

February 2010 Newsletter

Mrs. Grill and Mr. Noble



Language Arts

We are in the process of finishing our science fiction unit. Groups that have finished their books are now working on independent projects. These projects begin with students doing research on a planet from within our solar system. They will culminate with a piece of science fiction writing and artwork which describe a life form that could potentially exist on the planet that they researched. Since the length of the class books varied, some of the groups are still reading together. The independent project is optional for them. The life forms will be shared during the week of February 22nd.

All of the students have selected a new free reading book which should be read daily for 20-30 minutes. The book should be completed by February 26th. Details about the project this time will be forthcoming after vacation.

Weekly reading journals spelling quizzes continue.

Math

We have been working on a variety of mini-units: order-of-operations, divisibility rules, prime and composite numbers, and most recently greatest common factor and least common multiple. We are now moving into our fractions unit (naming, converting between decimals and percents, comparing and ordering, adding and subtracting, simplifying and renaming). Next, we will be learning about algebra and geometry. Students who still don't know their multiplication tables are experiencing a great deal of frustration as we

move further and further into the curriculum. Many students are still relying on multiplication charts as they complete daily class work, homework. These charts will not be available to them during any tests, most importantly the State Assessment in May. Therefore, it really is important that time be set aside at home to finally master the multiplication tables.

Science

We are continuing our unit on astronomy. We have discussed the Earth (rotation, revolution, seasons) and the moon (phases, tides, eclipses, and exploration). We will be continuing the astronomy unit for the next several weeks learning about the sun, planets, and stars.

The science fair is a great opportunity and I'm excited that so many of the children are participating in the science fair. Many of the ideas should have great results and I look forward to the finished product. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Social Studies

This week we finished our exploration unit. We will begin our 5th grade projects: Countries of Latin America on February 8th. The projects will be presented as part of What's Happening at CMS on March 17th. We will be researching and displaying facts about the countries of Latin America, writing short essays, making maps, and constructing models to highlight this exciting part of the world. An informational packet went home today with the students; it should be in their homework folders for a parent signature.

Please check with your children to make sure they have enough pencils and paper.

Please make sure that your Nature's Classroom payments are up to date.