

How to get your student to talk about their day



Families frequently ask teachers for advice on how to get their students to share more about their school day.

Describing an entire action-packed day can be hard for anyone, particularly young people. Help your student process by giving them time to have a snack and some down-time before asking about school. Sitting side-by-side-in a car, or on a couch-can be more conducive to conversation than sitting across from one another. Here are some questions that to get the conversation rolling:

Elementary

- What was your favorite part of the day?
- What was the hardest thing you did today? What helped you get through that?
- Can you show me something you did today?

Middle and High School

- What was the most interesting thing that happened today?
- Did anyone say anything funny?
- What was your biggest challenge? What support do you need with that?
- Which rules at school are different from at home? Do you think that's fair?

When talking with your student, keep in mind that young people often want to be heard and empathized with. When your student shares something challenging, ask if they want you to simply listen, or if they'd like your help before you jump into problem-solving. Unsolicited advice can feel like judgment rather than support, and judgement usually shuts conversations down.

IMPORTANT DATES & ITEMS TO NOTE

- 12-14 Sept:
Academic Open House ([click here](#) for specific times)
- 12-14 Sept:
Read to Achieve
- 14 Sept at 8:30 am:
First WINGS meeting
- 15 Sept: K-8th field trip permission slips and \$50 deposit is due. [Click here](#) to pay
- For school start and end times, [click here](#)
- Academic & Events Calendar [click here](#)

A huge thank you to our families for being mindful about arriving on-time (rather than early) for afternoon carpool. This has made dismissal more efficient and safe!

No early drop-off at carpool...When dropping your students off in the morning, please wait for staff to arrive at the car-line, and to indicate that it is time to drop off your students. If you need to drop your student off before 8 am, please [click here](#) to make arrangements with our Before & After Care program.

Running late for carpool pick-up? Look for your student at After School. Carpool ends promptly at 3:30 for Kindergarten through 4th grade and at 3:45 for 6th-12th grade. Students who are not picked-up by the end of Carpool are sent to After School at Davis. Families are charged \$10 for the first 15 minutes, \$35 after that. Cash or check due at pick up.

Thinking Classrooms

Stacey Stover, 7/8 Mathematics Lead Teacher



How do you get a goat, a dragon, and a head of lettuce across a river on your very small boat that only holds you and one item each time? That's the thinking task the 7th/8th graders kicked off their school year with as they began learning math in a Thinking Classroom setting.

Thinking Classrooms, created by Peter Liljedahl, use 14 research based practices to encourage productive thinking and problem solving. We started with non-curricular thinking tasks - open ended problems that have multiple ways to approach it but are not directly tied to grade level standards. The goat/dragon/lettuce problem got students thinking about creative solutions, while a "race around the world" problem strengthened their geography, measurement, and calculation skills. As we transitioned to grade level content, thinking tasks change to be curricular - for example, to introduce geometric patterns in 7th grade we might cut a square into a smaller number of squares. (Think about it right now: can you cut a square into 11 smaller squares? How about 5 smaller squares?) Other key components of Thinking Classrooms that middle school math has used so far are random table groups, small group work with 3-4 students, and starting each day with thinking tasks instead of notes. We are excited to develop some creative, flexible math thinkers this year!

On the lookout for mudpuppies

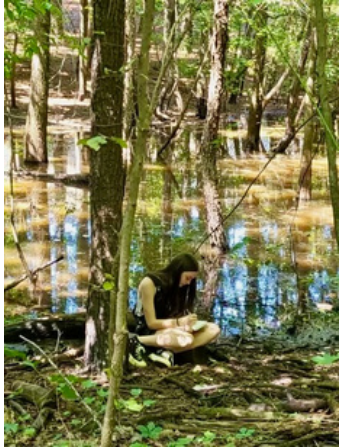
Did you know that due to our diverse range of ecosystems, North Carolina has more species of salamander than any other state? One particularly interesting species of salamander found in North Carolina is the mudpuppy (*Necturus maculosus*). Mudpuppies are unique salamanders that retain their gills through all phases of metamorphosis. Like their hellbender cousins, mudpuppies are considered giant salamanders because they can grow up to 10 inches long! The NC Wildlife Resources Commission is asking the community to be on the lookout for mudpuppy salamanders, which the state has identified as a species of concern. Mudpuppy populations are at risk due to sediment in the mountain streams that they call home. The state asks that if you spot a mudpuppy, take a photo and send it to Lori.Williams@ncwildlife.org. We'd love it if you'd also tag us with any amphibian sightings, or if you spot mudpuppies of the mud boot wearing variety! (#pioneersprings) Learn more [here](#).



Photo credit, Todd Pierson



Classroom Happenings



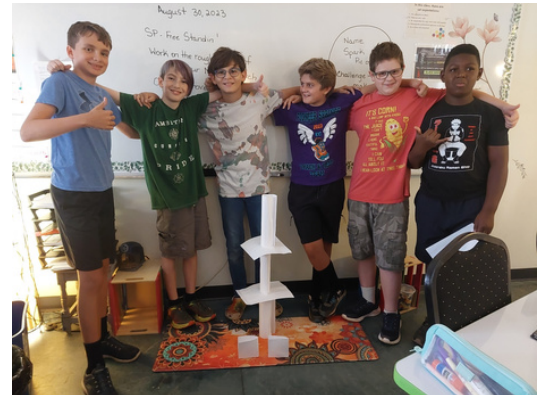
Nature journaling at the pond in 8th grade Environmental Literacy with Ms. Mel.



"Ms. Allie, we've been waiting to show you our play! Can we perform it right now????" cajoled Ms. Deepthi's class in Drama. Fifth grade has written an entire book of plays in a week!



8th graders working with the IT department to set-up the classroom 3-D printer in Ms. Michele's class.



7th Grade Explore students solved Spontaneous problems using to improve critical thinking and problem solving skills in Ms. Michele's class.



High school chemistry students studying the structure of atoms and compounds by using indicator solutions to test for the presence of biological polymers (aka macromolecules) in Shannon O'Connor's class.



4th grade preparing the Math Garden in front of Croft for new plants with Ms. Karlee during Environmental Literacy.