

Spring 2017



“Spring is the time of plans and projects.”

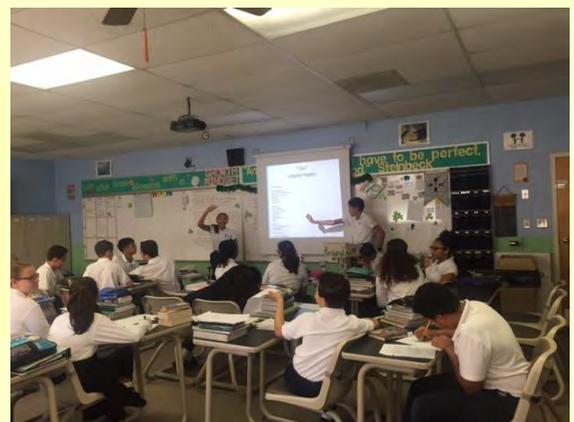
Ms. Potter - English and Literature

- Leo Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina*

As Tolstoy writes, the time for projects and big plans is upon us, and the middle school students are working hard in English and literature! After the excitement of Catholic Schools Week and the cold but snowless months of January and February, we're ready for some fun projects and good books to keep us busy.

Middle School Updates

- I am very proud of our SPS spelling bee team of Ethan, Bruce, Jasmine, Abigail, and Gus! They all studied so hard to prepare and have expanded their vocabularies so much. I think I'm most proud of how well they worked together and how supportive they were of one another at the competition!
- The sixth, seventh, and eighth grades have been working on a letter-writing campaign to raise money for the Make-A-Wish Foundation. They are learning about the power that their writing can have while raising money to help seriously ill children. They are also learning about Aristotle and his rhetorical appeals and honing their persuasive writing and speaking skills!
- The middle school will soon be doing some more public speaking practice in preparation for our big field trip to the Capitol and Library of Congress this spring. They'll be researching and presenting a different part of the trip to their classmates, and it's sure to be a blast!



About Me

My name is Haley Potter, and this is my fourth year teaching at St. Peter's. I am also a graduate of St. Peter's, so it is a great experience to be back as a teacher! I attended Villanova University and graduated with degrees in English and Honors, as well as a concentration in writing and rhetoric and minors in Spanish, sociology, and gender and women's studies. I am also just a few credits away from towards my masters in leadership in teaching. I love to read, and both creative and informative writing have always been passions, so I'm very happy to be able to share those interests with my students!



6th Grade News

After the Make-A-Wish project, the sixth grade will be continuing with their regular grammar practice, with some narrative writing practice mixed in. They've been writing lots of different types of poems as part of their poetry unit, which is coming to an end as the class reads *Eggs* by Jerry Spinelli. Soon they'll begin a short drama unit with *The Phantom Tollbooth* before moving onto Louis Sachar's *Holes* in the fourth quarter. Their third quarter project is to create a movie trailer for a book that they have read and present it as a pitch to a movie studio. They'll get to help design and plan their fourth quarter project, so we'll see what they come up with!



7th Grade News

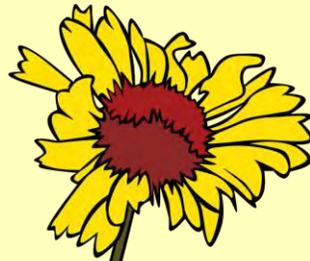
The seventh grade is currently working on their unit on science fiction and dystopian stories, and they've been doing some very cool classwork with Lois Lowry's *The Giver*. So far they've been given assignments like the characters in the book, and they'll be doing some big class discussions on the book soon. They'll also be doing an author study on Ray Bradbury before their books-into-board-games project is due in March. In the fourth quarter, they'll hone their personal narrative and résumé writing skills in time for their 20 year high school reunion project, in which they get to imagine their lives in twenty-five years and research their futures. They'll also read *The Color of My Words* by Lynn Joseph before breaking into small book studies on the related theme of friendship.



8th Grade News

As high school acceptance letters pour in, the eighth grade is not letting up on their preparation for next year! While completing a Black History Month persuasive letter to the African American History Museum, they conducted an in-depth study of African American poetry in the midst of their poetry unit. Beginning with *Beowulf*, this poetry unit will take them around the world and through all time periods before we finally settle in Elizabethan England and segue into our unit on Shakespeare. Sonnets will be first, followed by *Julius Caesar*, for which the students will work on political campaign projects. Naturally, this will transition into a study of horror stories, with *Things Not Seen*, *Frankenstein*, and "The Monkey's Paw." This is one of my favorite units to do and is such a fun way to wrap up the year! Before then, however, the students will have their poet projects to do, and, of course, their TED Talk projects, in which they all pick topics of interest, conduct extensive research, and prepare presentations for the class!





“It is spring again. The earth is like a child that knows poems by heart.” - Rainer Maria Rilke