

April 1, 2017

Hello Families,

This week brought the end of our state testing (whew!) and a return to normal curriculum and routine. I have noticed that the disruption of regular routine caused by snow days, Maine Birthday celebrations and testing have taken a toll on kids' behavior. We have spent some time this week reviewing our classroom rules and expectations. Please take some time to discuss this at home with your child. Thank you!

Here's a short update of what we're working on in class...

In reading, we continue to work in our character studies unit. Kids have been learning how to build ideas about their characters' traits, citing evidence from the text to support their ideas. We have also been learning a lot about story structure, learning to identify the character's main struggles and the point at which the character faces these struggles head on (or climax of the story). This week we discussed identifying a story's theme by thinking about lessons that characters have learned. We will continue our character work through next week. Book clubs are going strong and kids seem to be enjoying the opportunity to read and discuss their books with their clubs.

In writing, we are continuing our work with persuasive writing. Kids are in the planning and organizing stages of writing a persuasive speech on a topic about which they feel passionate. Ask your child what his/her persuasive speech is going to be about. We plan to film ourselves giving our speeches!

In math, we are finishing up our 6th unit which has focused on multiplication strategies and number stories, including the use of parentheses and the order of operations to help kids solve two step problems.

We finished up our Maine studies this week by learning a bit about how our state government is organized. Kids wrote and filmed commercials about Maine this week. We hope to have them ready for your viewing by the concert night. :)

Reminder: Our 3rd Grade concert is Thursday, April 6. All students are expected to attend! Students need to be at school by 5:15 for the 5:30 show. CRES singers will also stay for the second performance. I have the kids' CRES t-shirts and will have them change into these here at school.

We had an awesome lesson with Mrs. Roberts again this week (Thomas' mom) on DNA. The kids worked carefully to extract DNA from a strawberry! I will post some pictures of this on our website. Mrs. Roberts informed the kids that National DNA day is coming up. Here is a link to see more about this! <https://www.genome.gov/10506367/national-dna-day/> You can find a link under activities to try the strawberry experiment at home if you wish. Also attached is a flyer about the Brain Fair at UNE. This is geared toward children and will include some interesting hands-on activities as well as helmet fittings and giveaways.

Thanks for reading this very long email! Enjoy the snowy weekend!

Hannah