



Dear Parents,

I want to thank everyone who was able to attend our final open house of the school year, last Thursday. I enjoyed being able to see all of you. It is amazing that this school year is almost over. In just a few short weeks your student will be a fifth grader! I cannot stress enough just how important it is for students to continue to read grade level books and frequently review basic math facts (multiplication, division, addition, and subtraction) over the summer vacation. (SLE 2b). It has been a wonderful school year and I can not thank each of you enough for helping to make it so.

Sincerely,

Ms. Kim Murray

Religion

This month we have been focusing our attention on honoring Our Mother Mary. As always, we continue with our monthly prayer of the Rosary, and have been discussing Mary's important role in our lives as Catholics. (SLE 1a) In addition to discussing the Blessed Virgin we have also wrapped up our unit on the Ten Commandments. The students did a wonderful job with understanding all commandments and their relevance in a child's life. For this month our Life Perspectives unit will be a review of past lessons. The web site, www.webelieveweb.com, has more information for you to explore with your child.

Language Arts

For the remainder of this month and heading into June we will be reading our final selections out of our textbook, Imagine It! The stories we will be reading include, "The Great Gasping Garbage," "The Golden Spike" and "John Henry Races the Steam Drill." In addition, for these final weeks, the students will be reading the story, Esperanza Rising. As students read this story, they will be working on and discussing the various story elements with each other. These discussions will occur in a "book club" format. This will give the students many opportunities to explore various story elements with their peers and provide ample opportunity for the students to become effective communicators who are able to express thoughts and ideas clearly and confidently, while also developing the skills to respect varying view points and perspectives (SLEs 5a/5d). Supporting these stories, as always, is our Workshop Way phonics lessons. In these closing weeks we will be focusing on prepositions, idioms, and simple and complete predicates and subjects.

Mathematics

We have started Chapter 8 of our textbook, Progress in Mathematics, which focuses on fractions. In class we are working with the basic understanding that a fraction is part of a whole. As always, any and all real world examples will help your student further internalize this knowledge and foster a lifelong enthusiasm for learning (*SLE 3b*). Pointing out daily use of fractions (e.g., buying a ½ lb. of cheese from the deli and what that means in regards to the price per pound), or discussing quarters, dimes, and nickels as fractions of a dollar are ideal ways to make fractions meaningful. These real world examples will further assist the students in converting these “everyday fractions” into commonly used percentages (25%, 50%, 75%, etc.).

As we wrap up the school year, we will be working with geometric shapes and terminology. The students will explore angles, line segments, tessellations, and much more. With learning these various aspects of math, it is important that students not forget the “basics.” I cannot stress enough just how important it is for students to *continually* review their basic addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division facts. Visit www.multiplication.com for additional resources in math.

Science

With the recent seismologic activity surrounding San Diego in recent months, our science unit has been rather relevant as well as engaging (*SLE 3d*). As we finish up the school year we will be talking about various aspects of plate tectonics and how it affects us. We will pay extra attention to the San Andreas Fault and where it is in relation to us. Further, we will be discussing how to prepare for an earthquake and what actions to take after an earthquake.

Social Studies

This has been such an engaging subject this last quarter of school (*SLE 3b*). We have spent the last month focusing on the Gold Rush and how it led to California becoming the 31st state of the union. As we wrap up this year, we will focus on the expansion of California throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. We will be discussing the rapid development of California during this time, with a special focus on the start of cinema and the development of Hollywood.

Suggested Reading:

Hatchet by Gary Paulsen (Simon & Schuster, 2007)

Bread and Roses, Too by Katherine Paterson (Houghton Mifflin, 2006)

Number the Stars by Lois Lowry (Houghton Mifflin Children's Books, 1989)

A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L'Engle (Yearling, 1973)