

February Newsletter 5th Grade

Language Arts:

We are finishing *Touching Spirit Bear* by next week. As an end-of-the-book activity, we will have a meal together. In the novel, the main character, Cole, learns several important lessons. He learns that we have choices. We can always choose to focus on the positive side of things or we can choose to focus on the negative. He also learns that life is what you make of it. You can perform simple tasks, like preparing a meal, but if you do it with love and patience, it will be a satisfying meal. This is used as a metaphor to life. If we do our chores with love, our lives will become more meaningful. Because of this, I would like us, as a class, to prepare a meal together and share it, in a loving manner. Your child will be asked to bring an ingredient for this meal, which I will let you know what it is closer to the date of our activity.

In writing, we have been focusing on writing stories this trimester. It has been challenging for them to write about topics close to their own experiences. They tend to write fantastic, unrealistic tales, but Steve Peha, our mentor on this activity, asks the students to write about something meaningful, something they have experienced, since most authors use their own life experiences to write stories. The more you know about a topic, the more descriptive you can be, and the more knowledge you have about it.

We have also published our first writing project. A very special thanks to Raquel Garrido, Maria Leonor's mom, for designing the layout and printing them out. The cost per student will be of RD\$ 100. Each student will need to pay for their own copy of their writing project. I am sure you will find it worth your money. They are really beautiful! They will be handed to the parents at our Native American presentation explained below.

Mathematics:

We started Unit 7, which explores exponential notation, scientific notation, positive and negative numbers, and some rules for solving number sentences, such as the order of operations and the use of parentheses. It will be a break from fractions, although we will go back to them in Unit 8.

Theme:

We are finishing up Native Americans. As a class, we studied six tribes together. As a way for them to write and talk about the information they have learned in a fun and meaningful way, we will be making miniature models of each of the tribes' homes. Your child will be assigned a tribe. In class, he and his group or she and her group, will use different materials to make a model of the house of the tribe assigned to him or her. They will be writing the information and pasting their report around the model. At the end, you will be invited to come and listen to their oral reports and see their miniature models. More specific information on this will be sent soon.

Thanks,
Norma Oliveira

Febrero 2010

En **Lectura** continuamos leyendo el libro “**La canción de Amina**”, en el que discutimos elementos de la trama, descripciones de los personajes y escenarios. A través de la lectura de este libro, hemos estado analizando diferentes puntos de vista y comprendiendo mejor las nociones del género de ficción histórica. Los chico/as están muy entusiasmados con los capítulos leídos hasta el momento y suelen hacer predicciones sobre los sucesos a seguir, por lo que las discusiones del aula son bastante animadas.

En **Escritura** seguimos recopilando los datos de las entrevistas a nuestros familiares. Los estudiantes han trabajado muy concentradamente para escribir los primeros párrafos de sus memorias familiares. Estamos enfocándonos en la estructura de los párrafos, el orden secuencial y coherente de las ideas. Por último, reforzaremos el uso del vocabulario para mejorar la expresión de las ideas. Esperamos poder publicar los trabajos individuales para mediados de marzo. Les enviaremos dos copias, una para el estudiante y otra para el entrevistado.

En **Sociales** estamos muy activos con los preparativos del acto del 26 de febrero. Seguimos estudiando el tema de las exploraciones portuguesas y África, temas que serán representados en el acto. Estamos analizando nociones sencillas de geografía africana, los antiguos imperios de Malí, Benín y Tombuctú. Por otra parte estamos estudiando la trata negrera, hemos podido concluir con distintos enfoques que enriquecieron las clases de Sociales.

¡Les esperamos el viernes 26 de Febrero!

Geraldine