

First Grade Happenings

March, 2010

Where We are in Place and Time

An exploration of our orientation in place and time; of history and geography from local and global perspectives; of our homes and journeys; of the discoveries, explorations and migrations of humankind; of the contributions of individuals and civilizations.

-IBO

Science



We started our PYP unit on Sun and Earth and the children are very excited about what's to come. All learning during this unit will revolve around understanding that the Sun affects life on Earth. Students will be exploring this central idea through inquiring about: 1) The Sun as a source of light and heat. 2) The rotation of the Earth in relation to the Sun. 3) How life on Earth is affected by the relationships between the Sun and the Earth. Students will conduct many experiments and observations which will emphasize the

concepts of Function and Causation.

During this unit, we will read books about the Earth and the Sun and learn many facts related to them. We will talk about fantasy and reality and discuss the differences as well as watch an educational video and do research in order to write a book. The students will make a puzzle of the Earth and write sentences about why we love the Earth.

To ensure that students take their learning outside the classroom, we will take a field trip to the Planetarium and learn about how the position of Earth in the Solar System affects our lives.

We will have a professional visit by Ms. Margot, a second grade teacher at Academia Cotopaxi, who will talk with the children about her experiences and involvement with NASA and the space program.



Language Arts – Since one of the key concepts we are focusing on in this Unit of Inquiry is function, within Language Arts we are focusing on the mechanics of language. In addition, the key concept of causation will help students understand cause and effect within reading stories and their own writing. This way, students will be able to create deep understanding of concepts through trans-disciplinary themes.

READING

- Shared Reading – The children have finished reading **Hattie and the Fox** by Mom Fox, and **Any Kind of Dog** by Lynn Reiser, **Seven Sillies** by Joyce Dunbar, **Chicken Licken** by Jan Ormerod, **One Monday Morning** by Uri Shulevitz. And **You'll Soon Grow Into Them, Titch** by Pat Hutchins. In the coming weeks we will read **Seven Blind Mice** retold by Ed Young, **The Surprise Family** by Lynn Reiser, **In The Attic** by Hiawyn Oram, and **Julieta's Paintbox** by Carlos Pellicer Lopez. The children do a variety of activities for each story including: using the pictures to predict outcomes, analyzing characters, observing different expressions that characters use in stories and acting out stories.
- Guided Reading – At this time students read leveled texts in small groups. Certain skills found within the stories are reviewed/introduced. The students practice reading with expression and following the cues of punctuation.
- Language Form –
 1. **Verbs** - We are focusing on correct pronunciation of regular past verbs in past. For example, “**ed**” **endings (past tenses)** can make three different sounds: “**t**” as in **asked**, “**d**” as in **cried** or “**id**” as in **wanted**.
 2. **Homophones**, (words that sound the same but have different spelling and mean different things such as **no – know, be – bee, see – sea**)
 3. **Homographs**, (words that have the same spelling but different meaning such as **bat—bat, can—can, nail—nail**).
 4. **Long Vowel Sounds**, Students will learn about long vowel sounds and long vowel word families. We will continue to review the short vowel sounds, blends and consonants.



WRITING

- Language Form –
 1. **Nouns** - Students continue to learn about always including nouns in their written and spoken sentences. Nouns include people, places, things, and animals.
 2. **Adjectives** - Children are beginning to use more descriptive words in their writing.
 3. **Verbs** – Students are beginning to recognize and use verbs in present and past forms.



- Writing for different purposes – The students are being exposed to writing for different purposes (stories, notes, observations, and letters). Students are participating in writing letters to pen-pals in Wyoming, USA, and they have already shown great excitement! This allows them the chance to write for an authentic audience.
- Writing process – Students continue to participate in the writing process in order to organize their work in effective ways. This includes pre-writing in order to generate ideas, drafting, editing, to correct mistakes and add more detail, and publishing to create the best work possible.

Math- Our previous math unit was **Geometry**. The students learned about shapes, symmetry, spatial sense, patterns, and began to investigate the fractions of $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$. **New Math Vocabulary**: circle, square, triangle, rectangle, cube, cone, pyramid, rectangular prism, sphere, vertex, vertices, face, above, close by, near, next to, to the right of, to the left of, below, over, far, beside, up, down, left, right, line of symmetry, slide, turn, pattern, pattern unit, one-half, one-fourth.



At this time we are beginning Statistics and Measurement.

Through the combination of the measurement unit in mathematics, and Where we are in Place and Time unit in Science, students will be able to measure, use graphs, and draw conclusions about the world around them.

- Probability and Statistics – The children will investigate, identify, and describe various forms of information in their environment. This will allow students to ask questions, gather data, and make graphs in order to visually represent information. In this unit students will learn to interpret variety of graphs in order to compare numeric information.
- Measurement – In this unit students will learn the importance of measuring in various ways:
 - Money - We will continue to practice adding and subtracting using money.
 - Time - The students will begin to tell time to the hour and the $\frac{1}{2}$ hour.
 - Distance - The children will learn to measure the length/width of objects in their environment. This will allow students to compare information about length/width of objects.
- New Vocabulary – bar graph, pie graph, line graph, venn-diagram, more than, less than, equal to, greater than, fewer than, less, more, penny, nickel, dime, quarter, dollar, clock, o'clock, half, half past, inch, foot, yard, centimeter, meter, etc.

Reminders and Events

- **Remember to send your child with swimming gear on P.E. days.**
- **Thursday, March 11** – Field trip to the Planetarium. Remember to send your child a cold packed lunch.
- **Friday, March 12** – Professional development day. **NO SCHOOL for students.**
- **Saturday, March 27** – Spring Break begins
- **Sunday, April 4** – Last day of Spring Break..
- **Tuesday, April 13** – Student led conferences. We will be sending you more information about this.
- **Saturday, April 17** – International Festival
- **Wednesday, April 21** – Professional development, 12 o'clock dismissal for students.

WAY COOL KIDS

Our WCK's, Gian, Thomas, Sofia, Romina and Ana Catarina were chosen for demonstrating one of the following PYP Profiles:

Thinkers

- “I think carefully and creatively to solve problems”
- **IB Attitudes** - Independence, Commitment, and Curiosity.

Communicators –

- “I express ideas confidently in many ways.”
- **IB attitudes** - Confidence, Respect, and Cooperation

Balanced

- “I achieve well being by balancing mind, body and spirit.”
- **IB attitudes** – Creativity, Curiosity, Independence, and Cooperation

I hope you enjoyed our newsletter!