



THE TRAILBLAZER TIMES

January 23, 2008, Explorer MS, Arizona Excelling School, PVUSD

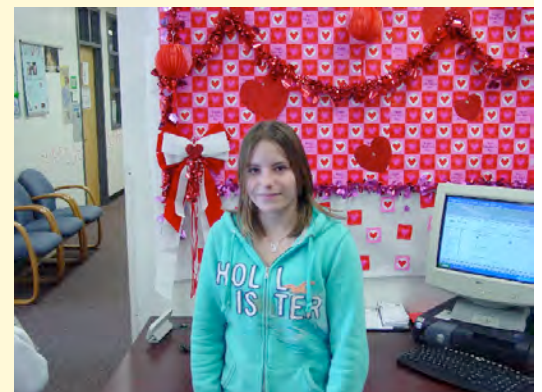


TRAILBLAZERS OF THE MONTH

Congratulations Students!



According to Aristotle "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit." This holds true for Explorer's latest "Trailblazers of the Month" Ben Meek and Maddie Ard, as they have made a habit of completing homework, studying for tests and going the extra mile to enhance their learning. Ben and Maddie are active outside of the classroom as well. Maddie is in gymnastics and enjoys horseback riding while Ben participated in Explorer's first "Future Cities Project" pre-engineering club which focused on nano-technology. We are very proud of their efforts this year and want to take this opportunity to say well done. Congratulations to Explorer's Trailblazers of the Month for December! We are very proud of your accomplishments and you now serve as a great role model for your peers.



SEEING WORDS WORK

THE EXTREME TEAM TAKES A LOOK AT THE VALUE OF WORDS WELL USED

This month in English, the Extreme Team read and listened to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s 1963 speech, "I Have a Dream." Almost every student was deeply impacted by the legendary words of one of our country's bravest leaders. Here are some of the many perceptive responses our students made about King's use of descriptive language:

To me, this speech is truly inspirational, and the way in which he worded it is ingenious. One section I loved stated: "This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism. Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy." What he is saying here is that this segregation has gone on far too long and we cannot go on any longer without taking some kind of action against it. His entire speech is like a beautiful poem. He used repetition constantly to grasp hold of the listeners' attention and to make his message clear and strong. His words were bold and passionate. He used them to paint a horrifying picture of the reality of injustice and a hopeful picture of his dream fulfilled. On the last page he restates the phrase "Let freedom ring" over and over again. The power in his voice drove his speech home for me. He made it crystal clear what he wanted changed, and obvious that he was determined to do it. The speech "I Have a Dream" fits in with the poetry unit we are currently studying. It showed us how ideas can be translated into beautiful, descriptive pictures in people's heads. It also showed us that poetry doesn't always come in the form of a poem, but comes in various forms if you are looking for it. Dr. Martin Luther King's speech really motivates me to want to learn more about using poetic language to express my ideas. It has been fun working with his speech and I can't wait until we start writing our own poems.

- Taylor Harper

He used descriptive phrases like "the flames of withering injustice" to clarify the suffering of African Americans under slavery. He told people that they needed "to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice." This showed that our country would be split in two if we didn't change to the "solid rock of brotherhood."

-Brittany Le

The picture of “thirst” he uses to describe the need for freedom helped us understand that African Americans were waiting and in need of freedom. It showed that they were tired of being segregated.

- Tate Avey

My favorite description is “the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination.” This painted a vivid picture in my mind of how hard the African American’s lives were in 1963.

-Parth Patel

We realized that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. not only wrote a speech, but a masterpiece of words all combined to deeply affect every person in the nation. One incredible description is how he explained that the white people’s freedom was “inextricably bound to [the African Americans’] freedom”.

-Zachary Reinstein

His passion and boldness drew me in and filled my mind with vivid pictures describing freedom and justice. As I listened to the speech, I almost felt as if I were in the crowd watching him engage the audience with his words. I am definitely inspired to improve my writing and learn to use more descriptive vocabulary. I’m also inspired to voice my opinions and try to make a change.

- Brionna Verse

I can honestly say that speech was one of the most powerful and inspiring things I have ever heard. He grips the listener with his amazing use of figurative language and metaphors. For example, he says, “Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred.” He was encouraging African American people to seek their rights by not acting violently. He also describes the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 as being “ a great beacon light of hope” to the many who faced racial injustice.

- Michelle MacKnight

I like his descriptions because it makes you see what it looked like in 1963 and now. When you look around you realize that a lot has happened because of these very words. Think what the world might look like if Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. didn't say these words?

- Jason Hyman

His voice and message is so clear, it's like staring through the looking glass of truth. You can just imagine the reactions from those who experienced these hardships.

- Meredith Sanders

Future Cities Project



Congratulations to Explorer's Future Cities Project Team for the excellent presentation they gave to a panel of engineering judges on Saturday, January 19. Three seventh grade students Thai Dao, Meredith Sanders, and Kevin Treadwell represented their team and they did a beautiful job of explaining the unique features and the infrastructure of Blazer City. Many students worked very hard on this engineering project, including, Thai Dao, Emily Gingras, Robbie Hill, Elias Karagiannis, Jacob McWhorter, Ben Meek, Grayson Payne, Jordan Powell, Meredith Sanders, Alex Seitz, Jordan Tarr, and Kevin Treadwell. Special thanks to the Future Cities Club sponsors Mrs. Feldman and Mrs. Martin. We want to extend a very special thank you to Explorer parent, Mr. John Morast, our mentor engineer, for volunteering his time and engineering expertise. We want to give a special thank you to the McWhorter Family for helping with the physical model and the use of their office space. Additional thanks to Mrs. Brownfield for supplying art materials for the physical model.

Our Future Cities Club members are already thinking about next year's model and working together again to design a second city of the future. Congratulations to everyone who participated in Future Cities.