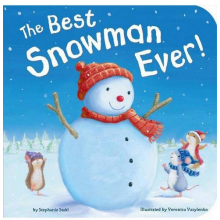
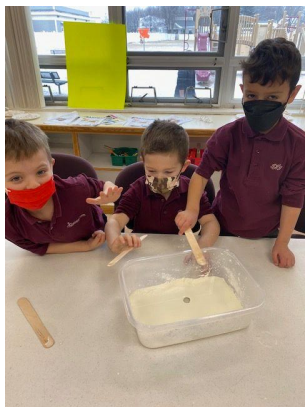
Sacred Heart School Steamsational Classroom Newsletter 03/10/2022

Welcome to the 4th edition of the SHS Steamsational Classroom Newsletter for the 2021-2022 school year! Although we've continued to have some interruptions in our schedule with snow days and other school activities, we continue to make the most of our time together. I've included many photos with this edition. It's always wonderful to witness the creative process and it's a WIN all around when coupled with big smiles! As we move through the last few weeks of winter and into spring, I have many creative lessons planned for all 9 grades. I am especially looking forward to seeing what our 8th graders produce for their Shark Tank capstone project! If you have any questions or need to follow up with me on anything, please feel free to reach out through email at alantaigne@shshampton.org.

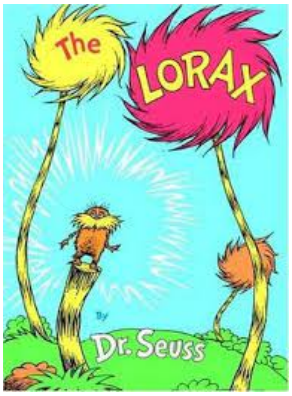
Our primary grade students have been very busy learning and exploring. I find that rocking between game play and guided lessons are the best way to stimulate the design process in this age group. The students continue to have some amount of time when they can explore on their own, but also begin to acclimate to project-based learning. Students in grades K-1 started out the winter reading **The Best Snowman Ever** by Stephanie Stahl and watched a short video on PBS kids about how snowflakes are formed. Students then took their learning to the building phase by creating their very own snowmen (or snowwoman) houses out of marshmallows, pretzels and toothpicks.



Is it a liquid or solid? No, it's Oobleck - a non-newtonian fluid! A non-newtonian fluid changes from liquid to solid depending on the amount of imposed force. It's a really fun and sensory-filled science experiment that pairs nicely with the classic children's book, **Bartholomew and the Oobleck**, by Dr. Seuss. Grade K-1 students had lots of fun learning, mixing, playing and getting very messy! Special thanks go out to Mr. Fernando for coming in and helping us with clean up duty!

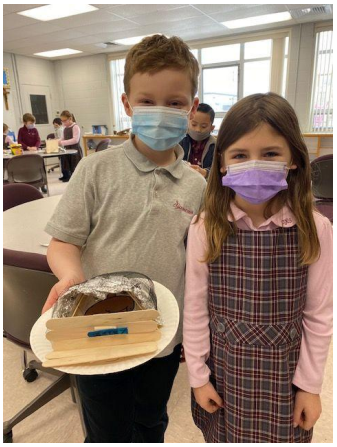


For Valentine's Day K-1 students decorated their own Valentine's Day themed board games. We then took time during class to play our games with friends. There is a lot that can be learned through board game play. Areas of learning such as logic sequencing (the building block for coding!), taking turns, patience and following directions are all very important 21st century skills that can be transferred to the engineering design process. I hope most of these games made their way home and that families enjoyed playing together!



Younger students also had an opportunity to celebrate Read Across America in STEAM. We read, **The Lorax**, by Dr. Seuss and students participated in building their own truffula tree forests using spaghetti, cotton balls and marshmallows.

Our 2nd and 3rd grade students participated in the **Hibernation Station** read aloud and then spent time building their own hibernation homes for a selected hibernating animal (ground squirrel, hedgehog or a brown bear). The students were very proud of their work and I was impressed by how these projects evolved. Below are a few examples of what our students created. Thank you to those families who donated extra items for our students!



Grade 4 and 5 students created their own 'chip clips' out of recycled plastic and also designed the packaging for their clips. This was a long term project that involved studying how polymers react to heat. We also used a new, web based design program to create the designs for our packaging. I hope most of these projects made their way home because I thought they would make great Valentine's Day gifts for families. Thanks again to families who donated plastic!

Grade 4 students are currently learning how to play chess. This unit will tie into the 4th grade reading/language arts curriculum in the weeks to come. Grade 5 students recently began a unit on the planets and the solar system. Students are currently working in small groups to put together 2 minute commercials on travel to a selected planet. Students are getting very creative with this lesson! Props and costumes are highly recommended! If you have any questions about this project, all supplemental material is posted in Google Classroom.

Our grade 6 students just finished up their digital poster board projects. Students had to research a historical figure from the fields of science, technology, engineering, art or math. They then created poster boards about their historical figure and coded areas for sound that viewers could interact with through our Makey Makey kits. Please click on the link below to view an exemplar project on Stephen Hawking:

https://youtu.be/zu4Bjv_BeFk

Now that our historical figure projects are completed, 6th graders are working on their keyboarding unit. Students should be able to type around 25 WPM by the end of 6th grade.

Grades 7 and 8 finished the Bloxels project and then worked through their 4 weeks of keyboarding. 7th grade students just started working on their Board Game projects. This is a multi-week project and all information on this assignment is posted in Google Classroom. This project was a class favorite last year. There were so many amazing board game designs and I shared a few previously submitted projects with our 7th graders to give them an idea of what is possible. I can't wait to see what the students come up with this time around!

Our grade 8 students just started their Shark Tank project. This is a capstone project for the 8th grade class. I am very excited for this unit and I know I will be completely impressed by many of the ideas!

Thank you for your continued partnership. I look forward to the weeks ahead! If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out.