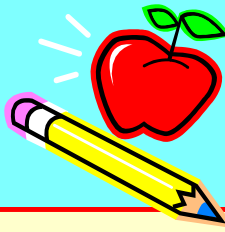


FIFTH GRADE



P.S 117

Briarwood, New York

Fifth Grade Curriculum
October 2010

Fifth Grade Curriculum Newsletter

Math

This October, the fifth grade will be working on our decimals unit in math. We will explore how decimals are part of a whole and work to connect this concept to our previous unit on whole numbers. We will be exploring place value, estimations, and operations with decimals. Students will add, subtract, multiply, and divide decimals. A big part of understanding decimals is the ability to visualize the image in your mind. Please encourage your children to illustrate the problems to gain a better understanding of the concepts. This can often be a challenging and overwhelming unit but we will be sure to use manipulatives and many hands-on activities to enhance the student's understanding of the concepts

Social Studies

Load those wagons.....kiss the kin goodbye.....get ready for adventure, drama, comedy, tragedy, and fantastic learning as we head west! For our first social studies unit, the students will be learning about Westward Expansion in America. We will begin our unit by discussing famous trailblazers and explorers such as Daniel Boone, Meriwether Lewis, and William Clark. Then, we will go back in time with the pioneers and load our wagons to make our journey west through the Oregon Trail. Finally, we will end our unit in California with The Gold Rush of 1849. The students will analyze maps from early America, write fictional stories through the eyes of pioneers/explorers, and take a field trip to watch a performance on Westward Expansion. Ultimately, the goal of this unit is for the students to obtain a deeper understanding of pioneers and early America. Westward Ho!

Science

In science we will begin the first FOSS unit of study on Variables. Some of the most important scientific concepts students learn are the result of their ability to see relationships between objects and events. Relationships always involve interactions, dependencies, and cause and effect. The Variables Module has four investigations that help students discover relationships through controlled experimentation. Students will fling, float, fly, and flip objects as they discover relationships in each investigation. The first investigation tests the idea of pendulums using swingers that we will make out of pennies and string. Our second will explore lifeboats and capacity. In the next experiment, students will construct rubber band airplanes and investigate the distance their planes fly. Finally, students will manipulate small catapults called flippers to discover what variables result in the highest and longest flips. They will use two-coordinate graphs to display all of the data they collect. It is the ultimate goal of this unit to enhance the student's awareness of the affects of variables in scientific experiments.



Reader and Writer's Workshop

For literacy, we have spent a great deal of time establishing our reader's workshop and all of the students are reading books on their independent levels. We have been learning new reading strategies that help us focus while reading. We have learned to "stop and jot" while reading and think about important topics such as main characters, predictions, and setting. This month, we are excited to begin our next unit on Characters and we will be reading with partners. Please keep in mind, your children should be bringing their book baggies as well as their reading log home each night to be signed.

Writer's workshop is a lot of fun! We have been generating entries on a daily basis, and have been working hard on our seed ideas for our personal narratives. The students have been using writing strategies such as creating sketches and timelines to develop their stories. We will even get to celebrate our published piece on a special field trip to Barnes and Nobles this month!