic needs based on data analysis. This is easily done using free Internet- accessible tools, such as those provided by Google.

I have set up a Google Group as a forum for completing these tasks. The self-study document is slowly finding its way to this web-based tool for editing purposes. Google Groups also provides a way to communicate with each other through discussion boards and a common email address (mvcswasc@googlegroups.com). I am looking at using Skype for real-time meetings with the leadership team (more on this soon).

Don't worry about the technology, I (or other MVCS techies) will provide the necessary training. Google and Skype are very user-friendly tools.

If you would like to volunteer as a WASC team leader or member, please contact

Gwen Neu, MVCS WASC Coordinator
707-476-8406 or
mvcswasc@googlegroups.com



NCLA Helps Haiti

Linda Nellist of the Red Cross accepts a donation from North Coast Learning Academy. NCLA collected the money in a penny drive for relief for the victims of the Haiti earthquake. The second and third graders, pictured here with their teacher, Linda Phelps, collected the most money. The student body of 84 collected over \$600 mostly in change from drawers and jars. The students enjoyed counting thousands of pennies and being able to contribute to the relief effort. (Look at all those rolls of coins!)

Invitation to Submit Elementary Student Stories for Second Annual MVCS Fruit/Veggie Art Writing Contest *inspired by Joost Elffers "Play with your Food" calendars and books*



Last year Ganasini held a writing contest for Southern Humboldt Elementary students. Cathy Wright helped judge, and found some very creative stories and art submitted. This year we'd like to expand the contest to include ALL Elementary Students in MVCS.

We all know that some kids really need a purpose to write, and this contest will help with

that. It not only gives kids a purpose for writing (Did I mention FABULOUS Prizes ☺), but the pre-writing activity of creating a character out of fruits and vegetables is intrinsically enjoyable and seems to kick-start the kids' imagination.

See below for Simple Rules and a Judging Rubric, as well as a few more examples of fruit/veggie art. Have Fun!

Rules:

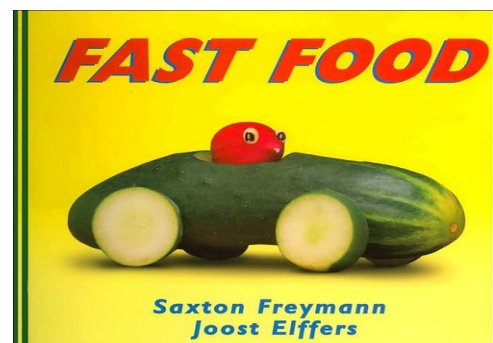
1. create story characters using fruits and vegetables
2. take at least one picture of your characters
3. write a story about them using the guidelines below
4. submit your story and photos to Cathy Wright for judging and entry into MVCS newsletter by May 6th. (If possible send as Word attachments or scan and attach cathlynwright@hotmail.com - don't forget to include at least one photo of the veggie/fruit character. We will accept hard copies as well.)

Nonwriters

dictate a story about your food art character(s) that has a plot, characters and a setting. Make sure your story has a beginning, middle and an end.

Writers

Neatly write or type a story that has a plot, characters based on your food art and a setting. Include well chosen details and descriptive language to develop your story. Be sure to use correct spelling, grammar, punctuation and capitalization. Your story should be at least three paragraphs long and have a beginning, middle and end.



Rubric for Veggie Stories

1 = not evident 2= sometimes 3 = evident 4 =
Definitely!

Character(s) - Setting

1 2 3 4 Created three dimensional character(s)
out of fruit/vegetable (or other media)

1 2 3 4 Wrote about the character and setting
using strong, descriptive, sensory words

Plot

1 2 3 4 Created a story with a problem to solve

1 2 3 4 Wrote a beginning to the story that
created interest in the plot

1 2 3 4 Wrote about the events leading to the
characters solving the problem in a
sequential way leading to a resolution

1 2 3 4 Created a story with a plot and ending
that made sense and was enjoyable to
read

Correctness & Conventions

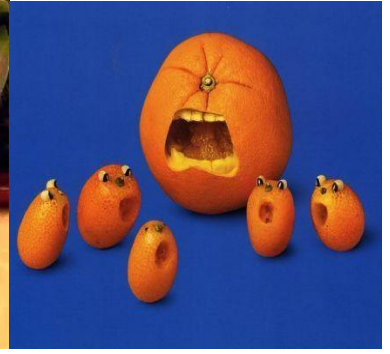
1 2 3 4 Proofreading was evident

1 2 3 4 Most English conventions were used
correctly -¶, spelling, capitals,
punctuation

1 2 3 4 Format for a narrative story was
observed

Total Score _____

Comments



Young Writers Conference for Grades 4-9

Co-sponsored by the Redwood Writing Project, the Humboldt County Office of Education, the Humboldt Reading Council, and the Redwood Council of Teachers of English.

When: Saturday, May 8, 2010

Where: Humboldt State University Campus

What to Bring: Your own sack lunch, writing materials, and a copy of the schedule

Registration Fee: \$40 if received by May 3, 2010. A \$5 late fee applies to applications received after May 3, including on-site registration.

Conference T-Shirt: \$5

Please make checks payable to "Redwood Writing Project" or "RWP."

Application Deadline: May 3, 2010. Please note that the early registration fee of \$40 (\$45 with t-shirt purchase) can apply only to applications received by May 3. Participants may also register on-site: a \$5.00 late-registration fee will apply, and participants will not be guaranteed their workshop choices, but this is still a very good option for those concerned about the May 3 deadline.

For more information, please contact **Megan Day, Melanie Nannizzi, or Sarah Holmes, Conference Coordinators**, at 707.822.4896 or rwpyoungwriters@gmail.com.

Congratulations and Good Luck at State Science Fair!

Friday night (March 19th) was exciting at Humboldt State's New Gym as the Humboldt County Science Fair winners were announced! Our very own Mattole Valley Charter School student Ryan Thomas (7th grade) won 2nd place for his project concerning bacteria in Little River at Moonstone Beach. In addition he won a \$50 award from the Arcata Marsh given each year for projects impacting

wetlands. Finally he won a grand prize, an all expense paid trip to the California State Science Fair May 17th-18th in Los Angeles!! So amazing and so inspirational!!!

Another student, Katherine Kabick, from Mattole's Triple Junction High School, won North Coast Unified Air Quality Management District's Award of Scientific Excellence!! Wow!!

Our school and its varied and talented students amaze me!

Enjoy! :)Cathie Shermer

Congratulations to ALL the students who participated in MVCS's FIRST EVER Science Fair. What a great job the students did!

Big, Big thanks to Cathie Shermer for heading up this worthwhile project and motivating so many to participate.

Can't Wait 'til Next Year!



THE SECRET TREE

Written by Gardner Boyce

(Ganasini's Student)

It was a nice, sunny day in an open field next to a bright, green forest. On that field there was a brick house and in that house there was a family of three, a dad, a mom, and a daughter. One day the young girl said, "I would like to go into the forest". So that day she packed a water bottle and some bread and then she set off.

She found a clearing and she sat down on the soft ground, exhausted. Then she thought it would be nice to have some flowers. Slowly, she got up and looked for some flowers. She found some wild, red roses and quickly a grey wolf jumped out of the berry bushes! Terrified, she jumped 30ft in the air and the wolf growled angrily at her as she landed with a bang. Then she threw her long, dirty blonde hair in the hot air as the wolf nipped fiercely at her! Ferociously, something grabbed her hair! Shockingly, she looked up and found that the dark tree above her has grabbed her hair. It started to pull her up and in a blink of an eye she was up in the tree. As she gasped, the tree said, "Do not tell anyone about this." She said, "Yes" and then she said in a nice voice, "Thank you." The tree said in its rumbling voice, "You're welcome."

That was the day the little girl made friends with a living tree.

The End



Meet the Willow Creek Group!

Here is a picture of the kids in the Creekside Learning Cooperative led by teacher Lisa Ambrosini (far right, back row) Thanks for being part of Mattole Valley Charter School!

More Educational Tips from Carla Giovannetti

Appreciation: How To Teach It To Our Kids

Did you know that when you praise your children, you're actually modeling how to notice and express appreciation? Your praise actually encourages them to be pleasant to others.

When you praise your children for certain successes and not for others, you're teaching them what is most important to you. For example, praising your child for accomplishments earned in athletics while ignoring academic achievements says a lot about what you value in your child.

In today's consumer-oriented society, kids absorb a barrage of messages that scream, "Material possessions determine self-worth!" If your children believe that, then it's important to negate that message with your own - less materialistic - beliefs. First and foremost, tell your children you love them for who they are. Then teach your children to recognize how the media's messages can sometimes be manipulative.

Advertisers are skilled at the art of making people - young and old - believe a particular product or certain look will bring success, love, happiness and joy. Ultimately, true contentment can't be found in things and your children need to hear that. Teach your children to have a healthy skepticism toward advertising and media by showing them the difference between wants and needs. By doing this, your children will become better consumers and more grounded individuals.

As parents, it's often easier to criticize and identify the faulty logic used by advertisers than it is to recognize our own communication breakdowns. If you want your children to learn the art of appreciation by valuing that which is truly important, then be generous with your praise and steadfast in your beliefs.

When Maya Angelou was interviewed on her 70+ birthday, Oprah asked her what she thought of growing older.

Maya Angelou said this:

"I've learned that no matter what happens, or how bad it seems today, life does go on, and it will be better tomorrow.

"I've learned that you can tell a lot about a person by the way he/she handles these three things: a rainy day, lost luggage, and tangled Christmas tree lights.

"I've learned that regardless of your relationship with your parents, you'll miss them when they're gone from your life.

"I've learned that making a 'living' is not the same thing as 'making a life.'

"I've learned that life sometimes gives you a second chance."

"I've learned that you shouldn't go through life with a catcher's mitt on both hands; you need to be able to throw some things back.

"I've learned that whenever I decide something with an open heart, I usually make the right decision.

"I've learned that even when I have pains, I don't have to be one.

"I've learned that every day you should reach out and touch someone. People love a warm hug, or just a friendly pat on the back.

"I've learned that I still have a lot to learn.

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."



What Is Formative Assessment?

Formative assessment is an active and intentional learning process that partners the teacher and the students to continuously and systematically gather evidence of learning with the express goal of improving student achievement. Intentional learning refers to cognitive processes that have learning as a goal rather than an incidental outcome (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1989). Teachers and their students actively and intentionally engage in the formative assessment process when they work together to do the following (Brookhart, 2006):

- Focus on learning goals.
- Take stock of where current work is in relation to the goal
- Take action to move closer to the goal

The primary purpose of formative assessment is to improve learning, not merely to audit it. It is assessment *for* learning rather than assessment *of* learning. Formative assessment is both an "instructional tool" that teachers and their students "use while learning is occurring" and "an accountability tool to determine if learning has occurred" (National Education Association, 2003, p. 3). In other words, to be "formative;" assessments must inform the decisions that teachers and their students make minute by minute in the classroom. Figure 1.1 compares the characteristics of formative assessment and summative assessment.

Benefits of Formative Assessment

Research on the use of formative assessment has shown that when teachers practice good formative assessment and students participate in it, both achievement and motivation increase.

The effects of good formative assessment on achievement can be as much as .4 to .7 standard deviations, the equivalent of moving from the 50th percentile to the 65th or 75th percentile on a standardized test. These effects exist at all levels - - primary, intermediate, and secondary-and are especially noticeable among lower achievers.

The reasons for these effects are numerous. Formative assessment helps identify what students can do with help and what they can do independently. Participating in formative assessment involves students in active learning, keeps them on task, and focuses them on learning goals. Formative assessment, especially peer evaluation and self-evaluation, helps students with the social construction of knowledge. But more important, formative assessment allows students to receive feedback on precisely what they need to do to improve. It shows them what to do next to get better.

Quality in education is not about "all students getting the same, but all students getting what they need."

Characteristics of Formative and Summative Assessments

Formative Assessment FOR Learning	Summative Assessment OF Learning
Purpose: To improve learning and achievement.	To measure or audit attainment.
Carried out while learning is in progress.	Carried out from time to time to create snapshots of what's been learned.
Focused on the learning process and progress.	Focused on the products of learning.
Viewed as integral part learning/teaching process	Viewed as something of separate, performed after learning.
Collaborative – teachers and students know the target goal & use assessment as feedback to guide and adapt what they do to meet student needs.	Teacher directed – students are given assignments then evaluated on how they do.
Fluid – An ongoing process influenced by student need & teacher feedback.	Rigid – An unchanging measure of student achievement
Active and intentional learning	Teachers are auditors
Uses evidence to guide making adjustments for continuous improvement.	Uses results to make pass fail decisions about fixed set of instructional goals.



Be sure to get your diploma and cap and gown requests in!

Scheduled ceremonies:

Humboldt - June 17th 5 PM Van Duzer Theater, Arcata

Siskiyou – June 6th 3 PM College of Siskiyou Theater

Three Rivers – June 18th mid-afternoon

Laurel Tree –June 18th Moonstone Beach