

## QHIA Weekly Update: August 25, 2016

Hello QHIA families,

What an incredible 4 days with your kids! We spent a lot of time with teambuilding through Improv games, peer interview activities, etc., and it has really started to show in their comfort level with each other.

Each week you will receive a brief update. This one will be a bit more lengthy, as we are still getting started with our routine. We now have our QHIA website up and running! All important info, including our calendar of events, will be accessible at any time here. Just click on this link:

[QHIA Website](#)

Students have been writing down their daily learning activities in their Charter Journals at the end of class each day. I keep a master copy by the front door on top of the white bookcase. Feel free to look at the master copy. This is what they will turn in to me at the end of each month's reporting period, along with some samples of their school work.

**Here are some important dates and info to be aware of:**

**Please bring your checks for the Exploratorium and Mt. Hermon no later than Monday, August 29.**

**Next Week (August 29-September 2):**

**Monday-Wednesday, August 29-31)**

- Students have the option of completing their CK-12 Math and Science Assignments **either at home or in the classroom between 9-11am.**
- **11-12:** Transition time/Art Jam-ongoing projects
- **12-2:30:** All students at the classroom by **noon.** English/American History/VAPA

**Thursday, September 1: Field Trip to SF Exploratorium to see the Strandbeests!**

- student cost is \$9.00
- 
- adult chaperone cost is \$12.50.
- 
- We have enough drivers to transport all of our kids! Thank you parents!
- 
- \*Please note that if you are a driver, you need to have the following insurance coverage:
- **\$100,000 per person, \$300,000 per occurrence**
- **\$50,000 property. Attached are the appropriate forms that need to be on file with Tarah in the charter office, located here at the Quail Hollow Campus.**
- **Please meet at the school parking lot by 8:15am! We will set up the carpools, then leave at**
- **8:30am and plan to return at around 4pm.**
- 

**Update:**

**Art**

Each morning we played some Theater/Improv games to get to know each other; some of them I introduced, and some of them the students taught each other. All I can say is that yesterday the kids were absolutely rolling with laughter (so was I) at each other's antics, and really becoming more brave and supportive of one another.

**Math and Physical Science**

We spent a few hours each day navigating their online Math and Science program: CK12.

Go to CK12.org and navigate around to get a feel for what they are doing, or ask them to show you what they are working on. We experienced glitches along the way, and expect to find more, but all in all, I think it's a dynamic program that should work for us. I told the kids, "we are the first program in our district to give this a

try". Each student is working in an adaptable online textbook which has pencil and paper problems as well as "practice"activities that mark their content knowledge via the online system. There are also interactives, videos, and other extras that enhance the experience. In math, I am starting them all out at grade level, and will adjust to individualize their learning. Some students may need to move ahead more quickly, others may need more time.

## **History and English**

### **First Semester Focus: American Revolution, Creation of our Government, and Elections.**

We watched some video clips to get excited about our US History focus. I will be using curriculum developed in New York that ties to the musical, "Hamilton". Half of the students literally screamed with delight when I mentioned this : )

Said New York City Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña, "This musical will ignite curiosity and give teachers and students the opportunity to experience American History in a unique way while connecting to the class curriculum and will cultivate a deep love of learning. I'm thrilled by this partnership and grateful to Mr. Seller, The Rockefeller Foundation and the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History for enriching our students with this incredible work of art."

They participated in various peer interview activities, and I introduced the writing benchmark and solo history project to them. Details for all of these assignments can be found on the website.

## **Classroom Culture**

We came up with and discussed some classroom norms that we will keep adding to, as well as brainstormed what the kids would like to add to their arts curriculum this year. You will find their lists at the end of this email.

## **Homework due by Sunday**

- The students are expected to complete their math assignments sequentially in CK12 for no more than one hour between now and Sunday. I expect them to give a concerted effort to determine a realistic pacing for themselves. \*I assigned more than I expect them to finish.
- 
- Students should narrow down their topics for their writing benchmark essay and solo history project (ask them to show you the paper handouts I gave them about their beginning of the year writing benchmark : )

**Below are the video clips that I shared in class:**

[Lin Manuel performs "Hamilton" spoken word at the White House](#)

[Theo Jansen's Strandbeests Intro](#)

[Adam Savage Meets a Strandbeest at the Exploratorium!](#)

**Below you will find a list of some of the ideas that the students generated themselves:**

How can we demonstrate learning in ways that are different from writing an essay?

- Collage
- Video
- Drawing or picture (sketch, watercolor, marker, etc.)
- Fictional story based on factual events
- Oral presentation
- Act it out: skit or monologue

- Comic strip
- Compose a song

#### Activities to do this year

- Tie-dye
- Sharing (a skill or piece of artwork)
- Put color all around the room
- Art on the walls
- Cooking
- Bring in pastries/snacks
- Have a display area (for artwork, 3d models, etc.)
- Stuffed animals in the room
- Hidden duck search for a prize (like the Trader Joe's tiki-man : )

#### **Norms/Guidelines for our Classroom Culture**

- Physical and Emotional Safety

##### Physical

- keep chairs legs on the ground to prevent tipping (one student witnessed another in a previous program have to go to the emergency room because they hit their head)
- Peer Pressure: don't challenge peers to do things beyond what their physical abilities and personal parameters are
- We need to feel confident that we won't be attacked physically
- Trust

##### Emotional

- We are a gossip-free zone! (we need to trust each other to share our personal thoughts; goals, ideas, etc.)
- We need to feel confident that we won't be attacked verbally
- Respect personal space
- Trust

Thanks so much for sharing your students with me! We are off to a great start.

Sincerely,  
Amber