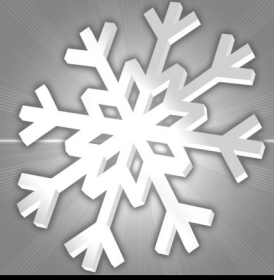


Mrs. MacDonald's Intermediate Classroom



Final Week of 2008

Issue 17
December 14, 2008

This past week went by very quickly as I am sure this week will too.

Monday, Amy Lipinski joined our classroom. She is in school to become a teacher and will be joining us for observations and participation in classroom activities.

Reading : We finished listening to the story Diamond of Darkhold. It is a fantastic book. It is the fourth in the series written by Jeanne DuPrau. Anyone interested in borrowing it is welcome to my copy. We discussed the plot, setting, and incidents of foreshadowing. Students discussed the character traits and made predictions.

Everyone read the story The Whipping Boy and participated in a discussion about the book. Students were asked to retell the story and talk about their favorite parts of the book. When we return from the Holiday Break, students will be reading Hatchet, The Gypsy Game and The Kingdom Keepers.

In Language Arts this week we worked on expository writing. Originally I was going to have this assignment be homework for the week, but I wanted to be sure the writing was completely student driven. The ideas for these "How-to" writings were fantastic, the written work was great and the presentations were fantastic. Many attempted to plink away at the keys to write their essay on the computer. Some were just learning how to use the shift key to make capital letters, and others searched for the apostrophe. Here is a website that offers some practice sites for kid's keyboarding skills.

<http://www.gameaquarium.com/keyboarding3.htm>

This ended up being an unforeseen learning outcome. The learning outcomes I planned for were sequencing writing, making clear, detailed written description of steps in a process, and making a presentation to an audience.

For each presentation, the remainder of the class was given a scoring sheet. Students rated the presenter on the tone of voice, eye contact, method of instructions, and had a chance to write comments and suggestions. Students rating a presentation paid closer attention to the presenter as well as reinforcing what was expected in their presentation. The presentations were fantastic. I wish everyone would have had the chance to see them.

This writing assignment combined other skills we have been working on in class. Students had to edit their own work and help another student edit their work. This coordinated nicely with the DAILY EDITS we have been working on in class. DAILY EDITS are simple practices to find spelling errors, grammar errors and punctuation errors. Hopefully, through this editing process, students will be able to identify and make corrections in their own work.

Thursday, students were given a spelling PRETEST. We worked with the -ed and -ing words on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday so on Thursday I gave a pretest. Anyone scoring 100% on this Thursday test was exempt from Thursday homework and did not have to take the test on Friday.

Important Dates

- Holiday Shop and Festival at MIM Saturday December 13 11-2
- Field trip to Boonshoft on Tuesday, December 16th
- Sneak Peak at the Seussical- December 19th at 1:30 official performance will be Jan 31st.

Math

This week in math we worked on adding decimals, comparing decimals, and some students multiplied decimals. We worked on ordering fractions, making equivalent fractions, figuring out the fraction of a whole. We worked together on problem solving skills that reinforced math terminology like difference, product, and sum. We used newspapers and the weather to determine again the range of the predicted temperatures.

Each day we practice math skills in a variety of ways to strengthen the foundation and see the ways in which math is used in our daily lives.

THIS WEEK:

Monday we will be reviewing matter, finalizing a few presentations, and reviewing our vocabulary words from September through December.

Tuesday we will be going on a field trip to the Boonshoff Museum– we will need to leave at 9:00 to arrive for our 9:30 demonstration. I have been watching the weather forecast and Tuesday is questionable. The forecasters do not know what the blizzard conditions in the west will do to our weather Tuesday morning.

If it is at all questionable on Tuesday, we will just reschedule this field trip. I have had to do this in the past and it is not a big deal. If the travel conditions are not good in the morning, we just won't go. The weather is all over the place this week. Temperatures range from 20's to 50's. Remember to check your emails on questionable mornings or watch Channel 7 for the scrolling displays.

THERE WILL BE NO FORMAL HOMEWORK THIS WEEK. Please have your child get on my website and practice math games, or daily edits, or do some typing practice.

All students need to be thinking about the Legacy Project and have their interviews completed by January. In January, we will begin sequencing and writing final drafts to be put into the computer.

Thanks for your help with this and all other projects.