

LCEU ALERT News

Active Learning Experiences in Resourceful Thinking

Mr. Durden's 4th/5th ALERT Website: <http://rsd2-alert-durden.weebly.com/>

Lake Carolina Elementary Upper Campus: [The Communigator](#)

First Quarter, Week 6

September 26, 2016

Happy Birthday!

Gabriella Gruendler	October 2nd
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Other Important Upcoming Dates

- Oct 6th** **Thursday: STEM Field Study @ The Citadel in Charleston (Mrs. Sexton's & Mr. Thompson's students)**
- Oct 7th** **Friday: Iron Brew Coffee Fundraiser Packets Due**
- Nov 10th** **Thursday: STEM Field Study @ The Citadel in Charleston (Ms. Bird's & Ms. Carter's students)**

ALERT STEM Field Studies to the Citadel in Charleston

Where to Meet: R2i2 763 Fashion Drive Columbia, SC 29229 (In the Village at Sandhill)

When: departing **7:00 a.m.**
returning by **5:30 p.m.**

Bring:

- **Bag lunch & drink labeled with name**
- **Comfortable walking shoes**
- **Dress for prevailing weather**

Families are invited to join the Remind text app (<https://www.remind.com/>) as a way to stay informed during extended-day and overnight field studies. Parents have found it of particular benefit during extended-day field studies.

Oct 6th study Mrs. Sexton & Mr. Thompson	Nov 10th study Ms. Bird & Ms. Carter
Text @alt5d to 81010. If you're having trouble, try (803) 602-3853.	Text @alm4d to 81010. If you're having trouble, try (803) 602-3853.
Go to rmd.at/alt5d on a desktop computer or smartphone to sign up for notifications.	Go to rmd.at/alm4d on a desktop computer or smartphone to sign up for notifications.

Letters About Literature:

Read. Be Inspired. Write Back.

National "Letters About Literature"

<http://readsc.org/projects>

Students nationwide are invited to share their most influential literary experiences through a contest that asks them to write a letter to an author and explain how his or her work changed their perspective of the world or of themselves. A former LCEU student, Michaela Lanier, won state-level honors in 2016 for her letter to Linda Sue Park about *A Long Walk to Water* as a 6th grader.

To enter, students write a personalized letter to an author, living or deceased, from any genre whose work has made an impact. Rather than summarizing the book's plot, contestants are encouraged to express the effect the book has had on their lives in a personalized, conversational tone. Students will be included in state-level and national-level competitions with the same letter. First place state winners in each age bracket will advance to the national level judging. A panel of national judges in the Library of Congress will select one National Winner to receive a \$1,000 cash award. ***Submissions are welcome after November 2nd. The deadline for individual submissions is January 9th for 4th-6th grades.*** To review the official contest rules and guidelines, please visit

<http://www.read.gov/documents/LAL16-Guidelines.pdf>

Mr. Durden will have paper copies available in the classroom as well. ***Mr. Durden is willing to coordinate and mail all entries from students he receives by Thursday, January 5th; this will allow him time to check entry forms and ensure the package is mailed in time to receive the required postmark.*** This is not a required activity, but we do encourage students to participate if reading and writing are a big part of the enjoyment they take in learning.

This Week in ALERT

Focus on Research: Successful Interviews

<http://rsd2-alert-durden-connections.weebly.com/research-step-by-step.html>

While face-to-face interviews with experts may be difficult to arrange, we are fortunate to have many knowledgeable people in government agencies, colleges, museums, and businesses in the greater Columbia area. ***Interviews are not required for a successful presentation;*** over the years, families and students have given us feedback that while it pushed students to the edge of their skills, it was also a very valuable experience.

Interviewing is a chance to gain extra information about your subject and an opportunity to discuss your area of interest. After all of your reading and online research, it is an opportunity to have an exchange with an adult who--

- understands the topic,
- appreciates your interest, and
- can help clear up any details from your earlier research you may not fully understand.

Select someone with professional experience in your topic area and arrange an appointment (call, write, or e-mail with your family's approval or Mr. D.'s guidance).

Interviewing also provides you with experience--

- meeting new people,
- speaking and listening with confidence and composure, and
- practicing the connections formed in polite society.

Suggestions for student interviews:

- Prepare a list of 5-10 questions you would like to ask the person.
- Recognize you may not have time to ask every question, so ask about what is most puzzling (what you really need an expert for) first.
- Try to avoid asking questions that can be answered with a YES/NO or a few words.
- Arrive on time for the interview, be polite, and be prepared!
- When you meet the person, introduce yourself, shake hands, and thank him/her for giving you the interview.
- Your prepared questions serve as a guide, but if something of interest comes up during the interview, ask follow-up questions.
- Be considerate. Try not to go over 30 minutes.
- Be an active listener. If there is something you do not understand, rephrase and clarify.
- Take notes so that you can write up the interview later (or record the interview with permission)
- Thank the person again at the end of the interview and tell him/her how helpful he/she has been to your study.

Next Week: Continue Note-taking, Organize Notes, and Arrange Interviews

October: Continuing note taking, identifying a potential person to interview by making an appointment to visit, interview via telephone, or exchange e-mails. ***Interviews are optional,*** but many students and families have found it a valuable experience. Coaching and oversight in making contacts, helping students arrange interviews, preparing questions, and rendering thanks.

November: Drafting a 5-paragraph essay or the equivalent (magazine article or webpage), and creating an infographic (table, chart, or graph) and product (display board, electronic presentation, diorama, model, game, brochure, short video, website). Coaching in organizing, outlining, revising, and time in class for construction or creation.

Late November-Early December: Sharing a 5-to-10-minute oral presentation and product or artifact with family and classmates during the school day. Tentative dates, dependent upon student progress:

4th graders: Monday, November 21st (before Thanksgiving), November 28th, or December 5th.

5th graders: Thursday, November 17th (before Thanksgiving), December 1st, or December 8th.