

February Newsletter



Literacy-Language and Readers' Workshop - Third graders have been working very hard in the area of nonfiction. Our focus is now on reading biographies. Our mentor texts have been inspirational, and they have led to engaged discussions. Our essential question is, "How are identities formed"? Mini lessons are used to teach children what to think about as they read a biography. So far the students have listened to mentor text about Michael Jordan, Sonia Sotomayor and Jean Michel. Ask your children about these people.

Remember to ask questions of your child when they finish reading their text at home. Discussions about text encourage students to think about the text and help them check their understanding of what they have read. As I say quite often in class, "the most important part of reading is understanding what you read".

During readers' have been choosing a specific person of interest and doing research about them. Students will be reading to gather information from both books and websites. Then they will write detailed notes and finally write a biography about this person .

Writers' Workshop- Students finished their informational writing pieces about their chosen invention This project took a lot longer than I expected. I am sure proud of all the progress the students made in producing this kind of writing. They will be showcasing these writing pieces, along with the start of their biographies, at our Showcase of learning at the end of February. I am excited for you to see their writing.

Math- After completing our first unit about fractions this year, now we are moving on to measuring time and length with inches to the nearest quarter of an inch. Your child will be learning how to tell time to the nearest minute so this is a perfect time to do this at home. Instead of consulting a digital clock, ask your child to tell you the time using an analog clock. Your child will also be learning about elapsed time, which is another great skill that can be easily practiced at home. You could ask questions like, "If your basketball practice starts at 5:00 pm and goes until 6:15 pm, how long was your practice?" or "If we went to the store at 7:35 and came home at 8:10, how long were we at the store?"

Just a reminder: Keep up that fact practice! Addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division facts are building blocks for your child to understand higher level problems. Here is a link to some fun games your child can play to get their nightly fact practice in:

<https://www.education.com/games/third-grade/multiplication-facts/>

They can also use their Xtra math account at home for their nightly practice.

Science - The big news this month has been the arrival of our crayfish! Your child is learning about crayfish and their adaptations as an example of how animals' bodies adapt to fit their needs and environment. We even had the very special experience of seeing a female crayfish lay eggs and getting to study the young crayfish as they molt and get larger. Many students have even been brave enough to touch and hold the crayfish for

short times. We have had a fantastic time getting to know our new crustacean friends!

Social Studies- We are almost finished with our social studies unit about landforms. This unit got interrupted because of our science unit but we will be finishing it up as soon as we have completed our time with the crayfish. Students have been working very hard to identify and create a book of their favorite landforms. They have done fantastic research about each landform and will have a fun surprise for you for how they will be presenting their information in their Book Creator. They are excited to show you their books during the showcase of learning!

iPad and Internet Safety at Home

Recently, we did an iPad check with third grade. We saw a lot of Youtube use by the students while they were at home. Youtube can be a very nice educational and entertainment resource ***if used safely***. I am including a link to the website, Common Sense. Common Sense is the nation's leading nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of kids and families by providing the trustworthy information, education, and independent voice they need to thrive in the 21st century. They review movies, video games, websites and more to let parents know if they are appropriate for kids of a certain age. The link I am providing addresses Youtube use.

<https://www.common Sense media.org/blog/a-parents-ultimate-guide-to-youtube>

Youtube age recommendation is 13+ when used outside of class. Within our district network videos are restricted. If teachers find a YouTube video they would like kids to watch on their own device, we have to send it to our tech people so they can review it and un-restrict it. In your own home network these restrictions are not in place. I highly recommend you have some restrictions in place for YouTube use. You should know the videos your children are viewing. It is easy for your child to put in a search and end up with a video that is not kid friendly. Also, video suggestions come up on the sidebar in YouTube. Videos are suggested based on previously viewed videos. We would like to see the iPad used at home for educational purposes only. If you are allowing your child to view other videos, I recommend you have some safety parameters set up around this. I also recommend checking Internet history on both Safari and Chrome. Any questions? Please ask either one of us.

Reminders:

February 14- Red, White, Purple and Pink Day and Valentine's Day Party

February 20 and Feb. 28 Showcase of Learning, 4:30-7:15

March 1 - Early Release, 1:40

See you all at the Showcase of Learning!

Mrs. Anderson

Mrs. Horton

Mrs. Mazza

Mrs. Zirbel