

2006 HONOREE

Lynn Kohlhagen & Janice Wendling

Shabbona Middle School, Morris, IL
Interdisciplinary Team • 6th Grade



LYNN KOHLHAGEN

Years Teaching: 28
Average Class Size: 22
Classes Taught Per Day: 6
School's % of ESL Students: 1%
School Type: Public, Med. City
Type of Class: Teams



JANICE WENDLING

Years Teaching: 18
Average Class Size: 26
Classes Taught Per Day: 6
School's % of ESL Students: 1%
School Type: Public, Med. City
Type of Class: Teams

“Through the years, we have found various ways to accomplish our goals for students in creative ways. In social studies, during our study of ancient Egypt, we make the civilization come to life by mummifying the leg of a chicken, ‘King Cluck.’ We follow the mummification process as closely as possible including creating a tomb with items the chicken would have liked during his life on earth. During our study of the Middle Ages, the students become pages who have to complete goals to work their way to becoming a squire and then a knight, at which time they are ‘dubbed.’ The requirements include learning proper manners, just like a page learned chivalry. Their manners test is a mock formal dinner party. We also arrange a visit by a knight in shining armor and a Madrigal Choir, and hold a nerf crossbow tournament. During the study of ancient China, the students become tour guides for an imaginary journey through China’s famous historic landmarks. We use engaged learning during study of ancient Greece when the students use technology to create slideshow presentations about the contributions of Athens’ Golden Age. Our unit on artifacts includes seven real artifacts about which groups must guess the what, when, and how for each. This one always amazes them.”

“The synergism of our team meetings creates a result greater than the sum of our individual efforts. For example, as a team we designed an assignment book that allows us to have daily communication with

parents. By use of a checklist, the communication lets the parent know of any missed assignment, behavior concern, or responsibility problem the student had that day. The same checklist also makes them aware of ‘good news’ for the day. There is also a space for written communication between parent and teacher. The parents are very pleased with this system and through cooperation between all of us, we are able to perpetuate student success.”

“Mrs. Wendling and Mrs. Kohlhagen are two exciting teachers who stir imaginations and create thinkers and problem solvers. Despite some major budget cuts, they have continued to offer their best to their students. They continuously collaborate and work to develop the full potential of their students. Through their dedication, they have earned the respect of their students, parents, and administration. When my daughter had these two teachers, they spoke to me as a real participant in her learning. Mrs. Wendling and Mrs. Kohlhagen are the sparks that ‘fire up’ junior high students at our school.”

– *Debbie Granger,*
 parent of former student

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS:

Lynn Kohlhagen: Fulbright Memorial Scholar (2003)

Janice Wendling: Who’s Who Among America’s Teachers (2005, 2004, 2003)