



Room A-2 March Newsletter

And More Growth!

Dear Kinder Parents,

We are in the time of the year when Kinder students begin to show a lot of growth. Children are writing more, using more sight words as they write and including more letters in words they try to write or invent words. They are able to spell many phonemic words and we practice every day with new words.

Each student has a growing bank of sight words that they can “read in a snap”. You will probably notice this as you read their library books with them. Each student has cubes. In April we will explore measurement as we continue with other skills as well.

If you notice any concerns or have any questions as you work with your child on library homework, other homework, or the units of inquiry, please let me know. We are tackling big concepts in math with telling time, counting coins, moving into more challenging addition and working with subtraction. We will also work more with expressing numbers with ten sticks and unit

Ms. Lisa and Ms. Daniela's Class

March 9, 2010

☺ **Remember:**

- ☺ March 12— no school, Teachers Teaching Teachers Conference
- ☺ March 15— session III extracurricular activities begin.
- ☺ March 20 — 50th Anniversary Gala Dance, 8:00 p.m.
- ☺ March 26 — Easter egg hunt.
- ☺ March 29—April 2nd — no school, spring holiday.
- ☺ April 17 — International Festival 10:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.
- ☺ April 21 — students dismissed at noon — professional day for teachers.
- ☺ April 13 parent teacher conferences

Our PYP Unit

Where We Are
in Place and
Time

We will soon be starting a new unit of inquiry. We will begin to explore and learn about the cultures we come from as well as the cultures our

classmates come from. I will be sending home more information on this unit in the coming days

Unit of Inquiry

The unit title is "Where We Are in Place and Time". The Central Idea is that we come from many different places and we can learn things from each other. It is an inquiry into classroom cultures, differences and similarities of our classroom cultures, and examining my own culture.

Some teacher questions are:

How do we show respect for other cultures?

How is your culture different from others?

How do we know that we are different?

How is your culture similar to others?

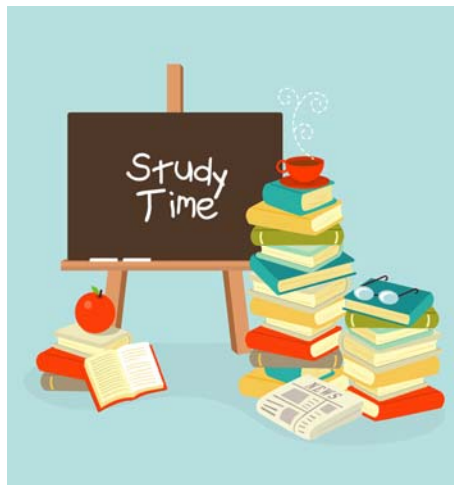
What are some unique characteristics of your culture?

How does the weather change in different places?

Why is knowing about other cultures important to us?

Writer's Workshop

During the Unit of Inquiry regarding how we all have stories to share, we launched the Writer's Workshop program. It is a writing program that encourages kids to write stories about themselves or a favorite topic. Because they are allowed to choose the topic, students are motivated to create and complete a story that



that they can read to a classmate. The Writer's Workshop format includes story planning, teacher editing, and direct instruction in the mechanics of grammar. After a daily minilesson regarding some aspect of the writing process the children have to work on their stories. Children really enjoy Writer's Workshop and they are becoming great authors.

Family Stories

As we delve into this new unit of inquiry, I encourage you to tell your child the stories of your family. In this age of technology, the oral tradition of story telling, even in families, is falling by the wayside. Take time to tell your child about his/her ancestry, the trials and triumphs of their

predecessor. It is really amazing how quiet and still a child might stay if you tell them a story. This activity not only reinforces a closer bond with your child but it enhances vocabulary and at the same time it gives them a sense of where they come from and who they are.



Math

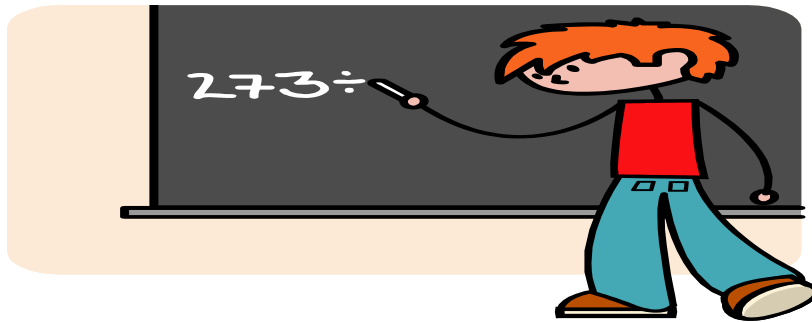
The students have now moved into more challenging addition problems and we have begun to tell story problems using subtraction. We have begun guided work in subtraction before moving into using centers focusing on subtraction. At the same time we have been working with activities involving telling time. All of the students are very capable at telling time to the hour but we are having some minor challenges as we work with telling time to the half hour. The benchmark for kindergarten in telling time is to tell time to the hour so everyone is on target.

With the 100 Days of School Celebration, the students practiced various concepts around the theme of 100. We made hats with tally marks and they practiced counting by fives and tens to 100. We had 100 number charts with missing numbers to fill in and I have been assessing each child's ability to write numerals to 100. I see all of the students being successful in this as our math benchmark is for students to count by 5s and 10s to at least 30 as well as count by ones to 30.

Counting money is moving along smoothly. The big trick for student at this age is to be able to count a coin such as a nickel or dime, and then "count on" as they count pennies. For example, when counting two nickels and four pennies, a child would touch each coin, starting with the nickels and say, "Five, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen".

Some other concepts we are working on in calendar time and also occasionally in small groups are: grouping objects by tens and ones and identifying/writing the corresponding numeral, odd/even, math vocabulary, identifying how much without counting (such as recognizing 5 dots on a die as 5 without having to count), and estimating small quantities of objects. We have also been working on learning right and left.

Some math vocabulary your child is learning: subtraction, minus, take away, o'clock, cents, nickel, dime, quarter, pennie.



Spelling

Our daily spelling practice is moving along into more challenging words. Children are learning new high frequency words every day and I encourage them to try and spell them correctly looking at a card with the word written on it. For other words they are encouraged to find the different sounds that they can identify in that particular word and write them down as they hear them. Blends and digraphs have been introduced and although the children still experience some difficulties identifying the sounds that certain blends and digraphs make they are progressing at an expected pace. Please encourage your child to write at home, this ongoing practice is very beneficial for them.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns regarding your child or the Kinder Program at lbarba@cotopaxi.k12.ec

Sincerely,
Lisa Barba