

December 1, 2010

Dear Parents,

We are having fun, while working hard in fifth grade! The students are being introduced to many new concepts and ideas at school.

In Math, we are completing a chapter about division. Our next unit will be an "investigation" called "Data: Kids, Cats, and Ads". We will learn about numbers, data collection, statistics, and graphing through hands-on experiences. Soon, we will be working with fractions. Please continue to review multiplication and division facts at home. Students who quickly recall their facts will be able to complete their assignments in class and have less homework. By fifth grade, the students should be comfortable with all of their math facts and be able to recall them immediately upon sight. We also use the Accelerated Math program to review and reinforce the concepts we learned earlier in the year.

We are currently involved in a science hands-on unit about "Variables". The students are discovering relationships through controlled experiments. One of the experiments we conducted is called "Swingers". The students made pendulums from strings and used pennies for weights. They experimented with variables by changing the lengths of the pendulums and discovered the effects that changing one variable can have on an experiment. They are looking forward to conducting more experiments called "Lifeboats," "Flippers," and "Plane Sense".

In Social Studies, we are collecting information a brief research project about the First Americans. Students collected information they acquired from non-fiction reading, and then presented their findings by creating a poster. Next, we will learn about the early American settlers. We continue to study current events by reading and discussing articles in *SCHOLASTIC NEWS*.

Our current Reading unit is called "Imagine That". The students are learning that the ways we express our thoughts and feelings can take different forms, including reading, speaking, writing, acting, or through expression in art.

I would also like to remind you that our class will have a small gift exchange. Any student wishing to participate may spend up to \$5 on a gift. A girl should buy a gift appropriate for another girl, and a boy should buy a gift appropriate for another boy. Our party will begin between 2:15-2:30 on Wednesday, December 22.

With winter upon us, we realize there may be late starts and early releases. School cancellations and late starts will be announced on the news and radio stations. Please review your plan for early release with your child, to help avoid unnecessary concerns and calls from school. It might be helpful for you to write what you want your child to do in the event of an early dismissal, in the front of your child's assignment notebook. Also, please include a daytime phone number for them to call in case of an emergency or early dismissal. (Many of the students do not know what daytime phone number to call.)

Thank you for all of your continued support and the interest you take in your child's education!

Respectfully,

Pam Ziegenhorn