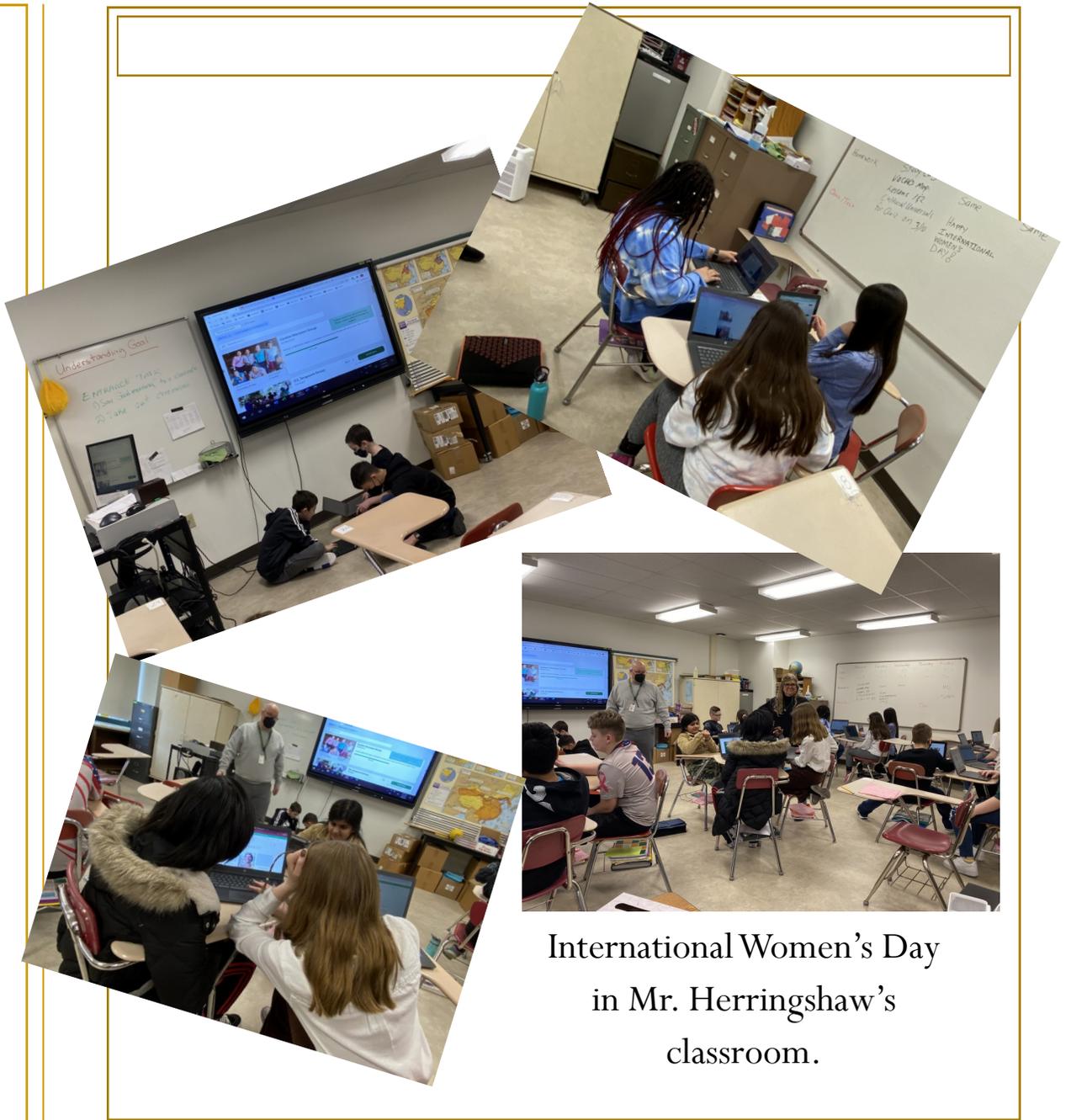


VESTAL MIDDLE SCHOOL



International Women's Day
in Mr. Herringshaw's
classroom.

APRIL 2022



UPCOMING EVENTS

- 3/29-4/5 NYS ELA Assessment
- 4/11-4/15 Spring Break
- 4/21 PTO Meeting
- 4/26-5/9 NYS Math Assessment

Anti-Vaping Presentation.

In March, Lourdes presented to our 6th grade P.E. classes about the dangers of vaping. This is an annual presentation and we were excited to have it back in person this year!



VMS OBSERVATIONS.....

- The ELA state assessment was given at the end of March. The test was computer based. Thank you to the tech department for their extra support.
- Our PE department just finished their archery unit for the school year.
- This month we transitioned students back to one cafeteria. They are thrilled to have the middle school cafeteria experience. There is a quieter location available for students who need it.
- March Manners Madness was a huge success. Students participated in Bingo and were able to see many of our staff members in videos that modeled appropriate behaviors in school.
- Our PTO sponsored a staff appreciation coffee cart and egg hunt. Thank you to all the parents who provided items for our staff! It was greatly appreciated!
- Mr. Herringshaw's social studies classes celebrated International Women's Day by researching and supporting projects by women from around the world.

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

Mrs. Saar's 6B Classes,

*We recently read "The Wretched Stone" by Chris Van Allsburg and used the book to open discussions on the benefits and dangers of technology. We explored the dangers of too much electronic technology use and some of the ramifications it can have on us. At the end, students wrote written responses in which they stated their opinion and backed it up with support to answer the question: Was technology good for our society?

*We also read an informational article about the 2018 rescue of a soccer team from a cave in Thailand. After reading the article and discussing it, students wrote expository essays that explained

how the rescue of the team was an example of teamwork from around the world. Finally, we took some time to watch and discuss the National Geographic documentary about the rescue.

*Currently we are reading about invasive species of wildlife and plants in the United States. We will be using information on this to complete a research unit. In the unit, students will learn the skills involved with researching; creating research questions, finding reliable sources, reading sources and taking notes, how to create a Works Cited and writing a research paper with in-text citations. After the research process is modeled, students will choose an invasive species that they wish to research on their own.

Mr. Herman's 6A Classes

Students in Vestal Middle School understand the need to "fit in." All students can relate to this universal theme. Recently, in Mr. Herman's ELA class students have been reading, writing, and reflecting on the need to belong to a group. They have been examining perspectives, specifically focusing on how culture can unite humans and enhance a sense of community. Students will have the opportunity to create a visual public service announcement for our school centered around the topics of tolerance and unity.

Mrs. Powell's 7A English Classes

In 7A English, we've just completed reading the classic novel *The Call of the Wild*.

The students then wrote an essay about aspects of the story and discussed their ideas about why this is considered a classic piece of literature. Additionally, we viewed the 2020 movie version of the book, starring Harrison Ford.

Next, classes will be heading into Poetry. Reading and analyzing a variety of poems, the devices used, with an emphasis on figurative language. Content will include a wide variety of poetic forms, with authors ranging from E.E. Cummings to Maya Angelou. Our studies will also include mini-units on seminal American poets Emily Dickinson and Robert Frost.

From Mrs. Stowell and Mrs. Mills,

We have brought back an incentive program we both created prior to the pandemic:

High 5 Readers. For every 5 books they read, they can turn in an entry for immediate rewards which include prizes and treats, as well as a certificate of recognition. A copy of each certificate hangs in the halls to celebrate our students' commitment to reading. Students are enjoying the spirit of the competition between our teams and reading like crazy!

From Mrs. Delmage and Mrs. Jones

ELA 8A and 8B students are learning how to podcast! *What is a podcast, you may ask? It's a series of multimedia episodes whereby a speaker leads a conversation, shares stories, reports the news, etc. Podcasts entertain, humor, and educate, focusing on one particular topic at a time. Podcasts are digital files that are watched and listened to on a device; most podcasts today are audio only. How are we using podcasting in the 8th grade classroom? Students are creating podcast episodes based on each of the three sections of their fiction independent reading books, using their annotations and notes as springboards. Students' podcasts will be analytical in nature, intelligently promoting (or intelligently critiquing) their books based on the elements and devices of literature. The podcasts will point back to specific moments in the text, include direct quotations along with students' elaborations, and showcase each student's voice as a thinker, writer, and speaker.*

Submitted by Darren Herman, Vestal Middle School English Chairperson