

As we progress through the academic year, it's exciting to see our students engage with and conquer the challenges of middle school mathematics.

During Trimester 2, **sixth graders** completed their unit on the four operations of fractions and decimals then moved onto ratios. Students explored writing equivalent ratios, comparing ratios and solved real-world problems involving ratios. In the next chapter, they learned to how to solve problems involving rates, unit rate, speed, and average speed. Proportional reasoning lays a foundation for future understanding of slope and linear relationships. The content in these chapters help refine students' thinking by encouraging them to flexibly apply proportional thinking in a variety of real-world situations.

Seventh graders started trimester 2 working on algebraic equations and inequalities. In this chapter, students extended their sixth grade learning to more complex equations and inequalities. They learned to identify equivalent equations, write equivalent expression by factoring or expanding an algebraic expression and extended the concept to equations, discovering that equivalent equations are equations that have the same solution.

Eighth graders focused on functions and systems of linear equations for the majority of the second trimester. In the functions chapter, students extended their understanding of expressions and equations to include relations (the relationship between two objects that are usually represented as an ordered pair) and functions (a rule that assigns to each input exactly one output). In the systems of linear equations chapter, students learned how these describe real-life situations based on the intersection of two graphs. This is useful in real-world problems in describing the interplay between two sets of linear data, finding cost and benefit relationships, and seeing relationships between two lines.

Why Math Matters

Mathematics is not just about numbers; it's about thinking critically, solving problems, and making sense of the world around us. The skills learned in middle school math lay the foundation for future academic and career success. Whether it's understanding finances, engaging in engineering, or exploring the sciences, math plays a crucial role in a wide range of fields.

How to Help at Home

- Listen to how your child makes sense of the math they are learning at school. Let them explain their thinking to you.
- Encourage persistence - Remind your child that it's okay to struggle with challenging problems. Encouraging a growth mindset helps students see challenges as opportunities to learn and grow.
- Play board games. Mancala, Mastermind, Battleship, Cribbage, Sequence, and Monopoly all have math built in!
- Encourage your child to use Zearn.
- Communication with your child's teacher can provide insights into your child's progress and ways you can help at home. Don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns.

LANGUAGE ARTS IN GRADES 6-8

Second Trimester

At Cawley, our students participated in the National History Day project. Social Studies and Language Arts teamed up to read, research, plan and present their history topics. In a variety of styles, the students did an excellent job of presenting the historical information. Our Language Arts classrooms have been moving forward with our reading curricula and conducting novel studies as part of their academic work. Including topics such as overcoming challenges and gaining knowledge of communities throughout the course of time. Teachers are constantly instructing, reviewing and developing the students comprehension skills.

How to Help at Home

What to notice at home and what good readers do.

Draw on prior knowledge. Good readers draw on prior knowledge and experience to help them understand what they are reading.

Draw inferences. In addition to understanding the literal points that the author is making, good readers are able to “read between the lines” and draw inferences about a wide range of hidden meanings, such as why events are unfolding as they do, why characters behave in a certain way, what the characters are thinking, and what might happen next.

Self-monitor. During reading, good readers learn to monitor their understanding, adjust their reading speed to fit the difficulty of the text, and address any comprehension problems they have. After reading, they check their understanding of what they have read. Students who are good at monitoring their comprehension know when they understand what they’re reading and when they don’t.

Form mental images. Good readers often form mental pictures, or images, as they read. Readers (especially younger readers) who picture the story during reading understand and remember what they read better than readers who do not create a picture in their mind.

Summarize and retell. Summarizing requires students to determine what is important in the text and then put it into their own words by retelling, verbally or in writing. Instruction in summarizing can help students become more purposeful as they read and more skilled in comprehending. Summarizing can help students to:

- Identify main ideas orally or in writing.
- Connect the main or central ideas orally or in writing.
- Learn to weed out unnecessary information.
- Remember what they have read.