NOVEMBER CLASSROOM FOCUS

Students will be finishing their narratives this month and will learn the difference between editing and revising a piece of writing. Many students tend to just fix grammar and capitalization mistakes. When revising, students will learn strategies on how to improve their writing. They will replace words that are overused, or add details or descriptive words that make a sentence more interesting or informative. Sometimes a writer needs to delete words or sentences that are unrelated to the point being made. Finally, authors need to reorder sentences or paragraphs to ensure their writing makes sense and sends the audience the intended message. Ask your child to share his or her Exploded Moment once it has gone through the revision process.

This month we will also focus on theme. Theme is message that an author wants the reader to take away. For instance, we learn how a person’s pride can be a downfall in of Arachne, a myth which compliments our social studies curriculum. In James Thurber’s fable, The Tiger Who Would Be King, we learn how the desire for power can lead to self-destruction. These universal themes can be found in not only books, but also songs, movies, and television shows. Whenever we learn a lesson or look deeper at a person’s motives, we begin to understand the big idea the author is attempting to make.

EXTENDING THE LEARNING AT HOME

Many of our students spend numerous hours in front of a screen, whether they are watching YouTube, playing video games, or binge-watching TV. Many of these video games, from classics such as Zelda to the more current Destiny II, pit good against evil. Many shows focus on universal themes.

Most students do not stop to think about how modern day entertainment is based upon big ideas that are found across all types of genres. These ideas reflect society. Our children’s interests become avenues to teach, and who knows, you may find yourself sharing stories about your favorite way to spend time when you were your child’s age.