

Jan Stauber Grant Final Report
Salem Elementary School

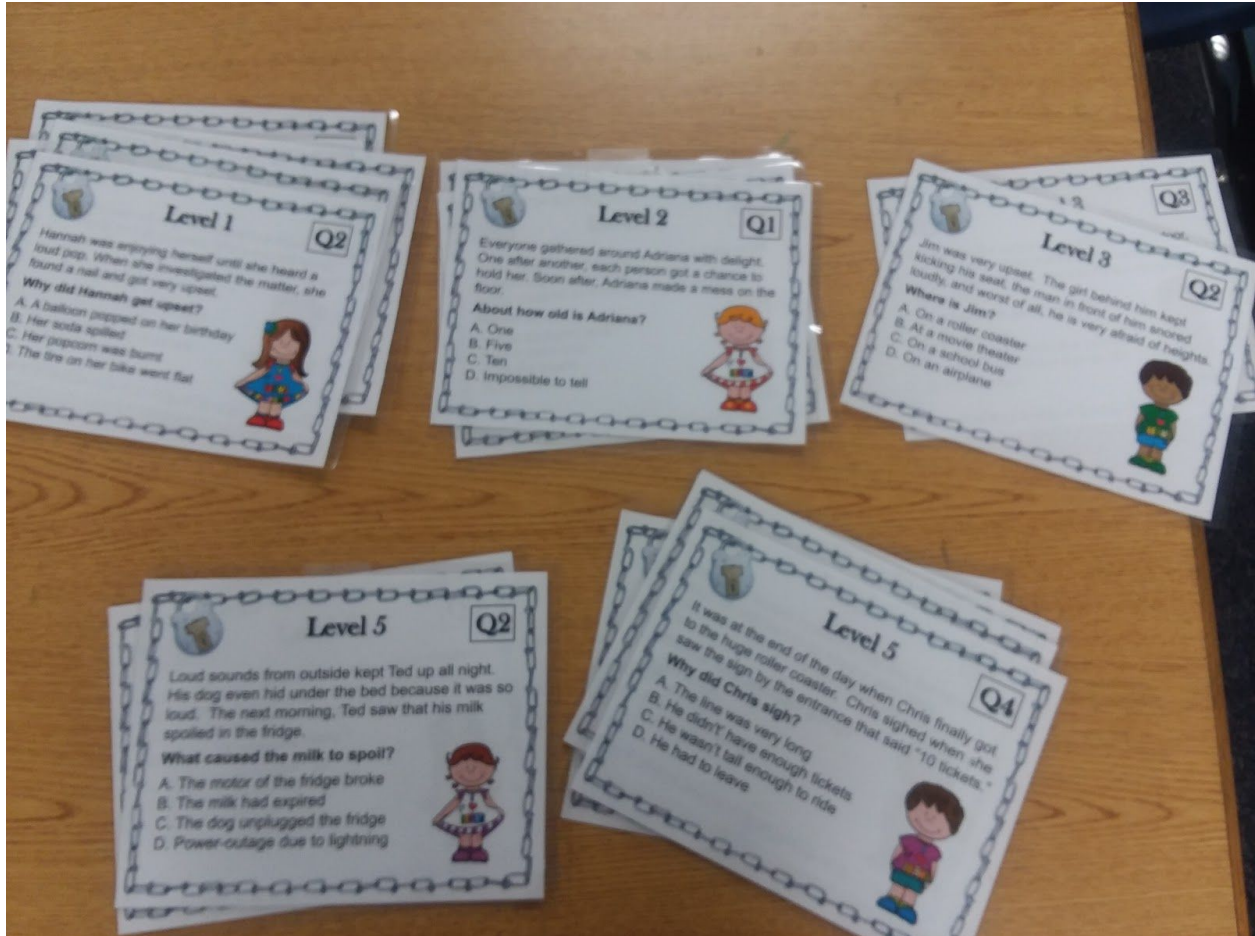
Description of Final Project:

Students at Salem Elementary had never heard about Sherlock Holmes. When introduced, to the Detective, I shared a PowerPoint presentation with them detailing his work and facts. We also “visited” the London location and took a brief tour of his home. To begin the year as detectives, we completed a breakout with Melville Dewey and Sherlock Holmes. The two “partnered” up and would not let the students check out books until they followed the clues and solved the mystery. The library was able to purchase a set of graphic novels describing the adventures of Sherlock Holmes.



We focused on reading a small portion of each book to hook students to read the graphic novel series. I then highlighted the book “The Adventure of the Speckled Band” and read the entire story to the students, so we could then participate in a reader’s theatre version of the story appropriate for 4th grade. Students were hooked on the story line and wanted to find out who or what had killed the sister. I was able to locate a version of the reader’s theatre on Teachers Pay Teachers (rights prohibit me from sharing). Students enjoyed pretending to be a detective like Sherlock Holmes to solve the case. All of the books seen here were never on the shelf. They were in constant circulation and I would help students to find other mystery novels when these were unavailable.

Students also participated in using their drawing conclusions and inferencing skills, like Sherlock Holmes, to help breakout of an Escape Room. Students were placed in partners and they had to go around the library reading clues and answering questions. There were five levels the students had to go through in order to “breakout.” This breakout involved multiple steps simulating the work of a detective. Students had to read the passages, answer questions, and complete all work for one level before moving on to the next. Once students completed a level, they were able to use a Chromebook to “record” their answers and solve a puzzle to move onto the next level. Once all five levels were completed, there was a special code that needed to be used in order to breakout!



After students were able to “unlock” the digital code, students were given the opportunity to use a breakout box .



Goals that were achieved:

Students loved “solving” the cases and answering questions to help them breakout. The skills that we discussed Sherlock Holmes using were very similar, if not the same, as what they needed to use in order to complete their assignment. Students used critical thinking skills that not only helped them with this “case,” but this was a wonderful way to review reading skills that they use while in the classroom or outside of school. Sometimes, students see learning in isolation. By introducing a new genre of literature, a famous detective, and new learning materials, students were able to see how often they are using critical thinking skills. They also learned the sense of accomplishment while completing a task. Often times, our students do not have opportunities to feel successful. Activities and materials that were provided empowered them as thinkers.

Project Impact

With the help of the Jan Stauber Grant, I was able to provide additional funds to our library budget to purchase Breakout Boxes through Breakout Edu and high interest graphic novels for students to read. The students developed a new love for mystery reading and were excited to become student detectives! And they were very excited when the movie, “Sherlock Gnomes” was released in March! Students were also able to make connections outside of the classroom

and understand how reading is not a subject in isolation. Using critical thinking skills is needed and often required in many areas of life. The students and staff here at Salem Elementary School are very appreciative of this grant!