Habits for Successful Teens

Many of us parents are familiar with Steven Covey’s “Seven Habits of Highly Effective People”, a #1 national bestseller in 1989-1990. But what we don’t likely know is that through the hard work of Ms. Jennifer Zock, a Language Arts teacher at Jackson Creek, the powerful lessons of personal change explained in Covey’s book are now more accessible to the teens at Jackson Creek.

Steven Covey’s book identifies seven key habits that provide an integrated approach to the development of personal and interpersonal effectiveness. The trouble with the book, though, is that it speaks to adults in adult terms, using examples from the workplace, the business world, and from parenting. The typical 7th and 8th grader simply can’t relate.

Enter Sean Covey … and Jennifer Zock. Sean Covey, son to Stephen Covey, published “Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens” in 1998. The book brings the message of Covey Sr. to the teen audience through cartoons, quotes, and real world stories of teens who have overcome obstacles. The seven habits themselves are embellished with amusing subtitiles like:

Seek first to understand then to be understood — You have two ears and one mouth … Hello!

Ms. Zock saw an opportunity in Sean’s book. Advisor/advisee period, 8-8:20 a.m., is set aside for personal growth and strengthening of the relationship between the teacher as advisor and the student. Ms. Zock thought the Covey material could facilitate meaningful discussion and learning during Advisor/advisee so she created a companion set of slides, roughly 30 per habit, for use in the Jackson Creek classroom. The response has been positive.

The material is used by a number of teachers in the classroom, and the work has caught the interest of a local book distributor as a potential supplement to the book.

The 20 minutes that begin each day are dedicated to enriching the personal self to complement the growth of the intellectual self. As Mr. Schlegel likes to close his daily advisor/advisee announcement: “Make it a great day, … or not. The choice is yours.

Beth Plale

From Around the School

► The JCMS Academic Super Bowl Team won 1st prize in the Brown County Invitational held at Brown County Junior High. Our teams placed first in English, social studies, mathematics, interdisciplinary, and they placed 2nd in science. We are looking forward to the annual state competition on April 27th at Sarah Scott Middle School in Terre Haute, Indiana.

► Attendance is being emphasized for the next six weeks as it was so important a component to our current 4 STAR rating. An Ice Cream social is planned for May 29th for all students who maintained a 98% attendance rate throughout the year AND for any student who maintains perfect attendance for the last six weeks of school. The Student Council is sponsoring this event. Special incentives are planned by Mr. Rose, Mr. Schlegel, and Mr. Terwilliger.

► The Student Council is exploring ideas for a gift to the school. Having a jaguar painted on the gymnasium floor is currently at the top of the list. This is a costly project, so it will take some investigation.
Science Blue Helps Nature

The 7th grade Science Blue Team has adopted two blue bird boxes as part of the Blue Bird Trail. The class monitors and reports when and how many eggs are laid and also when and how many babies fledge. Last summer each box had three nestlings that produced twenty eight fledgling baby blue birds. Good job, 7th grade Science Blue team.

Tree Fest 2002 will be held on May 3rd at Jackson Creek. The Blue team 7th grade blue science class is planning the day. They will determine the placement of trees and will be assisting all other teams (Jaguar, Silver and Green) in the actual planting of 100 trees on Friday May 3rd. Way to go Jackson Creek on making the campus more beautiful. It could not be done without the contributions of all the teams working together.

Youth Network Established

Ten JCMS students were recently selected to become Jackson Creek's new Youth Network core leadership team. They spent the weekend of April 13 at Bradford Woods brushing up on leadership, public speaking, and presentation skills. The group consists of seventh graders Joan Brickley, Lilly Ensley, Jordan Forney, Kip Gibson, Quincy Harrison, Will Knudsen, Lisa Smith, and Sasha Tourner. Eighth grade members are Ashley Breedlove and Christine Hartman. Planning the August orientation for new seventh graders is the group's first task. Mrs. Green, the club sponsor, looks forward to adding many more members to the Youth Network when the new school year starts.

Grant Received for Bookmaking

Sara McQueen and Kris McGlaun recently received a grant that will enable Ms. McQueen’s Art and Artists’ 7th and 8th grade classes to hand make books. The supplies for this lesson were purchased with a grant from the MCCSC foundation; the grant will make the lesson possible.

Ms. McQueen remarks that “bookmaking has become a timely contemporary art form and many universities now offer classes in hand made papers and bookmaking. The pride that a person feels in creating a beautiful handmade book will add to the students’ appreciation of the craft.” This project will allow students to learn about the traditional craft of bookmaking, and to have a hands-on appreciation of the work involved in the artists’ book media.”

Latest at the Library

April Showers bring poetry during this National Month of Poetry. Mrs. Nowlin and Mr. Keefer’s classes have been celebrating this month by reading poetry. Mr. Keefer’s language arts classes will construct web pages that incorporate the students own poetry.

While Mr. Inman’s classes are learning about the elements, Mrs. McQueen’s classes are creating their own books and learning about the History of the Book. The career classes have been busy learning about different careers. Mrs. Gibson’s class is reading biographies about certain individuals and how their careers affect their lives and Mrs. Schooler’s classes are researching and presenting a career of interest. Travel and geography are of interest to many classes. Mrs. Knable’s classes are studying Paris, France. Mr. Duvall’s classes are learning about the 50 United States, and Ms. Landsman’s 7th grade classes will be visiting Madrid via the Internet.

Voting for the Young Hoosier Book Award took place on April 12, 2002. Those students who read at least five of the 2001-2002 nominee titles elected Among the Hidden by Margaret Peterson Haddix as their favorite book.

I want to make a personal thank you to Barb Davis, Kathy Doering, Peggy Swafford, and Cathy Powell for all their generous help in the library throughout the year. I do believe that the library could not have functioned so wonderfully without their care and help.

Kris McGlaun

We welcome your newsworthy items. Please e-mail contributions to plale@cs.indiana.edu.