

The Week At WHMS
(parent edition)
Week of March 21, 2022



Thought for the week:

“See all human behavior as one of two things: either love, or a call for love.”

– Marianne Williamson

Weekly Calendar:

<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>	<u>Sat/Sun</u>
3/21	3/22	3/23	3/24	3/25	3/26-3/27
Day 2	Day 1	Day 2	Day 1	Day 2	
9:30a – Cerrone field trip Club Meets: Mathletes – LAST COMPETITION of the season	7:10a – Site- based committee meeting 8:45a – meeting re: LE challenge up rosters	1:15p – PST meeting Club Meets: Dignity & Tolerance	7:15p – Parent meeting for 6 th and 7 th grade families regarding English course for next year, VIRTUAL: https://meet.google.com/wq-m-azqi-goo	8:45a – RTI meeting	

Instructional tips: (from *Edutopia*)

A Question Teachers Should Ask as Often as Possible by Chris Kubic (excerpts)

Push students past simple recall into deeper thought and engagement by adding this short follow-up question to your repertoire.

Imagine you’re back in school: math class. Your teacher has a mathematical expression on a whiteboard and would like a student to come up and solve the problem. You volunteer, because you already know the answer. It’s a complex equation, requiring you to multiply, divide, add, and subtract. You scribble down the correct answer, turning around to walk back to your desk, when your teacher stops you in your tracks and says, “Don’t forget to show your work!”

Asking high-quality questions is essential in engaging students and sustaining deep learning. In certain subjects, it’s extremely common for teachers to ask students to explain how they came to a certain conclusion, but it took me a while to incorporate this concept into my Social Studies and Reading classes.

There are several useful techniques to generate questions (see [the Question Formulation Technique](#), [this site on Socratic Seminars](#), [this Questioning Toolkit](#), and [this article](#) about other types of

questions). I would add one specific question to the top of the list of techniques that deepen thinking and enhance engagement: asking students “How do you know...?”

Asking this follow-up question after a student provides an answer prompts deeper thinking in a number of ways. Students have to not only consider evidence and alternative answers but also support their thinking. It moves the initial question from a place of simple recall or recognition into higher levels of thinking. Additionally, it helps me as the instructor to ensure that my students understand the concept and can justify their answers.

AN EXAMPLE FROM MY CLASSROOM

While using a projector to show students a map of the Middle East, I ask the question, “What is the relative location of Afghanistan?” A student answers, stating that Afghanistan is next to Pakistan. I instruct the class to discuss with their elbow partners, deciding whether they agree or disagree, as well as how they know for sure that the answer provided is either correct or incorrect.

I ask a second student, “Do you agree with [Student 1]’s answer, and if so, how do you know?” The second student responds that the map shows Pakistan and Afghanistan are next to each other. I push further: “But how do you know that it’s the relative location that we are talking about?” The second student has the light bulb moment: “Oh,” they respond, “because relative location is about what’s nearby, and Afghanistan is near Pakistan.”

DRAWING IN THE WHOLE CLASS

I have now engaged two students directly with this conversation, and all students indirectly. At the same time, I’ve made the rest of the class aware that they need to know this, too, and reviewed both the definition and the application of the concept of relative location. This significantly increases the amount of participation and engagement—especially if paired with something like Think Pair Share or elbow partners—and helps me formatively assess more students. It also establishes the norm that students need to be actively listening and paying attention to their peers’ answers, because they might be the one to get that follow-up question next.

This technique can also help students use logic rather than memorization and find relationships between concepts.

Students worked to combine prior knowledge and current knowledge to create an answer to that question. This type of work requires them to use logic and find relationships between details, rather than simply memorizing information. You can also use “How do you know?” to engage students in some historical detective work. Present a hypothetical and ask them to determine if the scenario is possible or impossible. For example, “John turned 45 in 2021 but claims to remember watching the moon landing on TV live as it happened. Is that possible? How do you know?”

While not earth-shatteringly new, complex, or profound, adding this simple follow-up question into my repertoire is something that I need to remind myself to do on a regular basis. Asking “How do you know?” slows down the pace of my inquiry in the classroom but generates additional depth from students’ answers, increasing engagement and participation.

This is the kind of questioning, visible thinking, student-to-student dialogue, and justification of answers that the Danielson evaluation rubric calls for in Domains 3b and 3c—it's well worth the time.

For full article see <https://www.edutopia.org/article/question-teachers-should-ask-often-possible>

Items of importance:

- **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:

- 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

<u>Day</u>	<u>Teacher</u>	<u>Room</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Monday	Ms. Elezi	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:

- NYS has removed the "mask mandate" from public schools and the decision to wear a mask is a personal/family choice. We will ensure that regardless of your family decision, students are treated with dignity and civility.

- **ESPECIALLY** in light of the reduced mask use, 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.

Looking ahead:

Monday, March 28: *Day 1*

- MS spring sports begin today

Tuesday, March 29: *Day 2*

- NYS ELA exams begin today – alternate bell schedule with full 9-period day

Wednesday, March 30: *Day 1*

- NYS ELA exams continue today – alternate bell schedule with full 9-period day
- PST meeting, 1:15pm

Thursday, March 31: *Day 2*

- Last day of March!

Friday, April 1: *Day 1*

- RTI meeting, 8:45am