

The Week At WHMS
(parent edition)
 Week of January 31, 2022



Thought for the week:

“We swallow greedily any lie that flatters us, but we sip only little by little at a truth we find bitter.”

– Denis Diderot

Weekly Calendar:

<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>	<u>Sat/Sun</u>
1/31	2/1	2/2	2/3	2/4	2/5-2/6
<i>Day 2</i>	<i>Day 1</i>	<i>Day 2</i>	<i>Day 1</i>	<i>Day 2</i>	
3rd Marking Period Begins Congratulations to Julie Healey on her retirement! Club Meets: Mathletes (competition)	7:55a-9:19a – <i>NWEA Reading Assessment</i> (see memo for alternate bell schedule) 3:00p – Faculty meeting 7:30p – BOE work session (special presentation on proposed restructure of secondary building)	ALL DAY – Writers workshop PD for ELA teachers 7:55a-9:19a – <i>NWEA Math Assessment</i> (see memo for alternate bell schedule) 1:15p – PST meeting Club Meets: Art Club; Comic Book & Graphic Novel; Dignity & Tolerance	ALL DAY – Math PD with Savvas Club Meets: Science & Robotics	2nd Marking Period Reports Viewable on PowerSchool ALL DAY – Interdisciplinary Humanities PD with UVM 8:45a – RTI meeting 9:30a – SSAC meeting 1:15p – Band concert recording (see email from Mr. Coleman)	

Instructional tips: (from *Edutopia*)

Teaching Students to Evaluate Websites by Amie Weinberg (excerpts)

A few pointers on how to guide middle and high school students to determine whether a website offers accurate information.

Perceptive adults and savvy students know that saying something doesn't make it a fact, and neither does publishing information on the internet. But how to know which websites are sharing accurate information? As middle and high school students conduct research or access the internet on their own time, they need to be able to determine the accuracy of what they're reading by reviewing websites with a critical eye.

Middle and high school students should learn to review websites for their content, source, and purpose. By becoming educated consumers of information, students will gain a better understanding of what they're reading and the context.

Becoming a website sleuth is actually quite easy when students know what to look for. Middle and high school students can review three facets of any site to determine the validity and objectivity of what they're reading or viewing: 1. appearance versus content; 2. source of information; and 3. the website's purpose.

SEPARATING APPEARANCE FROM CONTENT

A site can look polished and professional yet [include inaccurate content](#)—or, conversely, it can look imperfect yet [disseminate factual information](#). It's therefore helpful for students to intellectually separate a website's look from the information the site is sharing.

- Is the website easy to navigate? Students want to understand how to steer through pages and links quickly to find information without any confusion.
- Are there a lot of ads or pop-ups on the site? Quality websites strive to reduce distractions and to maintain focus on the information they provide. Numerous advertisements, especially those that occupy significant visual space and continuously reload, can negatively impact a learner's focus and comprehension.
- Does the website include many spelling, syntax, or grammatical errors? Reputable internet publishers strive to post error-free, easy-to-understand information.
- Do graphics serve a purpose? Images should have specific purposes, such as extending understanding or clarifying information. Graphics should make sense and [not confuse or merely decorate the space](#) in a random manner.

REVIEWING THE SOURCE OF INFORMATION

It's important to find out where the information on the website originated by looking at the bottom of its home page or scanning "About Us" or "FAQ." If an organization authors a site, students should conduct a short review to find out more about the group.

- Website domains provide information. Use the URL (uniform resource locator) to learn about the site's source. Endings such as .gov or .edu are attributed to government or educational institutions, which can add legitimacy to sites.
- Is the author qualified to provide this information? Once students determine a website's publisher, they can dig deeper to learn more about the person or organization. Find out [if and how the website source is qualified to provide the information](#) by conducting a brief review of the author.
- Check a few sources. Trustworthy sites typically provide links to other reputable sources, so it's wise to review several links to validate the information.

CHECKING FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE SITE

Is the site sharing facts, or is it interpreting them for its readers?

To determine a site's purpose:

- Review the home page and a few others. The website or organization might be trying to sell a product or even promote a particular point of view. A biased site might include product or organization advertisements that support its ideals, or there could be opinionated blogging and one-sided articles. Biased sites try to persuade, and they might include video, still images, music, partial interpretation of data, and an appeal to emotions, rather than sharing impartial information.
- Confirm the context of quotes and information. Research the origins of a few website quotes or images to verify the context of the originals, and to help determine if the site is legitimate. It takes only a click to insert a quote, so review the wording and context of the original phrase to glean the original meaning.

Here are a few sites you can use to teach students how to review websites: [Aluminum Foil Deflector Beanie](#), [Dihydrogen Monoxide Research](#), [Petrol Direct](#), [Ninja Burger](#), [The Republic of Cascadia](#).

Once students determine that a website is one they want to access, they should find several others to use for cross-checking information. Confirm by checking various websites, periodicals, and even books: One source is not enough. With the continuous deluge of websites, it's more important than ever that we teach middle and high school students to critically review the sources of their information.

For full article see <https://www.edutopia.org/article/teaching-students-evaluate-websites>

Items of importance:

- The online course request window for our 8th graders going to high school run 1/31 through 2/18. Please see the mailed letter from Mr. Pumo, high school principal, which can also be found at: <https://www.whufsd.com/o/whhs/article/623645>
- **WEATHER NOTICE**: we have outdoor recess, outdoor AM line-up, and outdoor PE daily unless it is raining. Please make sure your child has appropriate clothing and outerwear. We only stay indoors if the temperature falls below 30° or the wind chill falls below 28°
- **Have you downloaded the West Hempstead App yet?** It is available in the App Store and Google Play, just search "West Hempstead." This will let you keep track of everything happening in our school and access documents such as this "Week @ WHMS" newsletter.
- *Let me know when you have exciting learning taking place that I can tweet out and be sure to tag @WH_MSRRAMS if you tweet yourself*

Items of interest:

- **From Ms. Walker and Ms. Gould, our yearbook advisors:**
 - Parents, a great way to celebrate your child in the yearbook is to purchase an ad. Also, please note, not enough yearbooks have been ordered to date. If you are interested in your child receiving a yearbook please go to www.jostens.com and order as soon as it is convenient.
 - Buying ads helps keep the cost of the yearbook down for all.

- Hello Parents. Happy New Year! Please watch this important recording regarding your parent ad in the yearbook for your child. When ready to begin creating your message, you can click this link:
<https://www.jostens.com/apps/jcom/router.mvc?affiliateId=1239445>
- Our club calendar is available on the website at:
<https://www.whufsd.com/o/whms/browse/221769>. Students should listen to AM announcements for the most up-to-date information about meeting dates and locations.
- The **extra help schedule** can be found at: https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/1553808/Extra-Help_Schedule_MS_21-22.pdf. Students should take advantage of teachers' availability to do their best work.
- The Homework Center is open after school on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday. See details below:

Homework Center Information: 21-22

Homework Center is open 2:45-3:45 on the following days

Day	Teacher	Room	Notes
Monday	Ms. Healey	257	Support available for any subject, or just a quiet place to work after school.
Wednesday	Ms. Geiger	17	
Thursday	Ms. Rogan	16	

“COVID Corner” Information:

- The district has updated its plan and protocols regarding quarantine, isolation, and who is considered a “close contact” based on guidance from New York State. Go to: <https://www.whufsd.com/page/reopening-information> for more information.
- I cannot say how vital it is that **if your child, or anyone in your home, feels sick, your child MUST REMAIN HOME FROM SCHOOL**. Call the nurse or Mr. Murray for advice on when it is okay to return to school.
- **Please send your child to school with a refillable water bottle**. Our water fountains are “COVID-safe” and only the water bottle filler function is available.
- For more information about the COVID vaccine for 5-15 year-olds, go to: <https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov>

Looking ahead:

Monday, February 7: *Day 1*

- Mr. Murray & Mr. Gil at central for admin PD, 10:00am-12:00pm

Tuesday, February 8: *Day 2*

- NWEA make-up assessments, in cafeteria
- Counselors in cafeteria during lunch periods to help with 8th grade schedule requests

- Orchestra concert recording, 1:15pm @ HS auditorium
- Department meetings, 3:00pm

Wednesday, February 9: *Day 1*

- PST meeting, 1:15pm

Thursday, February 10: *Day 2*

- Chromebook re-inventory, 1:15pm
- Challenge Up parent meeting for Living Environment, 7:15pm on WebEx (see mailing)

Friday, February 11: *Day 1*

- Math PD with Savvas, all day
- RTI meeting, 8:45am