THE WEEK Junior EDUCATION

October 30, 2026
Issue 341



Page	Title	Summary and Discussion Points	Content Area
2	Unrest erupts across France	Massive protests across France turned violent and destructive, leading to the most intense unrest in the country in several decades. What are people protesting? What do you predict will happen as a result of these protests?	Social Studies
3	Mars rover sets driving record	The Perseverance rover, operated by NASA (the US space agency), landed on Mars in 2021 and has driven 28.10 miles. That is the farthest any vehicle has traveled on another planet's surface. What would you want to learn about Mars? Why is space exploration important?	Science
4	Rallies held to boost voter turnout	Voting rights advocates held rallies on October 17 to urge people to vote, and political candidates are making their final appeals. Is voting a right or a responsibility? What's at stake in this year's midterm elections?	Social Studies
10	Honoring a creature of the night	Bats are the only mammals that can truly fly, and they play an important role in their ecosystems (groups of plants and animals that affect each other). To raise awareness about these amazing creatures, a team of conservationists and government officials organizes Bat Week every year from October 24–31. What role do bats play in the ecosystem? Can you name five facts about bats?	Science
15	Groundbreaking heart implant for UK girl	A 14-year-old girl became the first person in the UK to have a dissolvable device implanted to close a hole in her heart. What is an atrial septal defect, and why is it dangerous? What invention has the greatest impact on your life?	Tech

FEATURE OF THE WEEK JUNIOR: Story contest winner (p. 22)	
Invite students to look at this week's feature and answer the questions.	1. What elements are part of a good spooky story? 2. How would you describe the setting, theme, plot, characters, and lesson in "Discovery at the Graveyard"? What makes it a good spooky story? 3. Work with three other classmates to write a spooky story as a group. The first author writes the first paragraph and passes it to the second author, who writes the second paragraph. This continues until the story is finished and everyone has had a chance to contribute.

	DEBATE	CONNECT
ARTICLE	“Should adults dress up for Halloween?” (page 8)	“Honoring a creature of the night ” (page 10)
VOCABULARY	origins, immigrants, federation, dictated	mammals, ecosystems, conservationists, dwell
ACTIVITY	Have students stand along an imaginary line in the classroom, from “Strongly Agree” at one end to “Strongly Disagree” at the other to show their opinion on the statement, “Adults should dress up for Halloween.” Invite a few students to explain where they’re standing. Divide the class into a pro team and a con team, giving them ten minutes to develop three reasons for their position, each backed by an example or observation, and to predict one argument the other side will make. Give each team a one-minute opening statement, two minutes of supporting arguments, a short rebuttal after a one-minute huddle, and a one-minute closing statement. Finish by having students return to the opinion line to see whether anyone changed positions, discussing which argument from the opposing side was most convincing and what it felt like to argue a view they didn’t hold.	Invite students to write three words that come to mind when they hear “bat.” Share a few aloud to surface common ideas and misconceptions. Next, divide the class into small “expert groups,” each assigned one role bats play in nature: insect control, pollination, seed dispersal, or nutrient cycling. Give each group ten minutes to learn how their role works and to predict what would happen to plants, animals, and people if bats disappeared from that part of the ecosystem. Have groups come together to build a class “web of life” on the board or with yarn, connecting bats to the plants, insects, farmers, and other animals that depend on them, and watching what happens when the “bat” strand is cut. Finish by discussing why bats are sometimes misunderstood, what threats they face, and what people can do to help. If time allows, ask students to write a brief exit ticket describing the one bat role they think matters most and why.
EXTEND	Learn about the history of Halloween.	View bats in real life.

	CREATE	ACT
ARTICLE	“Rallies held to boost voter turnout” (page 4)	“Rallies held to boost voter turnout” (page 14)
VOCABULARY	rallies, advocates, movement, demonstrations	ballot, absentee, candidates, midterm
ACTIVITY	Ask students the difference between presidential and midterm elections. During midterms, voters choose all members of the House of Representatives and about one-third of the Senate, along with many governors and state and local officials. Have students create a Venn diagram comparing the two elections, including which offices are on the ballot and how often each happens. Divide students into research teams and assign each team a race on their state’s ballot. Give teams about fifteen minutes to use nonpartisan sources, such as their state’s official election website, Vote411 from the League of Women Voters, or Ballotpedia, to identify who is running and where each candidate stands on two or three key issues, checking the candidates’ own websites to confirm their positions. Challenge teams to create a side-by-side voter guide for their race and share it with the class. Finish by discussing what students learned about the choices voters in their state are facing, and ask them to explain one way the outcome of a midterm race could affect their community.	Write “Why is it important to vote?” and hold a silent chalk talk, in which students take turns writing ideas without speaking, adding new reasons or responding to ideas with arrows, questions, or check marks. Read responses and challenge the class to sort them into categories, such as having a voice, holding leaders accountable, shaping the community, and protecting rights. Give small groups a set of cards listing the reasons from the board, asking them to choose the two reasons they find most convincing. Assign each group a community member who might not plan to vote, such as a busy parent, a first-time voter who just turned 18, or someone who doesn’t think their vote matters. Challenge groups to create a nonpartisan message for that person, such as a social media post, a flyer, or a 30-second speech, that focuses on why voting matters. Have groups present their messages while classmates play the role of the community member and decide whether they’ve been convinced, offering feedback on what was most persuasive. Connect back to the article’s descriptions of people encouraging others to vote, and discuss which approaches would work best in the students’ own community.
EXTEND	Learn how midterm elections work.	Go back in time to learn important milestones in voting rights.