

November 29, 2011

Dear Parents,

I hope that everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving! I enjoyed meeting with you at conferences last week to discuss your child's progress this year.

This week in our class we have begun unit 5 in Everyday Math. The focus of this unit is fractions. I will send home the unit, "Letter Home," this week.

In Social Studies the students are finishing up their research and writing on a particular Native American tribe. I am hopeful that they can present their codex that they have created to the other students in a jigsaw group by Friday of this week. We will then move on to the study of early explorers. I have assigned each student a project to complete about one explorer. I gave the students a handout on the explorer as a starting point. I also handed out a research note organizer which lists the required information about their explorer. The students may choose how they wish to present their information: power point, web page they created, a poster, brochure, or they can dress up as the explorer and describe their life. The choices are endless. The final project is due on class for presentation on December 13.

In Reader's Workshop we are reading about folktales that teach a moral or a lesson. We are also focusing on the theme or author's purpose in writing the story. In Writer's Workshop, we have just begun writing down ideas for a memoir. The goal is to finish this personal narrative by our winter break.

In Science we have reviewed the water cycle and will create a small replica of an aquifer this week as we discuss water resources here in New Mexico.

It is difficult to believe, but we only have a few short weeks until winter break. If you are interested in planning our winter class party, please contact me. It would be the week of December 12th.

Also if you are open to the possibility of cutting out pieces and baking gingerbread for houses, please let me know. We made the real gingerbread last year, but it was quite a project. If I don't have volunteers to help, we will use graham crackers, which work fine. I will ask the students to bring in candy, by December 8th to help decorate the houses: ribbon candy, peppermint sticks (small), chocolate non-pareils, Necco wafers, licorice, pretzel rods, sugar ice cream cones, gumdrops, Hershey kisses, Dots, pretzel sticks, sugar wafer cookies, frosted mini-wheats (make a great roof), mini vanilla wafers—just to name a few! Any donations would be great—but please don't send until the end of next week. I would also appreciate parents who can come by and help especially with the building portion—we need extra hands. Please let me know if you are interested.

Until next time--

Jalynn