



Northeast School Principal's Newsletter

February 9th, 2024



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Black History in the Month February!

Celebrating black history at Northeast happens all year long. February is the month that nationally we highlight activities and lessons focused on the achievements of black people around the world. Throughout this month Northeast has amplified our programming to help punctuate the important and critical contributions of black people to our global society. Across the school we are making valuable connections to belonging, diversity and equity.

Both schoolwide and at each grade level the Northeast staff has created learning experiences that facilitate a deeper understanding of black contributions and successes in our culture, the fight for civil rights, and the development of human civilization. Here are some of the amazing moments happening at Northeast in February!

Our kick off activity was a schoolwide "Queen Nur" assembly this past Monday. Queen Nur accompanied by Dwight James. A percussionist, took our students through a tour of black history. Queen Nur retold the "Drum Story", an introduction to the first drum in West Africa. The drum was used for many purposes, such as sending joyful messages of marriages and births, and also of death and war cries. Through story, poetry, songs, call and response and rhythms, she shared cultural meanings and coded messages that originated with the first drums to African American milestones from enslavement and the



Underground Railroad, reconstruction, and civil rights. The children learned how to follow basic rhythms with the drum sounds by using their hands and bodies. Queen Nur highlighted important historical figures such as Henry Box Brown, Stagecoach Mary, Fannie Lou Hamer and Mamie Peanut Johnson. This school wide assembly was generously funded by the NE PTA and parent contributions.



In Kindergarten, morning stories will reflect notable African Americans. Scholastic News will focus on Stevie Wonder. Class lessons centered around Misty Copeland, Oprah Winfrey, Serena Williams, Barack Obama, Jackie Robinson, and Mohammed Ali will introduce our newest students to core values and accomplishments that shape the world around us. Additionally, students will put together small books on Ruby Bridges and Rosa Parks. In art kindergarten students will learn about Faith Ringold's story quilts and create a collage work inspired by her art.

While discovering the significance of Black History Month, our first grade will be highlighting Michael Jordan and Misty Copeland. By discussing their trials, tribulations, and accomplishments to society and the world of sports, students will see how individuals can impact a larger system. Books like *Salt in His Shoes*, *Dream Big*, *Bunheads*, and *Firebird* provide the gift of context and lead discussions about character traits. Ultimately students discoveries will be incorporated into an “All About Book” for each person. Classroom crafts like designing your own “Jordan” sneaker will also be incorporated. In art first graders will learn about the Gee's Bend Quilters who create quilts from fabric scraps and create a collage inspired by their quilt patterns.

Second graders have also been learning about notable African Americans. They have been researching and collecting facts on people, such as Nelson Mandela, Wangari Maathai, Stevie Wonder, Jackie Robinson, and Katherine Johnson. After collecting facts from various sources, students created flipbooks, published informational writing pieces, and completed fact sheets to showcase their amazing accomplishments. In art second graders will be learning about Tijay Muhammed and creating their initials using Adinkra symbols and patterns from African fabrics.

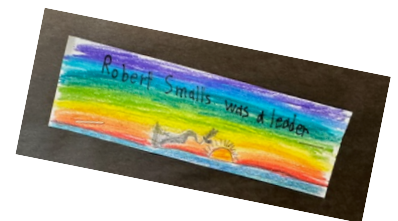


Meanwhile, the third grade is utilizing the information they have researched from videos, books, and the internet to buddy up with other students third grade who share the same African American notable. By comparing and contrasting their findings they will complete projects showcasing what they've learned in the form of a posters, fact page, drawings or other visual representation.



Students in grade four take part in our annual Black History Month Wax Museum. In social studies and writing, they research a notable black American and then demonstrate what they've learned through an informative essay and poster. Included on their poster students create math equations around different facts related to their subject. In art students will study Kadir Nelson & Bisa Butler to create portraits of famous African Americans for the Wax Museum. On the day of the Wax Museum, they dress up as their individuals and then “come to life” to share their life stories with museum visitors. Each morning in February the fourth grade sends a student representative to share the biography of their notable African American during the morning announcements.

In the fifth grade students complete a writing assignment comparing and contrasting two books, *Richard Wright and the Library Card*, by William Miller and *Uncle Jed's Barbershop*, by Margaree King Mitchell. Both books have segregation as a backdrop and have characters who overcome challenges to realize a dream. Students can make connections to their life experience related to the characters in the stories. Additionally, students are introduced to 25 important black figures whose contributions have impacted various fields such as science. The hall outside their classes will be decorated by posters they have create to celebrate some of these historical figures. In art, fifth graders will be learning about Art and Activism, creating projects inspired by street murals and street artists. Also, our BlueHawks Band has commenced learning a song about the battle of Gettysburg and about its importance in the civil war and eradication of slavery in the United States.



**Northeast
Parent Book
Club**

**February 15th
6:30pm**