

## February Newsletter

### Mrs. Miller's Class

Wow! We are halfway through our school year. Can you believe it? Our class has learned so much already...is there really more to learn? Let me update you on our fifth grade curriculum.

We have just completed our second geometry unit, perimeter and area. Using a variety of hands on methods, we arrived at formulas that make solving the problems a little easier. Ask your child to demonstrate how to find the area of a triangle, using a rectangle or parallelogram. Fractions will be the next challenge we face. Please ask your child to see his/her math notebook throughout the unit so that you will be able to answer any questions that may arise during homework.

Guided reading final projects are complete! Our class was split into four groups, and each group read a different book. We all finished around the same time and worked on a variety of final projects. Discuss your child's final project with him/her. We have just begun a grade five core literature book, The Sign of the Beaver by Elizabeth George Speare. The students were placed in groups, with different students and teachers from their last groups. Depending on the skill or strategy we are working on each day, your child may work independently, in a small group or in a large group.

Poetry is our new area of study in writing. I feel it is important for the students to read poetry, in order to be successful writing it, so you will see that reading homework for the next several weeks will include a poetry piece. We have been learning about figurative language and how to use it in our poetry writing. Your child should be able to identify several forms of figurative language, including similes, metaphors and personification.

Chemistry has begun in science. Goo Yuck is a fifth grade favorite! I'm sure you heard all about it. Ask your child to tell you the safety rules while working on an experiment. There will be many more to come.

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One topic in social studies this month was *Slavery in the American Colonies*, from the perspective of enslaved Africans. Have a discussion with your child about the Middle Passage, which is the 5-12 week trip across the Atlantic taken by West African slaves. Your child will be able to tell you why slaves were needed in the colonies, what the conditions were like on the ship, and how the slaves reacted to the conditions.

Now that we are halfway through the year, it is time for the students to check their school supplies, both in the classroom and at home. Please be sure your child has two pencils, two red pens, a highlighter and a glue stick in his/her desk at school. At home he/she should have access to a ruler (inches and centimeters), a dictionary, and a highlighter.

We have had an unbelievable amount of student dismissals this month! Please keep in mind that your child is in an academic subject until 3:20 each day. It is very difficult for Mrs. Abdal-Khabir and I to play "catch up" with each student who is dismissed. I completely understand the difficulty of getting to the doctor. However, as you schedule appointments, maybe you could check to see if an early release Wednesday would work for you.

As always, thank you for all you do to support your child's education!

Mrs. Deana Miller