

A publication of Sedona Charter School
K-8 Tuition-free Montessori School

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Music from Afar



Our Strings program is delivering a comprehensive online curriculum to meet the needs of students during the school closure. While not ideal for learning an instrument, Kristina has found ways to focus instruction on music topics that will enhance our students' musical knowledge as it applies to their instruments.

- Students are delving deeper into the world of music history as they incorporate interactive online activities in music listening, research and creativity as it relates to the baroque, classical, romantic, impressionist and modern periods. This unit will culminate in a final project with each student creating their own music history reference book.
 - Students are focusing on music notation and music theory through video instruction. They are completing a written packet to help them solidify notation and theoretical concepts while sharpening their musical literacy skills.
 - While still a work in progress, Kristina hopes to pre-record instructional lessons for students to continue practicing and progressing with their instruments at home. In addition, she may incorporate *SmartMusic* to provide feedback and assessment as students practice.
- One challenge we face in distance learning is making sure instruments are tuned. Kristina is hoping to offer parents tuning assistance via video in the future.

We are using Google Classroom to communicate with students online. You should have already received an email with the access code for your child's strings classroom. If you did not receive that code, please email Kristina at kristina@sedonacharterschool.com.

Navigating the Unknown

Parents, we are all taking a deep breath as we strive to keep kids learning, entertained and informed. We want you to know we appreciate all you are doing to make the new distance learning work from home, and we want you to know it's okay if the schedule you planned during our school closure goes out the window! We all need time to process this change. Be flexible, be understanding and know that it's okay if your kids get a little more screen time than you'd like or if they don't sit at the table studying all day.

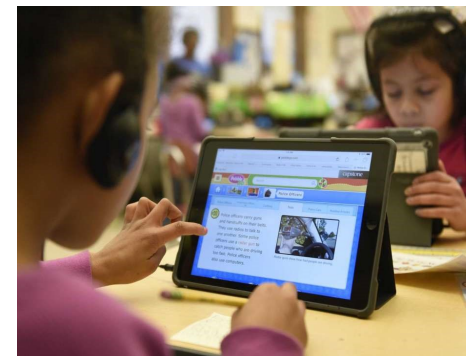
It's unclear how long school closures in Arizona will last, but at press time we know that we'll be facilitating distance learning at least until at least April 10. That's why we're doing all we can to move forward with staying connected via technology.

There are many educational activities to keep kids mentally stimulated while they're away from the classroom. If you want to supplement the digital learning our teachers are providing while your kids are temporarily away from school, we have some creative ways to keep their minds active.

To keep them learning, take advantage of these online resources (right mouse click to open hyperlinks):

- Art of Education Academy: Free [art lessons for kids](#).
- BrainPop: Free units on different subjects, including [social studies](#), [English](#), [math](#) and [science](#).
- Code.org: [Coding lessons for all grades](#).
- Flipgrid: Kids can [read a book and write a review of the book](#).
- Youcubed: [Free math lessons](#).

- Khan Academy: This nonprofit organization [offers free math lessons](#) and our UE students are currently using this resource.
- KidsPost: [News from the Washington Post, for kids](#).
- Mensa for kids: Activities to [encourage reading](#).
- National Geographic Kids: NatGeo provides [brain booster activities on its website](#).
- PBS Kids: PBS is [offering a daily newsletter](#) with activities for kids.
- Scholastic Learn At Home: At-home learning activities [with options for different age groups](#).
- The Learning Network: [Resources from The New York Times](#) including online news quizzes and writing prompts.
- The Math Learning Center: [Free math activities for kids](#).
- Cornell Lab Bird Academy for kids: [Games learning about birds and animals](#).



lower elementary >>>

Concrete vs. Abstract

During the Coronavirus pandemic, our classroom has been providing parents with online curriculum options for Language, Math, Physical Education, Art and STEM projects.

This has been a difficult challenge for many of our students because they are accustomed to learning in the concrete, meaning they require manipulative materials to further their understanding of topics. Some of our parents have

discovered that their children have a hard time understanding math equations because everything online is now in the abstract. We want to encourage parents to use concrete materials such as rocks, beans, beads, etc. to help students make groups of ten. For a fun art project, have your child label or paint the rocks to represent Montessori materials such as the Stamp Game. We have included a picture of the Stamp Game so parents can try to recreate something like this to help their students. We encourage our students and

parents to reach out to our LE teachers about what kind of materials you could recreate while we are all learning at home.

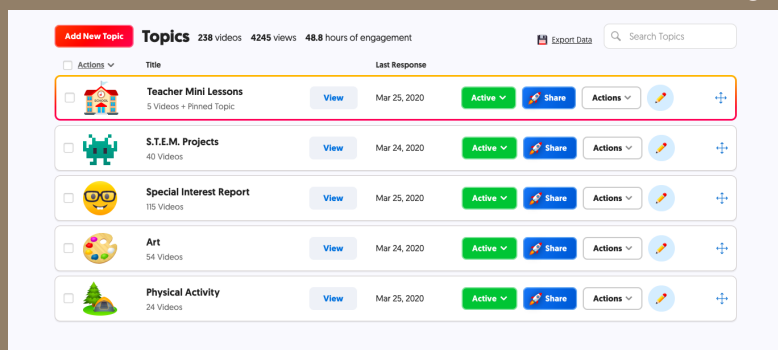
We are using Google Classroom to allow our



students to participate in reading groups and 3rd year grammar assignments. In addition, we've set up a Flipgrid .com account to allow our students to share work, view each other's videos and stay connected. We want to remind families that these videos are for teachers to see the work being done at home and to foster community.

We will continue to update and change our work as we discover more effective ways of educating from a distance!

Onward!



upper elementary >>>

Zoom! Zoom!

Flexibility is the name of the game! As we start to navigate our way through previously uncharted territory connecting online, students and teachers have learned to go with the flow. Our students have adapted quickly to this new format and the general consensus is, most like working in their pajamas. Although we would all rather be with our friends, teachers and peers each day, everyone is showing true grit and determination to make the best of an unprecedented situation.

When our school closed in March, we knew our first priority was providing every student with relevant, fun, interesting and rigorous curriculum. Thankfully, education is a field where many resources can be shared for free with students and teachers. One of the formats we quickly adopted was Google Classroom which allows us to reach out to all our students with daily communication streams for immediate feedback, posting assignments and assessments of completed work. Another online resource that our 5th grade math students are using is Khan Academy. They enjoy this program, mainly because a math instructor is explaining concepts to them, so they are not left in the dark when new material is presented. We have also become quite familiar with Zoom and are using it for class meetings and book clubs. It is so important to stay connected during this time and Zoom provides that personal touch of getting to see all of our classmates and teachers.

We want everyone to remember that our souls need the creative release of art in times of stress. The Metropolitan Opera has started streaming performances for free, Playbill is showing Broadway musicals such as *Peter Pan* and *Cats*, and many musicians are now streaming concerts for free. If writing is your passion, renowned playwright Lauren Gunderson is helping by giving free tutorials on playwriting live on Facebook. Another great resource is Scholastic, who has announced it has a digital learning hub for free that's intended to "support virtual learning plans." Their curriculum covers English language arts, STEM, social studies and social-emotional learning.

While we all hope to be returning to our normal lifestyles soon, it's nice to know that the world is reaching out to one another with helping hands, light and hope for a better tomorrow.

Our sixth years (Kyla, Josie and Lucy) have given their perspective on the past few weeks below:

As you know, the last few weeks of school have not been normal! We are all adapting to our new circumstances. Because of the coronavirus outbreak, we will be using technology to learn from home until April 10.



This is a good life lesson for everyone, as many changes have been made.

We all must work at home in the company of our families, which can get old. We are doing our best to keep up a schedule and get schoolwork in on time. For a lot of us, our day looks something like this. First, we wake up and eat breakfast. Then, we go do our schoolwork, which is online in Google Classroom or Khan Academy.

For exercise, we've been hiking, running, and bike riding. Social distancing has given many of us the opportunity to enjoy outside subjects like botany and gardening or building something.

Our class has started using Zoom as a way to stay connected. For instance, we are all in the same book club; so at 10:30 am on Mondays we have a book club meeting and discuss our book. Our teachers are doing an amazing job providing online education for us. Let's all stay healthy so we can go back to school soon!

Fostering Online Learning

The past two weeks have been an amazing time in the middle school that has required immense flexibility, ingenuity and positive energy to spring from a project-based, community-



involved, nature loving, lively in-classroom program to an online, virtual one. Our amazing team has been offering an innovative, interactive in-person (via Zoom!) program in which our students are enthusiastically participating.

In one ELA class students were developing pros and cons of online school. Some of the pros: "I can eat when I want, There are fewer distractions," and "I can make my own schedule." Some of the cons: "Teachers aren't right in the room with us to ask questions, I miss seeing my friends," and "I miss our energy together, and the spontaneity that happens when we are together." We are all continuing to learn and grow as we work together on this exciting venture. Each classroom team developed a way to transfer the magic of our classroom to virtual magic at home.

We have created a Google Classroom, and life has picked up where we left off before break. Students are busy designing the plan for making change through persuasion in their projects "A Cause to Care About."

Math classes are being held via Zoom meetings, and students are currently building sturdy bridges from items they choose in their homes, using the concepts they've learned in geometry classes.

Students are learning more about genetics by studying different genetic syndromes. ELA classes are delving into the elements of writing effective persuasive pieces, and

our language classes continue online as well.

This picture shows our first whole class Zoom meeting together. While our faces might

not show it, it was a JOYOUS occasion, with lots of catching up, big hellos and virtual hugs. That meeting was such great evidence of our amazing MS community. We really miss each other! We continue to hold Zoom classes, foster online interactions and discussions, make individual videos on flipgrid.com, and help one another with the inevitable issues of technology. During this challenging time, students are completing and submitting assignments while keeping up to date with expectations for the quarter.

We will be reaching out to our senior citizen friends soon, to reconnect with them during this time of isolation. We are actively finding ways to process and understand this time that we are in while continuing to make a difference in our community, even if it is from our laptops for the moment.

We wish you all health and wellness.

Letter from the President



Hello SCS Family.

I hope everyone is staying healthy and safe.

I wanted to share some information on how to manage your family's anxiety and stress during such uncertain and difficult times. Even though everyone reacts differently to stress, children and teens are among those that react strongly to it.

Keeping a routine is essential during this time. It can be something that IS predictable for everyone in the household. I suggest writing one out and posting it somewhere in your house that everyone can see. If you prefer not to have a daily schedule, you may decide what each day will look like the night before.

Be creative about new activities and exercise. Activities and exercise can help release some of those unwanted feelings of anxiety. We are fortunate to be surrounded by nature. Take a walk or a hike in an area that allows you to maintain the proper distance from others. If leaving your house is not an option, how about some yard work or an inside/outside scavenger hunt, obstacle course or board games.

Manage your own anxiety. Children will respond to how their parents behave. Try to minimize talking about your fears and concerns within earshot of your children. If you find your anxiety is escalating, ask that your partner (if possible) to take over and step away.

Manage consumption of news. Picking a time during the day when you will check the news may help you from constantly watching the news or checking your phone for updates. You may even need to reduce the time you interact with individuals that unnecessarily increase your anxiety levels. We want to stay informed of the latest events pertinent to our local area in order to stay safe, but we also need to maintain a sense of calm in our families.

Check in with your children once a day. Depending on their age, it's important that you tell them what's going on but keep it simple and avoid these discussions before bedtime. We don't want them worried right before they go to sleep.

Last but not least, try to stay positive. This is a time when we can focus on the most important things in our lives, namely our loved ones and how to better care for them. It is also an opportunity to unplug a bit and remember some of the simpler pleasures in life that may have escaped us in recent years. Be careful and support one another and we will make it through this together.

Yamile Daher, President
Sedona Charter School
Governing Council

ask our teachers >>>

Q: How can we foster sustainability during this virus?



A: Turn off the Tap! Let's face it. We're all washing our hands much more often than we did a month ago. We're probably washing clothing more often as well. So it's important to realize that we're using lots more water than we have in the past and much of it is just running down the drain. April 22nd marks the 50th anniversary of Earth Day and we all need to be aware of the resources we may be wasting.

Picture this. You return home from getting groceries and head straight to the sink to wash your hands, being certain to use lots of soap and water. You turn on the faucet, wet your hands and then reach for the soap. What's that water doing while you scrub your hands for those two choruses of Happy Birthday? Be aware that it doesn't have to just run down the drain. Start turning it off until you are ready to rinse.

Laundry! We all have much more of it these days, changing clothes upon returning home to prevent the spread of this virus. With everyone in the household doing their own laundry, please remember to run the washing machine with full loads only. Combine those soiled clothes and do laundry in the mornings when energy needs are lower.

staff >>>

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Orchestral Strings: Kristina Beachell

Athletic Director: Tim Smith

Administration: Alice Madar, Jannette Villalobos-Gil, Stephanie Knight

Title I: Bob Wentsch

Special Education: Cynthia Tyler



looking ahead >>>

May 2020

Classroom News

Ask A Teacher

End of Year Activities

Around Campus



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our mission... *Our Montessori school challenges each child to achieve excellence through an individualized program, which includes a schoolwide musical strings program. We inspire a passion for learning, instill a sense of personal responsibility, and cultivate a respect for the environment and involvement in the community.*

around campus and beyond >>>

Navigating the Unknown

(continued from front page)

To keep them entertained (which is just as important), take advantage of these online offerings:

- America's Test Kitchen Kids: Do you [dare put your kiddos in the kitchen](#)? Offers fun, kid-friendly recipes.
- Cincinnati Zoo: [On Facebook, the Cincinnati zoo is doing "home safaris" through April 11.](#)



- Cosmic Kids Yoga: [Mindfulness and yoga videos for kids.](#)
- Google Arts and Culture: [Explore art, museums and more.](#)
- Lucky Diaz and the Family Jam Band: [Broadcasting live jam sessions at 1 p.m. MT](#) every day for kids.
- Mystery Doug: A YouTuber who [answers educational questions.](#)
- National Aquarium: This [Baltimore aquarium is livestreaming different exhibits.](#)
- San Diego Zoo: Kids can [meet the different animals](#) at the San Diego Zoo online.
- SAVEWITHSTORIES: Celebrities on Instagram are [keeping kids occupied by reading stories.](#)

- Virtual rides: [Take a virtual ride on a Disney attraction on YouTube.](#)

It's also important to keep your kids informed without scaring them. Children should understand what's happening in our world and why they are spending more time around the house. See our President's column for ways to talk with your child about COVID-19.

We are all adjusting to staying connected via technology, and we want you to encourage your kids to get into a "school from home" routine. Structure will keep everyone happier and healthier in the seeming chaos of this pandemic. We are so thankful for our wonderful parents and we want to emphasize more than anything else, that it's okay if your school days don't quite go as you expected!