

IN THE MIDDLE: 'Time machine' project insightful for students

By Lauren Goolsby

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Have you ever wondered what it's like to time travel into the past or even better — the future? Well, Krueger Middle School's Humanities classes have been writing letters to fourth grade students in the Michigan City Area Schools. But not just any letters, these letters are written as if we are European settlers or Pottawatomie natives. We send them in decorated boxes we call "time machines."



In the box, you'll see a pen, a notebook, and a sheet of instructions about how the time machine works. The instructions include how to write in it, send it, what to

write, and just to have fun with it! The boxes have been back and forth about two times already, and I think the kids have enjoyed them as much as we do!

In the letters, kids ask about our everyday life, clothing, food and activities. We ask them, too, pretending to be totally ignorant to present times. They ask us if we have things they do, like cars and phones. Not only are the younger kids having fun, but they are also learning while doing so.

Marissa Selke, 7th grade student, writing as a Pottawatomie, says it's cool to be teaching the kids some of their fourth-grade standards, while they're still enjoying it. Most of the time when kids hear "school"

or "school work," they zone out uninterested. But in this experience, they want to get involved; they want to communicate with us.

Writing these letters is not only a great thing for the younger kids. Crystal B., seventh-grade student writing as a European settler, says you get to make up your own life, which is fun. Jennifer C., eighth-grade student writing as a Pottawatomie, says "You get to put yourself in their shoes. You can learn about how they lived their lives."

KMS students are also learning along the way while answering the fourth grade's questions, and making up new questions for them to answer for us. Later this year, the fourth grade students will come to Krueger for the day we bring history to life. The children will get to greet some European and Pottawatomie settlers played by the students in the GT classes. This is when we will complete our final mail call. This time every kid who attends will receive a letter. The letters might explain how the lives of the natives or settlers are going.

As every KMS Colt knows, our school makes learning fun. And not only fun but useful, memorable, and even interactive.

Lauren Goolsby is a student at Krueger Middle School. In the Middle is a regular column produced by MCAS middle school students.