



The Third Time's a Charm

Third grade's monthly newsletter- May – June 2010

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 happy they are ready☺

A few things...

- The Pennsylvania ABC Books are complete! What a great job the children did! 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 7th**. The books will then be on display in the front lobby of the school. If you have the opportunity to, please stop by and peruse the wonderful work done by all the students.
- The week of May 10th 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...

- Thurs., May 6 – New Parent Reception – 5:30 – 7:00
- Fri., May 7 – Final product of ABC book due
Kongo Bash – 1:00
- Mon., May 10 – Fri., May 14 – ERB TESTING
- Wed., May 12 – Commons at Squirrel Hill Carnival
- Mon., May 17 – LS Dress Rehearsal for Spring Concert – 1:55
- Thurs., May 20 – LS Fine Arts Festival – 6:00
- Fri., May 28 – Tour Ed Mine Filed Trip – 9:10 – 2:00
SEA Carnival – 6:00
- Mon., May 31 – NO SCHOOL – Memorial Day
- Wed., June 2 – Moving-up Ceremony – 11:00
- Thurs., June 3 – NO CHAPEL SERVICE
- Fri., June 4 – Field Day – 11:00
Last Day of School
- Fri., June 11 – Kennywood Day

Making a difference...

On Monday, April 19th we took a walk down to the Commons of Squirrel Hill. It was an absolutely beautiful day made even better by the time spent with our friends. On Wednesday, May 12th 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 also 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 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 nit 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, geometry, 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...

We have been exploring a lot of different things in writing since our return from spring break. The first thing we complete was an ABC Alliteration book. The children were broken into groups and asked to write an alliteration for every letter of the alphabet. Once they were done, they put them on neat sheet paper and created an illustration for every page. It was great exercise in so many ways. The creativity was overflowing and the cooperative learning was great to observe. Each child in the group received their own copy of the book. If you have not seen your child's, please ask him/her if you can see it.

Another lesson we did was called the Monster Exchange. In this activity, the children were first asked to draw a monster. Once they drew the monster, they were then asked to write a descriptive paragraph describing their monster. It was made clear that someone else would have to draw their monster based upon the description they wrote and thus, many details had to be included. We then exchanged the descriptive paragraphs with the other third grade class and the children were asked to draw the monster described in the paragraph. The purpose of course, was that the monster look as close as possible to the original.

Lovin' Literature...

We are extremely pleased with the fabulous discussions we have had surrounding our novel *A Real American*. The children look forward to the chapters each week and are always eager to share their thoughts and perspectives on the story. It truly teaches them a lot about friendship and how it is challenging to remain friends in the face of adversity. We have been very impressed with the depth of the conversation and the children's ability to think beyond the written word.

During literature, we also took time to research our country of origin since *A Real American* focuses so much on immigrants (Italian, specifically). The children spent time using the computers and encyclopedias to learn more about their country's flag, traditional foods, famous person (people) and in some instances the country's coat of arms or other symbols. Once the information was complete, the children took it to art class where they began to create their coat of arms. It was a great activity that had the children excited about their history. They were also excited to point out that this is what the 5th graders do in the Travel Fair. This was a great precursor to the much larger, detailed project that they will encounter in a just a couple of years.

How do you compute???

The Third Grade will be using Power Point throughout the month of May. The students will learn how to use some advanced features on Power Point such as transitions and linking. They will be researching topics in correlation to their traditional classroom material. The students will learn how to find worthy and safe websites and images to find information. In addition, the students will have access to a website created by the computer teacher which has links that reinforce mathematics skills.

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

Third Grade is exploring reference books that will be used frequently in Fourth Grade research projects. We will begin May looking at some of our general and specialized atlases and use them for geographic fact finding. Next, we will explore the World Almanac and Book of Facts.

The last opportunity to take *Reading Counts* quizzes will be May 8th. Classroom winners and prizes will be announced the following week. In addition, please help your child remember to return any checked-out books during the week of May 24th.

At the end of May, they will receive information on the summer reading programs at the Carnegie Library in Oakland.

And the beat goes on...

Mark your calendars for Thursday, May 20th for our annual Fine Arts Festival! Your children will be performing in the spring concert at 6:00, and may also choose to participate in our lower school talent show immediately following. Also at our Fine Arts Festival is our Art Show! Come and see our students' artwork on display in the hallways. More information will be coming out very shortly for this event. We hope that most of you can join us on May 20th!

Where in the world???

We had a very special guest speaker this year: our own Mrs. Miller who shared with us her wonderful photos and stories from her recent trip to Italy (The Vatican City and Florence). *Grazie, Signora Miller!* In our own imaginary trip to Florence, students will make drawings of Ponte Vecchio and learn about Leonardo da Vinci and his fantastic creations. They will make a model of his tank and write in mirror image, the same way Leonardo did on his notes. Our next project will be visiting the Galleria Uffici to study the "Primavera" painting by Botticelli, and then our last city to visit will be Venice. We will learn about the history of the city, the gondolas, and about some very famous Venetians such as Marco Polo and Antonio Vivaldi. We will also listen to some Italian opera arias sung by Pavarotti. To conclude our journey to Italy, the world cultures class will have an Italian party on Friday, May 21st. We will enjoy prosciutto, Italian cheeses, bread with Italian olive oil, and granitta (Italian Ice). Then we will watch a real Italian movie.

Keeping fit...

St. Edmund's third graders will be participating in a variety of physical education units through the rest of the school year. We will follow the track and field unit with relay races and obstacle courses, designed to continue the development of motor skills and body control. Sport specific skills will be included in the relays and obstacle courses to give the students an opportunity to practice and improve upon these elements. Then we will have a base games unit that will prepare the students for the highly anticipated "Kongo Bash". Finally, a Tennis and Lacrosse units that will introduce the sports and work to develop the skills needed to successfully play those games.

Express yourself...

We will finish the year with a project based on Matisse's 1001 Nights. The students will create a large "amusement park" mural using colored construction paper and scissors. We will study the use of color, shape and rhythm in Matisse's paintings. It has been a fun and exciting year in art!

She blinded me with SCIENCE...

Third grade is exploring the Solar System. They will gain perspective on the physical relationships between objects in our Solar System. The children will become familiar with the names and positions of the planets, researching one planet and sharing the information with the class. We will also begin discussing some of the satellites in our Solar System. Finally we will explore other space objects such as comets, asteroids, and meteoroids. This unit will take the third graders to the end of the school year. This is an exciting unit to end with in third grade!