

# Mrs. MacDonald's Week in Review

## Exploring

The Academy  
Minds in Motion

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### Important Dates

- Thursday, October 26th 7:00 Explorer Program
- Friday, October 27th Early Dismissal



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This week we began our unit on explorers. In our investigation of this topic we are learning about timelines, history, map skills, and vocabulary. This unit was introduced with four mystery chests. Students were divided into four random teams and had to go and find one of the four hidden mystery chests. Upon discovery of the chest they had to return to the home base. They had time to think about what might be in the chest and after lunch all students were able to open them and discover the artifacts that were inside. These artifacts were clues to an explorer.

- It was amazing what transpired in the classroom. The groups of three students looked over their artifacts and were using deductive reasoning skills to try and figure out who their explorer may be and what the clues meant. I was very impressed with their reasoning skills. Later in the week we watched a short video that discussed some of the early explorers and used websites to try and figure out more information about each explorer. These investigations led to more discoveries about the artifacts in the chests. On Friday, each group will present who they believe their explorer may be and why these artifacts were inside their chest.
- This was just the introduction to our unit on explorers-it peaked their interest and made them want to learn more.
- We will continue to learn about explorers and will present a program on October 26th in the evening at school. We hope you can attend.



After the teams find the treasure chest, they discuss how the artifacts inside relate to each other and what link they may have to an explorer.



In our upcoming investigations we will learn about ancient civilizations and discuss how we know about these civilizations. We will learn about archeological findings, ancient artifacts including writings, and writings by European conquistadors and missionaries. We will learn about the Mayan, Aztec and Inca n Civilizations. We will learn about Spanish conquerors including Hernan Cortez and Francisco Pizarro, We will be comparing and contrasting these explorers and the Aztec and Incan civilizations. We will learn how disease devastated these native populations. This will lead us to the European exploration, trade and colonization.



## Vocabulary

- conquistador
- monarchy
- colonize
- epidemic
- legend
- Quetzalcoatl
- Atahualpa

- pyramid
- temple
- archipelago
- Slave Coast
- trade route
- Northwest Passage
- spice trade

- Conquer
- Tianos

We will learn the meaning of these words and use them in our study of explorers.

## Language Arts

We have been working on pronouns, possessive nouns, and plural possessive nouns. We have identified how we use these and practiced using the (') with possessive nouns.

- We use pronouns to avoid repeating words.
- Possessive nouns are used to show ownership.
- Plural possessive nouns are used to show ownership by more than one person or thing.

Students will create on Friday a "Possessive Creature" that they will describe using four singular possessives and four plural possessives.

## Congratulations Alyssa

Last week I told you that Alyssa may have some exciting news for us. On Thursday, while we were enjoying the fish at the Aquarium, she was welcoming her new brother Gavin into the world.

Congratulations to Alyssa and her family.



## Reading

This week we are finishing up The Giver by Lois Lowry. We have been discussing what it would be like to live in a world of sameness, void of feelings and emotions. We are discussing how choices make a difference in our lives and how COLOR adds to our lives. This community functions on sameness, routine, structure and order. This has led to a discussion on how differences enhance who we are and what our society is like.

In another reading group we are finishing up Doctor Dolittle. This is a fun story about a doctor that relates to animals better than humans. It is an enjoyable story. We will finish this book this week and begin Fourth Grade Rats next week.

The City of Ember concluded this week. I strongly recommend this book to adults for a fun read. It is very well written and I can loan it to you if you are interested. The students enjoyed this book so much that they stayed in for recess on Thursday to work on a play involving the characters of this book. Our next read aloud will be People of Sparks the sequel of Embers.

# The Academy

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## Math

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- In math groups this week we have been working on a variety of skills. We have worked on a review of fractions, decimals and factors. We reviewed prime and composite numbers. We created decimals from fractions and compared fractions. We worked on problem solving skills.
- Another math group has been working on conversion of units of measure. We worked on inches to feet, feet to yards, cm to m and m to km. After making conversions we have been working on addition and subtraction of these units of measurement. This often required regrouping, but the regrouping was quite different for feet to inches and feet to yards. (You didn't bring 10 over when you borrowed, you would need to bring 12 if it were feet to inches.) It required some real thinking. Everyone did a great job.
- Singapore Math encourages mental math and promotes problem solving. The Singapore Math workbook will be coming home next week. Take this opportunity to look it over and see what type of work your child is doing.

Also, in the folders each week are Math Minutes. These are simple spiral reviews of skills that have been introduced already. These daily reviews help keep these skills fresh and maintain practice on geometry, area, weights and measures, conversions, simple math terms and more.

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A fantastic website was found by Mrs. Bauer, it is

[www.rainforestmaths.com](http://www.rainforestmaths.com)

This website has a variety of math levels and questions it is fantastic. Give it a try.

<http://nlvm.usu.edu/en/nav/vlibrary.html> was sent to me by Mrs. Gray. It is another great math practice site.