



WOODSTOCK NEWSLETTER

Date: January 25, 2008

WOODSTOCK SCHOOL OFFICE

Dear Woodstock Families,

The hustle and bustle at Woodstock School continues! We have basketball, Rug Rat skiing, and X-Country Skiing all going strong. The students are certainly very busy with those special activities. Check out the calendar for dates.

The WPTA will be planning the **Valentine Family Dance** for February 15th. The next **PTA meeting is February 7th**. We hope to have a lot of folks there to help with those plans and to look toward spring activities.

BASKET BINGO is this Sunday, January 27th at the Locke Mills Legion Hall. This is the big fundraiser for our fifth graders to go to Boston for their two day trip. Please come join us if you can. You might win a basket, but even if you don't, the company and food are awesome.

As a reminder, students should not be dropped off at school until **7:45 AM**. If you need to drop them off earlier, please make arrangements ahead of time with the MKA program. Teachers work hours officially begin at 7:45, so that is when they are expected to be responsible for monitoring children. If they arrive before that, they prepare for the day. School is dismissed at **2:40** each day. Please try not to pick your child up early as it is very disruptive to the class if someone is getting ready while teachers are closing their educational activities with students. We understand emergencies, but would ask your help with limiting these early dismissals. Don't forget to check out our **school's website** and calendar. You can go to www.sad44.org ; then click on schools. You'll see Woodstock School or Woodstock Calendar. Click on either one to check it out. Staff e-mails are there as well.

We are beginning to collect names for our **2008-09 Kindergarten class**. If you have a child or know of a child who will be turning 5 years old by October 15, 2008, please give school a call or drop us a note. It is important for us to get the students names as soon as possible so we can plan for preschool screening.

Keep warm. I hope to see you at Basket Bingo!

Sincerely,

Jolene M. Littlehale

Teaching Principal

KINDERGARTEN - Miss Wilkey

Hello everyone! January is nearly over already. We have missed quite a few days. Our Friday Meeting performance was snowed out, so we combined with the 5th graders to present today. We adapted Jan Brett's story, *The Mitten*, into a play. Jan Brett is our Author of the Month.

Next, we will focus on fairy tales. We will re-tell fairy tales, read traditional fairy tales, write our own, and compare tales we know with versions from other cultures.

We are finishing a unit on animals in winter. The kindergarteners have learned about migration, hibernation, deep sleeping, and the adaptations of those that remain active. They have also written and drawn in nature journals. Many students observed their backyards over the long weekend and wrote of the animals they saw there. We are also going to experiment with how animal fur keeps animals warm and dry.

Our next theme will be Maps. We will learn about reading and making maps. The students will learn about continents and countries. A large part of the unit will focus on the idea of being in more than one place at a time. They will know that they live in Maine, in the United States, on North America, on Earth. Later, we will spend time comparing the United States with another country.

In Math, we are finishing a unit on the numbers 1-12. The students have been counting, learning to recognize numbers in sets, and exploring place value. They have become excellent at a game called "Ten Frame Flash" where they call out the number of dots on a ten frame. They only get a quick flash of the card before calling out the number. Next, we will begin to learn about measurement. We will start by measuring with non-standard units, such as paper clips and blocks. We will also compare measurements. We will use measurement to compare animal sizes as well. Later, we will learn to use rulers and scales.

In Literacy, we are learning about the letter 'M'. It is our new 'Letter of the Week'. We remember the sound of 'm' by rubbing our bellies and saying 'mmmm', like we do when something is yummy. Another literacy focus has been on diagraphs. We have practiced identifying 'sh', 'ch', 'th', and 'wh' in words. We are also going to begin to learn about blends. Blends are sounds made when 2 or 3 letters blend together, like 'tr' or 'gl'. These sounds appear in our books and in our writing frequently. Everyone is making a lot of progress in reading and writing. We look forward to Share Circle next week. Have a great month and enjoy all of the snow!

GRADE ONE - Mrs. Wentworth

First graders came back from the holidays with a positive attitude and lots of enthusiasm. We started the new year off with discussing New Year's resolutions. We decided to choose individual, weekly goals that were school related and work on these for the month of January. Everyone is doing a great job so far and I love seeing some of the positive changes.

Keep up the good work boys and girls.

The children had a great time presenting their goals, poems, and songs at their second Friday meeting of the year. Practicing for the presentations is always a little nerve-wracking, but they always amaze me with how well they end up doing. Thanks again to parents, grandparents, and friends for coming to see us.

In math, we have completed our unit on addition and are now working on subtraction. Everyone has already passed the timed addition test and is doing very well with the subtraction facts. Our next unit will be on place value which will tie in very well with our 100th Day celebration. If Mother Nature cooperates, that should be around the 13th of February. As part of the celebration, I always ask the children to either wear or bring in a collection (small items) of 100 things. So you might want to be thinking about that. A number of additional fun activities are being planned for that day.

With the holidays and weather interruptions, we haven't had as much time for Writing Workshop as I would like. However, the children did complete their first official writing prompt and most of them did an excellent job. Since then, we have been learning how to organize and plan a story before actually writing it with the help of some graphic organizers. Hopefully, you will get a chance to hear some of the results at Share Circle next Thursday. In the coming weeks, your children will be learning how to do some different kinds of writing, such as "How to Make or Do" something.

In reading, we have been focusing on fluency and comprehension techniques. The children are learning how to use *story ladders*, *maps*, *pyramids*, and *book tents*, to help them remember and understand what they are reading. As the quarter comes to a close, I have been administering the DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment) and everyone is doing very well. We have some great readers in this room. I am very pleased with their progress.

In Social Studies, we have been reading and learning about Martin Luther King and all the wonderful things he did. We have also been working on mapping skills by identifying all the different names for where we live. The children are currently working on a project that will help them visualize this concept better. They are learning about the many purposes and features of maps, directionality terms, and map symbols. Future lessons include learning how to read a compass rose, distinguishing the difference between physical and natural characteristics, reading and designing a map key, and drawing a map with written directions on how to locate something. The students have been having a lot of fun with this so far.

That just about wraps it up for January. Although February is a short month, it tends to be a busy one also. We are looking forward to a field trip to Dr. Mason's office on February 11th as part of our focus on dental health. Additional Science topics will include light, shadows, and two life cycles: day and night and the seasons. Then of course it is the end of second quarter, so be on the lookout for report cards. Finally, February is also a party month with the celebration of the 100th Day of School and Valentine's Day. Stay warm and have a good weekend.

GRADE TWO - Mrs. Meisner

Second Grade has actually been able to accomplish something in between storm days and holidays surprisingly enough! We have been studying about Martin Luther King, Jr. and discussing all the things that made him such an important person. We decided you had to be very special to have a holiday in your name!

We are working on "Money" in Math right now. Please work on this at home. Some students are still learning to recognize all the coins and some are making change so there is a big difference in skills! We will be working on "Graphing" as well. This is usually easy for them and they enjoy it!

We have just finished our second writing prompt, "An Adventure Story" and everyone did very well! I have some great writers in here! I love it! Our next "Share Circle" is on the 31st. Come join us if you can! You will be amazed at how well the kids write!

We are doing our DRA reading assessments right now for a mid-year score. They seem to be going well and I'll let you know about them on the Report Cards!

We are working on "Map Skills" in Social Studies right now and soon we will be working on "Solids and Liquids" in Science.

Continue to encourage your child to read every night and if they are reading on their own, make sure to check in with them and ask questions!

Report Cards will be coming home soon!

GRADE THREE - Mrs. Burke

Wow! This has been quite a chopped up month. Between snow days, holidays, ski days, and days that I needed to be out for medical reasons, it has been difficult to stay focused. Actually, I think the kids have done pretty well, but I am hoping that we don't have too many more unexpected days off. If there are any more projected snow days, I am thinking about sending work home that could be done during that day so that we don't get too far behind, and so that the students' minds keep thinking instead of just dozing.

As far as the Rug Rats ski program goes, it may not be "academic", but it is a fantastic learning experience. I am very proud of the way our Woodstock kids are behaving at the mountain. We have received so many compliments from the coaches about "how good these kids are." Even those kids who are finding this new skill a bit challenging to learn are certainly hanging in there and giving it their best effort.

Our "chocolate" reading groups are finishing up with the reading and their responses to it. We should be ready for our "chocolate celebration" some time next week. This will include following recipes to make a chocolate delight, and conducting an experiment about why chocolate melts. All groups have worked very hard to write in depth responses to what they

have read, so all students should finish up by having a good idea of just how a quality response should be written.

We have done a lot of problem solving over the last couple of weeks, especially using the *Guess and Check* strategy. Many students still are NOT showing their work on their assignments. I am encouraging them to even write down and leave their mistakes. Cross them off to show that they are incorrect, but do not erase. It helps me understand their thinking, especially when the answers are wrong. Then we can go back and see how to fix them.

Our science and social studies unit on inventions is just getting started, with our focus right now on the inventions that were necessary to happen before skyscrapers could be built. Next we will be reading in our *Communities* texts about the invention, or discovery really, of certain medical vaccines that help to keep our communities safer. I will be sending the *Weekly Readers* home to do as homework, so that we don't get behind while working on this unit.

Enjoy the snow, and try to keep warm.

GRADE FOUR - Mrs. Ferland

Now with the holidays over, we should be getting back to business as usual. Mother Nature has other plans for us. Progress has been slow in fourth grade due to storm days and skiing. Everyone is still working hard when we are in class and we are starting to get back into the swing of things.

To go with our unit on the Southeast region, we have been reading about civil rights and slavery that mostly took place in this region. Our books include *Souther, Freedom Train, I Have a Dream, Mississippi Bridge and Bud, not Buddy*. In each reading group, we are analyzing the characters and how they are treated. We are writing summaries, writing our own questions to ask the group, and looking for details to use in our answers. At the end of the books, we will compare and contrast the characters of each book.

In writing, we are finishing letters to soldiers. This has been a great way to practice writing letters and support the people who are protecting our country. We hope to mail them this week and then we will wait for a reply.

In math, everyone has been working on geometry. Our first chapter is on lines, line segments, angles, quadrilaterals, and triangles. We are able to use our bodies to make acute, right, and obtuse angles as well as the degrees of a circle. There are a lot of vocabulary words in this chapter so we have been using them a lot so that we become familiar with them.

We have finished our unit on the Southeast region and are ready to move onto the Southwest region. We made foldables that highlighted the important parts of the Southeast. We also had our test on the states, capitals, and landforms.

Our human bodies are looking good. We finally are getting a lot of organs on them. We had our big test on the first three systems. We are starting on the nervous, respiratory, and digestive system next.

Congratulations to all the third, fourth, and fifth graders for doing a great job skiing at Sunday River. It is so impressive to see everyone take a challenge and excel at it.

Get out and enjoy the snow! Have a great weekend!

GRADE FIVE - Ms. Wilson

This month the fifth grade really worked on looking at numbers between numbers. A huge part of our quarter has focused on fractions and percents, and how those two ideas are related. We investigated money and time in relationship to this topic. Students are now able to convert fractions to percents with relative ease, compare fractional amounts, add fractions, and solve real life problems where fractions are involved.

Our science studies focused on space, and we used our knowledge of fractions when talking about the sizes of planets compared to one another. Since we had been studying fractions, the kids could understand that the moon was $\frac{1}{4}$ the size of Earth, and the moon's gravity is $\frac{1}{6}$ that of Earth. Students also learned about how celestial bodies move in the solar system, and how that affects us on Earth. We studied the movement of the moon, the phases of the moon, which we connected to fractions, and how the moon affects the Earth by its gravitational pull. Students learned about how the motion of Earth causes changes on the planet, such as days, years, and seasons. We also compared these changes to other planets in the solar system.

We have also been exploring our planet's history by learning about the Age of European Exploration. Students have evaluated the effects of Marco Polo on the middle ages, and have now ventured into learning about Columbus and the impact his explorations had on the Americas.

Our reading unit looked at the books, Hatchet and Sign of the Beaver. Students were able to participate in discussion groups about the books. We worked on vocabulary building, drawing inferences, making predictions, and challenging each other's ideas about a book. Students were also assessed on their ongoing work with summarizing information, and how well they worked together as a group.

Students worked on more on-demand writing, by completing more writing prompts this month. We continued to score these prompts as a class, so students were able to evaluate their progress, and learn how to improve their pieces. Students also began the prewriting and draft writing phases of a narrative autobiographical piece. The focus of this assignment has been the development of the setting, as well as how to describe characters in subtle ways. Students have also begun to use metaphors and similes regularly in their work this month, as a result of work earlier in the year.

So we are $\frac{1}{2}$, or 50%, or 0.5 of the way through the school year. The fifth graders have impressed me with what they can do, and I am sure they will continue to do so for the second 50% of the year! Thank you to all of you who helped to make our Basket Bingo Fundraiser happen. In the next newsletter I should be able to happily report how much we earned towards our trip to Boston. Before we know it, Boston will be upon us!

RESOURCE ROOM - Mrs. Robinson

This month has certainly flown by. The students who work with me for reading will be finishing up the month by completing DRAs so that we can see how much progress they have made so far this year. The third, fourth, and fifth graders have been busily working on MEA released items to get them ready to work on the MEAs that we have coming up in March. They all seem to be really enjoying the opportunity to go skiing and snowboarding up at Sunday River. I hope that everyone has a healthy and happy February.

TITLE ONE – Mrs. Hartford

Thank you parents, teachers, and friends for helping make Math Night an interactive learning experience for all ages. Your time and effort to play the games and run the stations at the nine learning centers was appreciated.

Cameron R. took the challenge of moving upward at the Attribute Challenge. Nick J. even challenged the adults at the pattern block animal station to make with the least and most pieces for the same animal. Mason was proud to take down his brother at a game of 99. Marcus strategized to try and show mom up at the Guess-timation game. Kevin took great interest in the measurement station; perhaps he'll be a great scientist when he gets older. Tehya caught me off guard with the width of her split, (she borrowed her dad's numbers since he had the daddy long legs). Bobby was very interested to check on the growth of his height and the diameter of his cranium. If his cranium gets any bigger, it will topple off his shoulders. I guess Mrs. Burke will have to be careful not to overfill it with wisdom. Mrs. Meisner's Mancala was a hit among many parents and students alike. Ms. Wilkey's Money Train and Hand in Hand activities had a steady flow of visitors, too.

A special thanks to those who volunteered to man a station. Sorry you didn't get to play at all the stations, but you made a difference where you were Mr. & Mrs. Littlehale, Mr. Hartford, Mrs. Bobbe, Mrs. Howe, Mrs. House, Mrs. Knight (AKA Mrs. Hartford's Mom), Mrs. Clark, Mrs. Meisner, and Ms. Wilkey.

ART - Miss Ingraham

Kindergarten has been looking at the work of Pablo Picasso. Picasso's work inspired us to make our own funny portraits in black crayon. We finished the portraits with watercolor paint.

First grade just finished creating winter landscapes. We looked at a couple of picture books illustrated by Stephen Gammell. Gammell's style of painting is a little messy and very

energetic. We created our own winter scenes with crayons and then painted the pictures in a style similar to Gammell.

Second grade is currently drawing a mask. We looked at various examples of African masks and discussed why masks are used in different parts of Africa. Each student was asked to create a mask that has a special meaning and purpose.

Third grade started a new project with Gustav Klimt as our inspiration. Klimt was part of the Art Nouveau movement. Each Third grader was asked to create a portrait of a sleeping person wrapped in a quilt. The quilt will be filled with various ornamental patterns.

Fourth grade has started a printmaking project using organic lines to create his or her design on styrofoam. We used watercolor to create the prints.

Fifth grade is finishing up the Geometric mobile unit we started several weeks ago. The art room is filled with mobiles hanging from the ceiling. They are fun to look at!

INSTRUMENTS - Ms. DeVore

The fourth grade band has begun to learn their first real band piece, "Fanfare and March." This is challenging for them, because every instrument has a different part. The fifth graders have just about learned Midnight Sky and Midnight Mission, two movements of Brian Balmages "Midnight Suite." You'll be hearing both bands play at the Woodstock concert coming up in March.

January snow days have knocked out some of our rehearsals, and many of our students are not practicing. Our bands are progressing, but not nearly as well as they could. The arrival of the new year is a great time for improving habits. Encourage your child to practice regularly, and to fill out their practice record. Any student who practices 45 minutes or more during the week gets a reward sticker in their book! And please remind your children to bring instruments to school on band day.

MUSIC - Mrs. Stowell

Well, there's not too much to write about, since out of 4 Mondays, I've only been at WES once, due to storms and holidays!

Kindergarteners learned the song "Welcome Back to School," and first graders sang "Wake Me, Shake Me." Second graders listened to two different musical sleigh rides and played some instruments used for special sound effects. Third graders learned a song and played a game to "All Who Born in January." Fourth graders learned "Head and Shoulders" and played a partner game. And, fifth graders studied the percussion family, and learned the difference between the pitched and unpitched instruments.

PHYSICAL ED. - Ms. Russell

Basketball has been the focus in January. Balls of various sizes and textures are used to accommodate the different skill levels. K-1 have begun learning and improving their dribbling skills and will progress individually from standing still to walking and running while dribbling. They have also had a chance to shoot at low baskets. Grades 2-5 have worked on those same skills, along with passing and catching. 4-5 has done some 2 on 2 game play.

Grade 2 students will be assessed on its Physical Education Maine Learning Result during this unit. Grades K-2 also continue to do warm-up activities that involve locomotor skills and spatial awareness, and grades 3-5 continue upper body and abdominal exercises to build muscular endurance and strength. Coming up: JUMP ROPE for HEART activities!