



Dear Parents,

This year has flown by, but we are ending the school year with continuous, meaningful work. I am proud to see the growth in your children, especially in terms of responsibility and initiative, two important skills that they will need in seventh grade. I have truly enjoyed watching them grow into such capable and accomplished individuals. Each one of them has made our classroom a more intellectually engaging, socially dynamic, and thoroughly charming environment. I know I have enjoyed teaching this particularly bright and enterprising class, and it will be a privilege to continue teaching them language arts again next year.

I would like to give a special "Thank You" to all the parents who volunteered to drive and help chaperone field trips this year. Learning outside of the classroom is such an important aspect of a student's holistic growth, and I am very grateful for your participation and contribution towards these experiences. Also, a monumental thank you to Nikki Paredes and Ellen Stanley for being such invaluable room parents this year. I simply could not have done it without their unwavering support and graciousness.

In closing, let's pray that God will continue to bless our families during the wonderful months of summer. May we make the season a time of joy, discovery, and much deserved relaxation.

I wish you all a blessed, peaceful summer!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Mosel



Curriculum . . .

Social Studies (Mr. Mains): The students have been learning about the Ancient Civilization of Greece. We focused on the events of the Peloponnesian War, the Persian Wars, Trojan War, the Myceneans, Minoans, the exploits of Alexander the Great, Greek mythology and the difference between the city-states. The students completed a project where they were to describe and display a Greek deity, monster or hero of their choice using a poster board. I was very impressed with the quality of these projects. I think it is just a testament to their level of interest regarding this civilization.

Our final unit of the school year will be on Ancient Rome. We will be discussing the development of the Republic of Rome, the Roman Empire, influential Roman emperors and the advancements that helped shape Rome into a powerful culture. Lastly, it has been an honor teaching your child this school year. I hope that they finish sixth grade with a deeper appreciation for history in general. I hope you enjoy your summer. *SLE: 2b, c*
Useful websites: • www.mrdonn.org • www.wingedsandals.com • www.greekmythology.com

Math (Mr. Woltz): The last few weeks of Math will be spent working on geometry. The class will be working on measuring area and perimeter of regular polygons. We will also study circles, triangles, and irregular shapes.

Math (continued):

There are many activities that will help the students maintain their skills from this school year and discover new ones. Playing board games and card games with siblings and friends is a great way to use higher level thinking and problem solving. The rewards of baking are two-fold: 1) the obvious results in the joy of eating what you created, and 2) using the skills of measuring, estimating, and creating. When students work on puzzles, there are physical, emotional, and cognitive skills involved. They are using hand-eye coordination and fine-motor skills to fit pieces together, learning the rewards of patience, and solving the problem the puzzles places before them. I highly encourage jigsaw as well as crossword and math puzzles during their down time. Visiting museums and summer camps are also excellent ways to keep learning and interacting with academic subjects.

English/Language Arts: In preparation for their last essay assignment of the year, the students have been analyzing different persuasive essays, identifying the various techniques that make for the most effective type of argumentative writing such as providing compelling factual evidence, acknowledging and providing counter arguments, and appealing to the reader's emotions. Each student has also chosen their own compelling topic for their persuasive essay, which has made their writing process that much more inspired and effectual.

In their literature books, the students have been studying various works of drama. In their quest to answer the presiding unit question of, "How do we decide who we are?", they have read and performed a dramatization of the Abenaki folktale "Gluskabe and Old Man Winter", as well as read and analyzed an adaptation of Norton Juster's beloved and fantastical novel *The Phantom Tollbooth* by Susan Nanus. These are wonderfully rich and textured selections and reading them within the analysis of specific dramatic elements such as dialogue, stage direction, and narration, has really helped imbue them with an appreciation for the magic of drama.

The students will be finishing the last unit of their Vocabulary Workshop books and demonstrating their vocabulary proficiency with a cumulative mastery test. For their last vocabulary project of the year, they will be creating and presenting a Prezi on their assigned word. Vocabulary acquisition is fundamental to developing fluent and meaningful reading comprehension, concise writing skills, and effective communication, so I encourage you to ask them to continue to use the many wonderful words they have learned this year on a daily basis.

SLE: 2a, 2c, 2f, 3a, 3c, 5a

Religion: The students continue to reflect on their religious growth through learning various religious vocabulary and reading biblical passages embedded in their religion workshop. Their Nicene Creed crosses came out beautifully, and they will finish the religious curriculum aligned within their *We Believe* religion textbooks by the end of the year. The students have also been focused on demonstrating their Catholic faith and identity through their conduct towards each other and others in and outside of the classroom. In order to help celebrate and honor the academic and religious accomplishments of the eighth graders as they prepare for graduation, they have conducted interviews with them and are creating a fun gift to present to them during their commencement celebration.

Science (Mr. Mains): The students have been learning about the intricate animal world and how they exist amongst the various ecosystems of the world. In addition, they will be able to show how the use of water, nitrogen and carbon are important to the world. The students have explored the differences between a predator and prey. They will also understand the balance between the decomposer, scavenger, predator, prey and parasite. Before the remainder of the year we will be examining how this intricate balance can fluctuate due to invading species, lack of resources and the changing of the ecosystem. This can also lead to endangered species and possible extinction. I hope you enjoy your summer. *SLE: 2d, 3a*

Useful websites: • <http://www.ecology.com/> • <http://nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/ecology/>

Reminders ~

- It is very easy for students to forget many of the facts they learned over the long summer. Please continue to challenge them intellectually so they are ready for the school year at the end of August.
- Water bottles are needed more than ever in the next week.