



Imagine Foundations Public Charter School Newsletter

JANUARY 9, 2012

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 2

Dates to Remember

Jan. 3rd – 6th –
MSA Math
Practice
Assessment
(6th & 7th grade)

Jan. 16th –
Holiday
(School Closed)

Jan. 20th –
End of Second
Quarter

Jan. 23rd –
Grading/Teacher
Planning
(Schools Closed
for Students)

**Jan. 24th – Feb.
7th –**
MAPS Testing
(Grades K-7)



Principal's Message

Welcome back and Happy 2012 Imagine Foundations Family! We left an abundance of wonderful memories of school year 2011. We enter a new year with the goal of continuing to have a terrific school year. Our students are having a wonderful school year with plenty of instructional and extracurricular activities. We have had so many exciting events take place and look forward to many more. Our students are showing great academic gains on our benchmark assessments. As we continue to move forward and make academic progress we need the support of all of our parents. Parents please continue to monitor your child's progress regularly through Family Portal and teacher conferences.

Parents please be reminded that the school day does not begin until 8:30 a.m. The school doors will open at 8:15 a.m. Please do not drop your child off before 8:15 unless he/she is having breakfast. If he/she is having breakfast they should be dropped off at Leeland Hall between 8:00 a.m. and 8:15 a.m. Additionally, please remember that students are marked tardy after 8:36 a.m. Students should enter the campus through the front entrance of Seton Belt Hall. Please do not drop students off at the back of the Science building or on the side of the gym.

February 2012 will mark the completion of my first year as Principal of Imagine Foundations Public Charter School. It has been a pleasure serving this community and I look forward to continuing a great year. I am so proud of the staff, students, and parents of this school. "We are Imagine."

Sincerely,

*Chenee Dwarte
Principal*

Counselor's Corner



Happy New Year!

I hope that everyone had a very happy holiday and is excited about what the new year will bring to you and your family!

A new item on the academic agenda for students in 5th grade an up is service-learning. Service-learning is a teaching method that combines meaningful service to the community with curriculum-based learning. Students improve their academic skills by applying what they learn in school to the real world; they then reflect on their experience to reinforce the link between their service and their learning.

Prince George's County Public Schools students must engage in a minimum of 75 student service-learning (SSL) hours in order to successfully meet the service-learning graduation requirement. To ensure that students are able to meet this requirement, service-learning has been infused into the science and social studies curricula for grades 5-10 for a total of 51 hours. Social Studies courses provide a total of 28 curriculum-infused hours and Science courses provide a total of 23 curriculum-infused hours. Additionally, students must complete 24 independent hours of service learning.

Independent service learning hours that students earn require them to submit a signed verification form to the school counselor so that hours can be entered into School Max. Students graduating in the Classes of 2014 and beyond must earn 24 independent hours.

For more information about SSL and to obtain verification and/or approval forms and journals, visit the Prince Georges County home page at www.pgcps.org.

If you have additional questions concerning SSL and/or PEP meeting dates and times for students in grades 1, 4 and 7, feel free to contact me at erica.daves@pgcps.org or 301-808-4003..

Ms. Daves

REMINDER

All students must have an emergency card on file at the school. If you have not completed a white card yet, please do so as soon as possible.

Special Area News

PHYSICAL EDUCATION



HAPPY NEW YEAR PARENTS AND FRIENDS!

The new year brings hope and confidence in achieving goals and improving character. Thanks to the cooperation and understanding of our parents we are expanding extra-curricular activities as well as maintaining cohesiveness with teachers. It has been challenging but exciting to see the different groups vie for gym space. That means we are growing!

The seventh grade class will continue to receive health education for the remainder of the quarter. We will complete Disease Control and begin Nutrition.

The sixth grade class will continue with regular physical education classes. We are completing basketball skills with the emphasis on cardiovascular endurance. We are striving to run 6 minutes non-stop at any pace. Remember, in the middle school curriculum Grade Max will generate grades for one semester only. You will see grades in the third and fourth quarters.

Third, fourth, and fifth grades are continuing basketball skills, but will transition to volleyball skills in a few weeks.

Kindergarten through second grade is always moving. I will continue to offer activities that facilitate fitness and give the students a chance to expend energy. Relays and movement games are always fun, but effective. The students love the activities which reflect our motto: "Getting fit while having fun." Tumbling skills will be incorporated by mid-January.

-Remember that grades 3 through 7 must wear athletic shoes during physical education classes.

-Parents of students who are having respiratory issues on PE day should alert Mr. Rainey and teachers by notes or phone.

-Please eliminate sugary breakfasts and lunches for your children's sake. This results in low energy and future health issues. Check the internet for time saving healthy foods and snacks for kids.

-Contact me at john.rainey@pgcps.org if you have any questions or concerns. Let's have a great new year!!!!!!

"Developing dynamic individuals through hard work, academic achievement, and character education".

TRAFFIC

Thanks to all who are really exercising patience and cooperation in the safety of your children. **We take this responsibility very seriously.** Our aim is to complete dismissal by 3:30pm. However, weather and equipment issues affect the process at times. You can help tremendously by supplying your child with appropriate clothing so that children can get in and out safely. Walking your child to the steps with an umbrella really hampers traffic. Please remain with your vehicle especially during dismissal.

If you do not receive your child at your rotation just notify a staff member and move to the right near Leland Hall. Have students exit the vehicle on the right. ***Under no circumstance should you double park to unload a student.*** If you need to park, please use the appropriate parking spaces. Lastly, for safety reasons, the staff is not required to open vehicle doors for your children. You may get out and assist. Thank you for allowing us to serve you!

Mr. Rainey

ART DEPARTMENT NEWS

Its January Imagine families! I hope that everyone enjoyed their much needed Winter Break because there will be new projects in the art classroom and our minds need to stay sharp!



K-1st grade - Inspired by Frederick by Leo Lionni, students will use cutting and pasting skills to create their own field mice who appreciate the four seasons. They have been drawing their favorite seasonal things in a book. Students will use problem solving to recreate these drawings with cut paper. Also, be sure to check out the Robots your son or daughter created last month. Most students will bring these home, but some robots are showcased in the foyer outside of the art classroom. These projects are great ways to see your child's creative expression. Ask about their robots. There is a reason behind every scrap of paper!

2nd grade - I noticed that 2nd grade students learned a lot about the value of patience when making art. Last month, both classes were awarded Free Art Days for consistent good Studio Behavior. Every table earned at least 5 stars and some tables even received prizes for earning 15 stars. This month, we are using our robot drawings as blueprints for 3-dimensional robots. We will recycle old crayon boxes and cut buttons and gadgets out of construction paper.

3rd-4th grade - Our Head-to-Toe Self-Portrait masterpieces are just about done! Students are cutting out their portraits and visualizing their goals with artist statements. But before we finish, we will learn about primary and secondary colors and the art element of Pattern while introducing a painting unit.

5th-7th grade - Students are drawing their self-portraits and animals on final paper, paying close attention to facial features, detail, and proportion. They will learn about value as they shade in their portraits with colored pencils. Students will then paint gestural strokes to suggest an environment for their final artworks.

Progress Reports and Grades

Due to some issues with talking, some classes may see a change in seating arrangement. Participation makes up a good portion of final grades. If a student has been reminded several times to stay on task, their grade is negatively impacted. Full participation includes paying attention to discussions and putting forth effort during the studio work period. Artwork and journal grades are based on a series of lessons. Participation grades show the level of a student's productivity with a project. I give students plenty of notice before due dates. I would like for all students to reach their full artistic potential. This is only achieved with consistent effort, so I cannot stress enough that participation is key!

Ms. Ortañez



SPANISH DEPARTMENT

Hola padres y estudiantes!

Feliz ano nuevo!!

This past month of diciembre, we continued to learn about the members of the family with more focus on incorporating the verbs 'tener' (to have) and 'ser' (to be). The students have been forming simple sentences with these words and also played BINGO with basic spanish objects.

In enero (january), we will take a break on family and focus on numbers 1-100 and telling time. This month the students will be introduced to some different types of interactive games in order to review and retain spanish numbers. I am looking forward to it!

Padres, all students in grades 3-7 are receiving an extra credit assignment due by Friday the 20th of enero for the 2nd quarter. They were given a print-out with all the details.

Señora Gardis - Garay

MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Happy New Year Imagine Family!

General Information: Many parents have had questions about my grading system. For General Music, I follow the Prince George's County grading scale, which is the following:

- Kindergarten: 90% class work and 10% assessment
- Grades 1-3: 60% class work, 30% homework and 10% assessment
- Grades 4-5: 50% class work, 30% homework and 20% assessment
- Middle School: 50% class work, 20% homework and 30% assessment

I do not give homework which means students automatically get the homework percentage towards their grades. I do, however, encourage students in grades 3-7 to practice their instruments at home because I give pop quizzes often!

If you have any questions, comments, concerns or ideas, please feel free to contact me at MusicAtImagine@gmail.com or quanice.floyd@pgcps.org.



Choir: We will have Choir practice on Friday, January 20th. All students in grades 5-7 are welcomed to join! I am in the process of setting up fundraisers and performances for the choir this Spring and do hope you all come and support!

Kindergarten - 2nd grade - I would love for the students to start their rhythm bands this month, but due to the lack of materials that I requested in collaboration with Ms. Ortanez, we will be unable to have a rhythm band. However, I have many percussion instruments in the classroom and will have the students share them and practice beat, rhythm and tempos. I am still requesting that parents please send oatmeal cartons and empty boxes so that we can get the rhythm band moving and grooving!

3rd & 4th grade - The 3rd grade has already started using their recorders and the 4th grade will begin using recorders by the end of this month. Some students still have not brought in their recorders and I do encourage parents to please get them for your child if you have not. If your child does not have a recorder, they will not receive class work points/credit.

The recorder I requested for students to get is the Yamaha Soprano Recorder which you can get at any Music & Arts Store or any general music store. I will send home a recorder packet that introduces students to the recorder and its notes. Once we get comfortable with the recorder, students will begin the recorder karate method, where they will all start off on white belt and work their way up by playing different songs.

5th through 7th grade - Students are currently being introduced to the keyboard and are working in groups to ensure each other's success! Students are also being introduced to the history of different genres of music. We have recently watched a video on the history of Hip Hop and will watch more videos on the other genres (gospel, soul, rock/pop, classical, jazz etc.).

I hope you have had a great holiday season and I look forward to a very productive and fun 2012!

Mrs. Floyd

Kindergarten News

Happy New Year to all! I hope you were energized from the holiday break.

To start the New Year in Math we will focus on Number and Operations, Process Skills and Measurements by adding 2 digit numbers using dimes and pennies without regrouping, finding the sums of doubles plus 1 fact, identifying and making congruent shapes, counting sets of 10's and 1's and telling time to the half hour.

To extend these concepts at home you may draw two congruent shapes and use a ruler to draw a design using line segments, list down the amount that you buy at the grocery store and compare the coins that you used. You may also write about your favorite half-hour television show.

We will be investigating and discussing tools for observing the weather changes from day to day in Science.



These tools will provide students with opportunities to:

- observe daily weather and record observations
- use a calendar to monitor daily weather
- use different weather instruments including a thermometer and rain gauge
- identify several types of clouds
- observe evidence of wind speed using pinwheels

To connect these concepts at home you may read about meteorologists, introduce your child to different weather tools that you have at home, record the daily temperature and compare your observations.

Upcoming Activities:

- MAPS testing scheduled
- more field trips to visit and learn from
- more exciting lessons to learn and master

Mrs. Lo



Language Arts

Greetings Kindergarten Parents!

I hope your winter breaks were full of reading!

In January, we will start our unit on neighborhoods. We will read, write and talk a lot about different places we can visit in our neighborhoods, the people who work and live in our neighborhood, and how we can be responsible citizens in our communities.

In phonics, we will continue with our letters, but also work on more consonant blends. Phonemic awareness, such as rhyming and syllable counting, will continue to be a focus because these are critical steps towards writing. We will also begin an online program called Reading Eggs that will support your child's reading growth through leveled instruction and independent practice.

Please look for more information about how you can support your child's learning in Monday folders. Also, look for your child to bring home books with which to practice. The black and white paper books can be kept at home and read over and over again. The glossy books are part of our class library and should be returned the Tuesday after they are brought home.

As always, please make sure your child is reading and/or being read to at least 20 minutes per night and be sure to reach out with questions or concerns.

Ms. McPhaul

First Grade News

Wow... the school year is flying right on by! I hope everyone enjoyed the holidays and is ready to begin a new year!

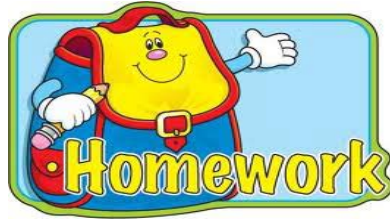
In math we will begin learning about:

- adding two-digit numbers with regrouping
- making congruent shapes
- making a Venn diagram
- using the a.m. and p.m. labels for time
- reading a thermometer to the nearest 2 degrees Fahrenheit
- measuring objects to the nearest half inch
- naming containers that hold liquid (gallon, half gallon, quart, and liter)

In science class we are underway in our unit Solids and Liquids. We will:

- experience solid materials as pieces, grains, and particles
- observe behavior of small solid materials of different particle size
- compare the behavior of solids and liquids in similar settings

- observe what happens when solids and liquids are mixed with water
- organize observations of mixtures
- conduct an investigation to determine if toothpaste is solid or liquid



Please make sure your child completes and turns in their homework every day, it is essential to their learning. Practicing daily with addition and subtraction flash cards would give your student a head start to mastering their basic facts.

Math-drills.com is a great website where a lot of additional practice can be found. Additional information on Saxon Math may be found at SaxonMath.com/Math2Activities.

Mrs. Fanning

Greetings First Grade Families!

Here is what we will be doing during the month of January in Phonics, Reading, and History & Geography ... and how you as parents can help!

Phonics:

- **There will be an assessment every fifth lesson** - so remember to keep count by 5's based on the phonics homework. Example: lessons 65, 70, 75, etc. are assessment days. **If** your child has lesson 73 for homework on Thursday night, lesson 74 will be completed in class on Friday and the spelling and oral assessments will be on MONDAY.
- Spelling lists will be sent home **weekly**. Please use them to help your child review for the spelling tests! All lists sent home you may **KEEP AT HOME**.
- We will review and introduce the following: Contractions, tri-graph igh, compound words, suffix -y, -less, -ness, -ly, digraphs ai, ay, ar, ch, or, continuation of blends, initial, medial and final sounds in words.

For Home: Please read the paragraph at the bottom of your child's phonics homework to understand what he/she learned about that day.

Reading –Let's Connect!

Comprehension Skills:

- Make inferences
- Draw conclusions
- Compare and contrast

Grammar:

- Contractions with Not
- Compound words

Writing:

- Handwriting and Presentation
- Letters: Persuasive and Entertaining
- Beginning Use of Writing Prompts

For Home: READ 20 MINUTES EACH NIGHT!

History & Geography: MEXICO: Assignment One DUE Thursday January 5, 2011!

***For Home: Keep an eye out for ADDITIONAL Projects and Activities!
They will be sent home in your child's homework folder.***

Thank you for your continued support!

Mrs. Sereida

2nd GRADE READING & HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY NEWS!!



Happy New Year parents and students!!!!

I am thrilled about starting off the New Year with exciting new challenges and growth for our students!!! Students will receive new homework assignments this year in the areas of writing and reading. We will have a book study on the chapter book GO FREE OR DIE, A Story about Harriet Tubman by Jeri Ferris. Students will receive questions and vocabulary words to complete over a course of two weeks. This should help increase their vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension skills. This will also ensure that your child is reading every night for 30 minutes. The questions will be posted for you to view on school notes and each student will receive a hard copy as well. They will also be given a test after reading the entire book on the questions they had to answer. Make sure you keep up with the questions once they are checked and returned.

**Snapshot of Learning for the
Month of January**

Saxon Phonics

- **trigraph tch,**
- **suffixes -ist, -en, -ish,**
- **more sight words,**
- **g that sound like j**

Treasures Comprehension Strategies/Skills

- Visualize/Summarize
- Visualize/Cause and Effect

Grammar

- The Verb Have
- Sentence Combining

Writing

Persuasive Ad
Persuasive Letter

World History and Geography

- Geography of the Americas



Reminders to parents:

This may be a good time to replenish any school supplies students may be lacking such as pencils, notebooks, dictionaries and thesauruses.

If you have any questions, contact me via email at trendlyon.veal@pgps.org.

Ms. Veal

Math and Science:

Dear Parents,

We are about to end our unit on Balance and Motion in Science. Look for a study guide for the Unit Test this week. The test is scheduled for Tuesday, January 10, 2012.

After the test, we will begin a fun new Unit called "Physics of Sound". As you can probably guess, this unit will be all about sound:

- how it travels
- what changes it
- hw to discriminate sounds
- hw you can "see" sound

You can enhance your child's learning by reading books on sound travel and the human ear.



In Math this month, we will learn:

- How to square numbers and identify perfect squares.
- To add and subtract fractions.
- How to write money amounts using decimals and fractions.
- How to use data to make predictions.

You can help your child's learning of these subjects by continuing to practice multiplication facts with flash cards so they will have a solid foundation, allowing him/ her to use your store receipts to play store with, and using information about past weather to predict this winter's snowfall.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30	32
3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27	30	33	36	39	42	45	48
4	8	12	16	20	24	28	32	36	40	44	48	52	56	60	64
5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80
6	12	18	24	30	36	42	48	54	60	66	72	78	84	90	96
7	14	21	28	35	42	49	56	63	70	77	84	91	98	105	112
8	16	24	32	40	48	56	64	72	80	88	96	104	112	120	128
9	18	27	36	45	54	63	72	81	90	99	108	117	126	135	144
10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	110	120	130	140	150	160
11	22	33	44	55	66	77	88	99	110	121	132	143	154	165	176
12	24	36	48	60	72	84	96	108	120	132	144	156	168	180	192
13	26	39	52	65	78	91	104	117	130	143	156	169	182	195	208
14	28	42	56	70	84	98	112	126	140	154	168	182	196	210	224
15	30	45	60	75	90	105	120	135	150	165	180	195	210	225	240
16	32	48	64	80	96	112	128	144	160	176	192	208	224	240	256

Thank you again to Ms. Saunders and Ms. Gates for their help in the classroom, and all parents who donated for our holiday party!

Mrs. Williams

Third Grade News

Welcome back!!!

We will continue studying the science unit "Earth Materials." We will investigate a selection of the most common rocks and minerals that make up Earth's crust, and learn some techniques used by geologists to identify them. You can increase your child's understanding and interest in earth materials by asking him or her to talk about the investigations we are doing at school.

We are looking forward to weeks of fun with rocks and minerals! Study guides for the Earth Materials Assessment will be sent home soon. The test will be towards the end of January. If you have questions or comments, or have expertise you would like to share with the class, please drop me a note.



The following concepts are what we will concentrate on in Mathematics for the month of January:

- ❖ Read and write money amounts to \$99,999.99
- ❖ Identify rational numbers from pictures and draws pictures to show rational numbers
- ❖ Identify addends, sums, factors, products, differences, quotients, dividends, and divisors
- ❖ Act out, draw pictures of, and write number sentences to show multiplication and division

- ❖ Make, label, and write number sentences for an array
- ❖ Write division problems in three ways
- ❖ Subtract numbers with 2 to 5 digits
- ❖ Subtract money amounts
- ❖ Check subtraction involving subtraction
- ❖ Multiply using the multiplication algorithm
- ❖ Master division facts
- ❖ Divide 2, 3, and 4 digit numbers by a single digit number
- ❖ Check division with multiplication
- ❖ Compare, order, and identify equivalent fractions
- ❖ Record transactions in a checkbook register

*******We will continue to prepare the students for the MSA and work on our BCR questions daily. Please look at them and discuss them with your children*******

Remember to please check over each homework question with your child and practice multiplication and division facts. I will continue to send out study guides for all of the written assessments. Please be on the lookout for those. I will also continue to update my Schoolnotes.com with weekly homework assignments, important updates, and study guides. Please be on the watch for our January field trip permission slip. We are going to the **Newseum!!**

Mrs. Doughty

Reading/Language Arts:

Greetings Families!



Happy New Year! I hope everyone had an enjoyable and restful winter break! If any parent has free time during the day and would like to volunteer to help during small groups and grading papers ☺ please let me know!

What We Are Learning:

For the month of January in Treasures, we will discuss two new weekly themes (Unit 3 weeks 4, and 5) and have our first Unit Assessment. Unit 3 Week 4 theme: Making Journeys. Unit 3 Week 5 theme: The Art of Illustrating. Within these two themes we will learn about:



- **Vocabulary:** Making Journeys: annual, potential, expensive, politely, package, wrapping, innocent, aisles. The Art of Illustrating: instance, illustrate, style, textures, sketches, suggestions.
- **Vocabulary Strategies:** Homophones and sentence clues.
- **Comprehension:** Visualizing, making inferences, story and text structure, and sequencing.
- **Grammar:** Verbs: Future tense verbs and sentence combining with verbs.
- **Writing:** Dialogue and play.
- **Spelling:** Words with /u/ and /oi/.

This month in **History and Geography** we will continue to learn Ancient Rome. Some important concepts we will cover are:

- Geography of the Mediterranean region
- Romulus and Remus
- Roman Gods and Goddesses
- The Roman Republic
- The Punic Wars
- Julius Caesar
- Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt
- Julius Caesar Dies
- Augustus Caesar
- Roman Lands
- Roads, Bridges, and Aqueducts
- The Buildings of Rome
- Gladiators and Chariot Races
- Pompeii
- The Romans and the Christians
- The Decline of the Roman Empire
- East and West



Novel: *The Story of Harriet Tubman, Conductor of the Underground Railroad*
by Kate McMullan



- **Literature Circles:** held every 5th lesson of each weekly theme. Each child has a literature circle job sheet that will need to be completed by this time. The jobs include: Connector, Illustrator, Word Finder, Correspondent, and Discussion Director. It is imperative that each child do their part and complete their job sheet to support their literature circle group.

What You Can Do At Home:



- **PLEASE PRACTICE WRITING BCRs!!!** Use the acronym **R.A.C.E** (restate the question, answer the question, cite evidence from the story, and explain answer) to answer a question about stories they read.
- Check **SchoolMax** and **SchoolNotes** frequently to see your child's grades, homework for the week, and important updates!
- Make sure your child is **coming to school on time** every day! When they come in late, they miss completing important morning procedures, like their warm-up and writing down homework. Their Treasure packets are sent home a day or two before the Treasures test. **Please go over the answers with your child**, make sure the packet is complete, they understand what they are doing, and they turn it back in the next day. If you have any problems, do not hesitate to email me. **SAVE YOUR TREASURE PACKETS FOR THE UNIT ASSESSMENTS!!**
- Have your child go on the Treasures website to find games and activities that go along with the weekly themes and concepts being learned. Another great site is starfall.com. It helps students practice vowel and consonant sounds.
- The #1 most important thing to do at home is **read to your child and/or**

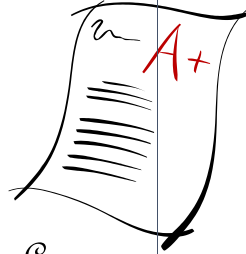
have him/her read to you every night for 20-30 minutes. This is the perfect opportunity for your child to read and keep up with their novels or indulge in a favorite book!

- **The love of reading is key to academic success.**
- Comprehension workbooks can be purchased to give your child practice answering questions

Classroom Donations:

- Filler paper! We go through almost a 100 sheets a day!

Thank you again for all your hard work and dedication at home!



Mrs. Grode

4th GRADE NEWS MATH AND SCIENCE

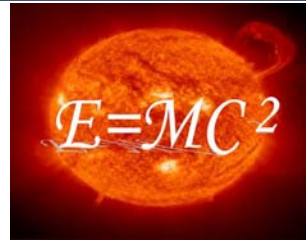
Dear Parents/Guardians,

I hope that you had a wonderful holiday! Can you believe it is 2012 already?! We are almost half way in the school year, and there is so much to accomplish for the month of January.

Math Focus:

For this month we will continue to work mindfully as we practice and study Math. Have your children make conscious efforts as they complete homework and practice new concepts. Homework enforces review of the new concepts, so ask your child questions about the problems that they are solving. Ensure that they not just write answers, but show all work for items that calls for this. Their work gives you an idea of their mental processes, as they solve the problems. That way you will be able to assess their understanding of different concepts. Also, practice brief constructed response (BRC) items with your child daily. Help him/her to give detailed responses to math problems.

We will continue with Perimeter, Measures of Circles, Probability and Graphs. We will also engage in extended work on data analysis, measurement (more on the metric units), and fractions. We will expand on data display, geometry (especially solids), and fractions. Intense work will be done in the area of decimal numbers, as well as integration of that with the metric system.



Science Focus:

Our focus will continue to be on Energy and Matter. We have introduced Matter but will focus more on energy for this month. As mentioned prior, we will be conducting four investigations; Energy, Light, Matter, and Changing Matter. Students are enjoying this unit so far. Please encourage your child to do further exploration via the internet (with your guidance). There is a wealth of information that provides interactive activities, mini projects, and home investigations that he/she will enjoy.

Note:

Study guides are teacher created as an extra effort to guide your child's study habits. It is however a futile practice if it is not being utilized for study purpose. The absence of study is being reflected in many students' test results. Please ensure that your child studies for all tests/quizzes. It is also imperative that students maintain focus at all times. Guide them into developing intrinsic motivation to do this.

Thanks for your kind support in making this a productive month of learning.

Mrs. Holding-Smith

Language Arts:

Happy 2012 Parent(s)/Guardians!

A new year brings about anticipation of great new things to come! This month we will wrap up our theme on "Great Plains Indians" and then we will move into a theme entitled, "Precipitation."

Our upcoming writing focus will be writing a Character Sketch.

For reading comprehension we will focus on summarizing, sequencing, and evaluating.

The vocabulary strategies for this month are *Homophones* and *Multiple Meaning Words*.

In Grammar the focus will continue to be Verbs, specifically Linking and Irregular.

In World History and Geography we will move into a new monthly project on Castles.

Reminders/Notices:

- There are just a few weeks left in this quarter. There is still time for improvement to occur or for good grades to remain or even fall. Students are encouraged to keep the right focus and drive with hopes of ending this quarter on a positive note.

Special Homeroom Note:

- Guess what? Another party opportunity is coming for Mrs. Pike's homeroom class. In keeping with the spirit of rightfully earning a reward, the same criteria to participate will be applied, starting Wednesday 1/4/12 – Friday 2/3/12 (all greens, with only 1 yellow, and no red).

Tip of the Month: After your child has stopped to correct a word he has read, have him go back and reread the entire sentence from the beginning to make sure he understands what the sentence is saying.

Thank you for being your child's first teacher!

Mrs. Pike

Fifth Grade News

Greetings Teammates!

I hope you and your families enjoyed the Holidays! We are getting into the home stretch of the school year. Your students are almost half a year away from being in middle school! Please continue to work with your student's on their Brief Constructed Responses (BCR's). The 5th grade team will be holding a family MSA night on February 1, 2012. The event will be held in the science building from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. This will be an opportunity for you and your student to work on math, science, and reading BCR's together. Ms. John and I will offer tips on the best ways you can help your student prepare for the MSA. We look forward to seeing you there! The following are Math and Science skills that will be covered during the month of January:

**Math:**

- Rounding decimal numbers
- Mentally dividing decimal numbers
- Simplifying fractions
- 3 step fraction problems
- Adding mixed numbers
- Attributes of geometric solids
- Adding three or more fractions
- Writing mixed numbers as improper fractions
- Prime factorization
- Factor trees
- Dividing mixed numbers

Science:

In Science class we will finish up the Water Planet module. Remember, this is the first year that your student will take the Science MSA. I will be incorporating BCR's and other information from the SCIENCE GRANDSLAM practice book. If able, I suggest purchasing a copy of the practice book. I believe they are \$8 each and are available for math, science, and reading. The books can be found at any teacher store or online by searching "GRANDSLAM PRACTICE BOOK".

* I look forward to continuing to work with you on your students' journey to academic excellence!

Mr. Sereda

Happy New Year Fifth Grade Family!



I hope everyone had an enjoyable holiday season. We will continue in our reading program during the month of January by covering the following topics:

Unit 4- Experiences

Weekly Themes: "Civil Rights", and "Animal Defenses".

Reading Comprehension Skills

- Character and Setting
- Author's Purpose

Grammar

- Pronouns and Antecedents
- Subject and Object Pronouns

Writing

- News Article
- Scientific Observation

Social Studies

- Westward Expansion

Core Knowledge Novel

- "Little Women"

Students will be assigned activities for each chapter that will be collected and graded on a weekly basis. Students are expected to keep all assignments in a folder or a notebook. Assignments can be hand written neatly or typed.

Happy Reading!!

Ms. John

Sixth and Seventh Grade News

Dear Sixth Grade Family,

Happy New Year and Welcome to 2012!! We are so excited about all of the new treasures we will discover. Here is an overview of what we will cover for the month of January in our Treasures program.

Unit 4 Theme- Achievements
Themes Unit 4:

Reading Comprehension Skill

- Author's Purpose
- Fact and Opinion

Grammar

- Pronoun and Antecedents
- Subject and Object Pronouns

Writing Skills and Application

- Interview
- Persuasive Writing

Social Studies

- Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome
- Mythology

** Please refer to your child's Social Studies Project Planner

Current Core Knowledge Novel



- The Iliad and The Odyssey
- Fact and Opinion

Students are responsible for reading assigned pages or chapters for homework. Students are given activities to complete for each chapter in the book.

Please be mindful that students must complete **all** homework assignments each night to ensure comprehension and success. **Remember, homework is 25% of student's total grade.**

Please replenish **all** supplies before January 10th.



We are in need of room deodorizer refills (Glade Scented Oil) so we can keep our room warm and smelling nice. All donations will be greatly appreciated.

Please have your child read to you each night. Your interest, praise, and encouragement are sure to lead to your child's success.

Mrs. McBurrows



Science:

Happy New Year parents and students!

As we begin 2012, sixth graders will continue their investigations of erosion and deposition by exploring the effects of slope of land. Students will continue to investigate stream table landforms in an effort to model occurrences of nature. In preparation for the final project, students will participate in brainstorming activities to explore the possibilities around creating an individual investigation. Ultimately, students will display their knowledge of landforms by designing and carrying out a stream-table investigation to discover how human modification influences stream processes.

Seventh grade students will learn how the age of rocks is determined by discovering how index fossils are used as indicators. Students will continue to sequence events by organizing various life forms based on their historical relevance in the Grand Canyon. Various rock types will be observed and compared based on their unique characteristics. The final experiment conducted will involve students creating crystals; this will be a lot of fun.

As we approach the end of second quarter, sixth and seventh grade science students will be expected to complete final projects. Parents, please assist your student with the necessary materials needed to be successful with their presentations. Students will have class time to work on their selected topics, which means that they must be prepared with research documentation and materials. In order to receive the highest score possible, students must work on the projects in class and at home.

Also, please encourage your student to practice speaking loudly and clearly. Students will receive presentation guidelines and requirements in the coming weeks. Parents, thank you in advance for your continued support and cooperation as we begin this New Year.

Mrs. Fletcher

Reading/Language Arts

Happy New Year! I hope that you all had an enjoyable and relaxing Winter Break. With that being said, it is time to get right back into the swing of things. MSA testing is only about two months away, and we have a lot to do before this takes place.

In Reading, students will continue to read *The Road to Memphis*. Over Winter Break, students were to have completed thru Chapter 3 of our latest novel. We will continue reading this throughout the month of January. My hope is to be finished with this novel no later than mid-February.

Also in Reading, students will continue to follow the Pearson program. Prior to Winter Break, we had a selection test on the third pairing of stories. We will be jumping right back into it by starting the fourth pairing. The assessment for this pairing is tentatively scheduled for Friday January 6, 2012.

Right around the end of the 2nd Quarter, we will also wrap up Unit 3. We will have an assessment on this unit right before the quarter ends. Topics to be included on this assessment are main idea, fact and opinion, word choice, expository essay, reflective essay, persuasive essay, autobiography, biography, author's argument, and humor in stories.

In grammar, we will continue working on prepositions. Students will also be introduced to conjunctions and interjections. Students will work with these different parts of speech for much of January. Students will also complete one final writing assignment before the end of the month. This will be a "compare and contrast" essay. Students will work on this essay in stages. More information will be forthcoming in the next few weeks.



Social Studies

Students will continue to work on all parts of their Hammurabi's Code projects. The rough draft of their own laws is due on January 9 with the final product due on January 17. Students will present their projects to their classmates during that week. Just as a heads up, students will be given an African American History project. This will be assigned in late January and will be due at the end of February. More information will be forthcoming later this month.

As always, if you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please do not hesitate to ask. Thank you for helping make the first half of this school year a great success. Let's keep the momentum going!

Mr. Curcio

Hello and Welcome Parents!

I am very happy to be back for the school year. I am very happy to welcome back your child/children for the rest of the school term. I just wanted to update you on some of the things that we are going to work towards for the rest of this quarter.

1. For those students who are performing consistently above grade level in 6th and 7th grades, I have moved them up a level (ex. for course 2 they are moved up to course 3). For Course 3, I am seeking to introduce the students to Algebra earlier than expected. I am excited for this move because it will allow the advanced students to be pushed harder than usual and really exercise their minds beyond their comfort levels. To this end I strongly advise parents to call and communicate with me via twitter and the www.skinnymath.org website so that you are fully aware of what is coming and how best you can continue to push your child forward.
2. For those students who are performing on grade level, they are staying on course, though I am introducing more hands on projects in order to help the more tactile students to show their comprehension of the concepts. Please stick to the deadlines for these projects. Since we are diversifying the curriculum, the timeline is tight and I will not be able to accept late work.
3. For those students who are consistently performing below grade level, I am considering using a Course level below their current level. They will still be doing the same group lesson as the advanced, and proficient level students, but the difference will come in when they do the book assignments. For many of these students the struggle has been over some time, and I really want to make an adjustment that enables to them to build not only their mathematical comprehension, but also their confidence. Many of them just do not believe that they can do it, and I want to instill within them that they can.
4. Videos – I am seeking to put videos of the lessons on ustream.com/skinnymath for refreshers. If you need immediate help on a problem you can text or email me, I will do the problem on a whiteboard and either email it on how I got the answer and you can then explain it to your child.

Finally feel free to contact me any time after school either through my number, @skinnymath on twitter, or www.skinnymath.org

Mr. Seneque

