



The Third Time's a Charm

Third grade's monthly newsletter- May – June 2011

A message from Mrs. Ciummo and Mrs. Haz...

It has been absolutely fabulous year! Even though it is hard to believe that it is coming to an end so rapidly, we are confident that the children are well prepared for the challenges of fourth grade. We have watched them grow in so many ways and are proud of the wonderful things they have accomplished. We are sad to see them go, but certainly happy they are ready☺

The Core Virtue for the month is.....

HOPE!!!! What a wonderful virtue to possess. Without hope, there are no dreams! We will talk about hope with the children in relation to themselves, but also how we can have hope for others. A very recent example will be for the earthquake victims in China and how we worked to raise money to give them hope. We will read a great book entitled *Boxes for Katje* – a great book of hope!

A couple reminders...

- The Pennsylvania ABC Books are nearly complete! What a great job the children did! The final set of letters is due **Friday, May 6th**. The final step is to make sure all of the letters are in ABC order and that the final product is organized in a binder with a cover. The final product is due on **Friday, May 20th**. The books will then be on display in the front lobby of the school
- The week of May 9th is **ERB week!** Please be sure that the children are well rested and that they are fed a complete, healthy breakfast. The third grade actually takes tests all 5 mornings so the week is busy. With good rest and a solid breakfast, the children are more prepared to remain focused on the task at hand.

Dates to remember...

- Mon., May 2 – Commons of Squirrel Hill visit
- Thurs., May 5 – New Parent Reception – 5:30 – 6:30
- Fri., May 6 – **Final set of letters for PA ABC book due**
Kongo Bash – 1:00
- Mon., May 9 – Fri., May 13 – **ERB TESTING**
- Mon., May 16 – LS Dress Rehearsal for Spring Concert – 1:55
- Wed., May 18 – LS Fine Arts Festival – 6:00
- Fri., May 20 – Carnival with our friends at The Commons of Squirrel Hill
Dress Down Day
FINAL ABC BOOK DUE!!!!
- Mon., May 30 – NO SCHOOL – Memorial Day
- Fri., June 3 – Tour-Ed Mine Field Trip
SEA PTA Carnival 6:00
- Mon., Jun 6 – Field Day 11:30 – 3:00
- Wed., June 8 – Moving-up Ceremony – 11:00
- Fri., June 11 – Kennywood Day

Making a difference...

On Monday, May 2nd we will take a walk down to the Commons of Squirrel Hill. We are hoping for a beautiful day that will be made even better by the time spent with our friends. On Friday, May 20th we will head down there once again to take part in an indoor carnival with the residents! The children are already very eager and looking forward to that day. Before the end of May, we will make some wonderful summer pictures to adorn the walls of the residents' once we are gone for the summer.

Social Studies takes us back...

The children took a rather challenging test on The French and Indian War and taxation. This test looked more like the ones they will begin seeing in fourth grade. We are pleased to say that everyone did well and rose to the occasion. It is great to see them meet with such success after working so hard in this content area.

As we move forward we will be studying the American Revolution and the role Pennsylvania played in it. It is amazing to learn how much of history occurred right here in our part of Pennsylvania and the children are always very interested in learning and understanding our role. The children will learn the difference between Loyalists and Patriots and take part in a debate pitting one against the other. We will also explore the Declaration of Independence and what it meant to our country. If time permits, we will explore the Constitution as well. You can expect one more Social Studies test before the end of the year.

Math madness...

What a great success our multiplication unit was. The children performed beautifully throughout, and felt very good about their accomplishments. We do suggest that time is spent during the summer keep those facts fresh in their minds. The children know several websites that we used during class that would be helpful in this area. Keeping the facts fresh will enable the students to take off running once they begin fourth grade. In fact, it may not hurt to spend a bit of time revisiting those addition and subtraction facts.

We will spend time wrapping up the year with division, focusing on facts specifically. We will also explore some elements of fractions and measurement.

It has been a successful year for the students in math. What is typically a challenging year for children was outstanding due to their dedication to learning and internalizing the multiplication facts.

Grammar is grand and writing is wonderful...

In April we concluded our study on pronouns and moved directly into the study of adjectives. The children learned to identify adjectives, use the correct form of comparative adjectives, understand when to use proper adjectives and also explored articles. As we move through the end of the year we will be studying verbs and adverbs. Our study of verbs will include action and being verbs as well as the conjugation of verbs to indicate past, present and future. We will study adverbs that tell how, when and where.

Writing is wonderful...

We are currently working through a 5 paragraph paper relating to favorite seasons. The children began this activity by listening to the story *Red Sings from Treetops – A Year in Colors*. The children were then placed in groups according to their favorite season and brainstormed the reasons that season was their favorite. These ideas were shared with the entire class. From this brainstorming information, the children filled out an organizer for each individual paragraph to use as a launching pad. We like to use this activity as it really shows the children all that they learned in writing throughout the year.

Lovin' Literature...

We continue to enjoy the classic novel of *Charlotte's Web*. About half-way through the novel at this point, it is great to see how the children's analytical skills are growing. They are developing the ability to look beyond what is written and explore deeper meaning. Our weekly comprehension packets show increasing deeper, more meaningful responses as their skills increase. We have also been doing a good amount of sequencing using this book. It has proven challenging for some of the children but we encourage them to use the book to help them and they are beginning to use that tool effectively.

We hope to watch the movie *Charlotte's Web* as one of our culminating activities for this unit. It is a great movie and the children really enjoy seeing the characters that we spent so much time getting to know come to life!

Keeping fit...

During May, St. Edmund's third graders will have a chance to choose the activities for a P.E. class. Each student will be responsible for planning a class period with their favorite warm-up and their favorite unit activity. This is a fun way to review many of the different units, skills, and activities that we have learned so far throughout this year.

Books can take us where we've never been...

Third Grade will conclude the year investigating additional general reference sources. Since they have had used the encyclopedia for several projects this year, we will practice using almanacs and atlases. We will begin with exploring the World Almanac and Book of Facts to find facts on various subjects. They will also learn how to access the almanac online through Power Library. Next, we will look at different types of atlases and practice using them for geographic fact finding. We will also take a closer look at the Carnegie Library kids home page which would be a useful site for them during the summer break giving them information on summer reading and activities at the Carnegie Libraries. The Reading Counts competition will end by mid-May to allow time to award prizes. In addition, please help your child remember to return any checked-out books during the week of May 23rd.

And the beat goes on...

The third grade has been successfully learning how to play the recorder! We are learning how to read notes and rhythms and play them with our instruments. These music-playing techniques will certainly help all of our students who wish to go on to play another musical instrument. We are also looking forward to our Fine Arts Festival on May 18th! Our students will prepare a spring concert and a talent show. We will provide more details about this event very soon!

Where in the world???

The class ended the study of Germany learning about the Brothers Grimm, the Passion Play of Oberammergau, the Black Forest, and German cars. Students also learned about the role of Germany in World War II. Our last trip will be to Israel! After learning about its location, geography, population and language, students will learn the main facts that led to the creation of Israel. Student will watch a Brain Pop movie about The Holocaust. 3rd grade will also be having a very special guest: Dr. Alessandro Basso (AKA Sofia's grandfather).

How do you compute???

The third grade will be utilizing the tools in Excel this last month of school. Students will create a poll with at least 3 possible responses. The students will type these up on Word, print them for their classmates, and collect responses. Students will then tally their responses and put the results into an Excel spreadsheet, including a title with merged cells, columns, rows, borders, colors, fonts. The students will then learn how to create various charts using the information received.

Express yourself...

We will finish out the year with a textile project. The students will work with a variety of fabrics such as burlap and felt and to create a tapestry. We will also explore fabrics from around the world and how they are produced. If we have time and the weather cooperates, we will work on sketching from nature. It has been such a pleasure working with your children this year!

She blinded me with SCIENCE...

Our final unit in science is called "Weather Watching." During this unit students learn how to observe, describe, and measure aspects of weather using weather instruments. After brainstorming why weather changes from day to day, season to season, and place to place, students investigate temperature and wind strength. They will construct rain gauges, lightning rods, and wind socks. They will find out which cloud formations predict which weather patterns. They will also explore rainbows, thunderstorms, and snowflakes and model tornadoes, track hurricanes, and interpret weather maps.