

JSG Grant Report

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Five students met after school one day each week for 7 weeks. Meetings of the Sherlock Holmes Club lasted about an hour and 20 minutes.

As planned, in the first session we discussed elements of a mystery and watched *Wishbone: Slobbery Hound*. Students were hooked on the project very effectively by this introduction.

Reading assignments were discussed at each meeting, including vocabulary building words. Classroom teachers were given identified vocabulary words as well, so they could work them into conversation with club members.

Two sixth grade students read the original version of Hound of the Baskervilles. Three third grade students read a simplified version.

A school wide mystery event was held, and definitely increased interest in the club. Our school mascot left a letter saying he was going on a quest, but then we did not hear from him for over a week. Missing posters went up all around school, requesting students to be on the lookout for clues to his whereabouts. This proved incredibly popular with the youngest students (Kindergarten through 3rd grade). They found all clues left for them, and even brought me some items that I had not left, but which they perceived to be potential clues.

Soon a ransom note arrived. Since we didn't have money for ransom, we resolved to rescue Sir Husky. Working in multi-age teams, students participated in 6 tasks, earning Mardi Gras beads for individual and team accomplishments. At the completion of each task, the team was given a clue to the identity of Sir Husky's captor. Everyone had a great time, and learned something about medieval times.

The older members of the club had an idea to create a mystery game, which all the club members begged to play each week. We played a few minutes each week, and refined the game as time passed.

We also worked to develop logic skills. We played 20 questions, and worked on logic puzzles each week. Students started out not knowing how to do work the puzzles, one even proclaiming, "I can't do this. I'm never going to get this." But within a couple weeks he was solving the problems very efficiently.

The Sherlock Holmes books purchased for the library have been shelved, but thus far have not been checked out. However, they will be featured in the library display for February along with other great mysteries.

We did not watch the 1939 Hound of the Baskervilles movie as stated in the grant proposal, due to scheduling constraints.

I consider this to have been a very successful project, in that participating students went above and beyond by creating their own game. Also, I had intended this to be a short-term club, but students asked for it to continue after Hound of the Baskervilles was wrapped up. Due to the enthusiasm and recruiting efforts of the club members, 4 new students have joined and the original 5 are returning.

This project has also received financial support by a local community betterment organization, and through another grant secured by the school.

Thank you so much for funding this opportunity for our students!