

# GT

Grades 3-5

End of Year  
2021-22  
Newsletter

Ridgewood  
Avenue School

Third graders explored various explorations of **Water Sustainability** and accented on historical aspects of "The Great American Dust Bowl" through Don Brown's graphic novel and an online game entitled "Up from the Dust."

Fourth graders examined key timeline details of **Solar Energy** and completed solar cars before delving into an historical fiction Revolutionary spy novel, "Sophia's War" by Avi.

*"The surface of things gives enjoyment.  
Their interiority gives life."*

*- Piet Mondrian*

Born Pieter Cornelis Mondriaan, but after 1906 recognized as **Piet Mondrian**, the Dutch painter and art theoretician regarded as one of the greatest artists of the 20th century was the influence for a mini unit during the latter half of the school year.

After dropping the second "a" from his surname, the spelling of his name renders an **anagram**. The first challenge undertaken by students was to view a chronological collection of his work, and discover the phrase, "**I Paint Modern.**"

In honor of the 150th anniversary of his March 7th birth, this celebrated artist's influence was further discovered via mathematical riddles and a game. Capitalizing on their instinctive knowledge of number dimensions, area, and flexible thinking, the second task undertaken was to work through the **Mondrian Squares Riddle**: completely covering a square with non-overlapping rectangles, all dimensions unique unto themselves. By subtracting the area of the smallest rectangle from the area of the largest rectangle, their goal was to get the lowest score possible. Beginning with a 4 x 4 square, students used their learned strategies toward an 8 x 8 square.

With interest in covering a square surface in rectangles growing, some of the 88 various challenges of the **Mondrian Blocks** were attempted, each testing the player's spatial ability, solutions resulting in a Mondrian-like piece of art. <https://mondrianblocks.com/>

**Fifth graders** completed their examinations of **nanotechnology** developments with the folding of Lumifold Lamps tying in their origami-like folding skills and the concept of carbon nanotube structures and will finish with a look at another Avi piece of writing, the documentary novel, "Nothin But the Truth."

**Sixth graders** examined the importance of **Biomimicry** and looked toward nature for creative solutions to maintain a sustainable future. Their Superhero reports displayed some of their insights. Reading "Outcasts United" opened discussions around the refugee's experiences.