

September 21, 2007

Dear Parents,

Happy Friday! What a beautiful week of summer weather! It was warm, but not unbearable. The kids were attentive and worked hard all week. I have an ice cream cake from the Dairy Queen for them today to celebrate the end of summer.

We have finished our work with place value in Math. All but four students did very well on the Math test. Those students may re-take the test of Monday and raise their grade. Place value is such a difficult concept for kids to get. I am very pleased with their efforts! Thank you for your help at home. We use the Houghton Mifflin Math and Reading series. You can access their web site at www.eduplace.com . You can find lots of great support ideas for Math and Reading at this site, including Math practice sheets. We will be working on comparing, ordering, and rounding whole numbers in our next Math chapter.

We are finishing our first chapter in Science, as well. This chapter dealt with characteristics of living things, the needs of plants, and the life cycle of a plant. I will be sending home a chapter review today. The students will have a test covering Chapter 1 on Friday. We are starting two labs today that will require observation over several days. One involves planting some seeds and altering their environment, and the

other involves watching colored water travel through a plant. We will also be drawing plant and animal cells with 8th grade buddies today. We are so busy!

In Social Studies, we have been working on building geography skills. We've talked about the five themes of geography: location, place, movement, places and people change each other, and region. Today we will begin taking apart our first chapter which deals with introducing the children to two communities in the United States and to a community in Mali. We will be doing lots of cooperative learning in Social Studies. This is always one of the kids favorite things to do. On Monday, we celebrated Constitution Day by learning about the origins of our Constitution.

This week in Religion, we talked about Jesus as the light of the world. The faith formation homework assignment was fabulous! I have truly enjoyed reading about the people who are a "light" to your children. Next week we will be talking about Mary as the Mother of the Church. We all have Bibles now and are learning how to use them. We read from them every day.

We are concluding the study of our first story in reading, "Cliff Hanger." We have done lots of work with cause and effect, and sentences and sentence fragments. Next week, we will be reading the story of "Mulan." We will eventually be comparing and contrasting the story and the movie.

We will begin doing some vocabulary work next week. The children will also be doing some at-home

activities with their vocabulary words. Research shows that good vocabulary development is one of the factors in developing strong readers. One of my goals as a teacher is to help develop a love for reading in all my students. Learning more vocabulary is one step toward that goal.

Next Friday we will be making scarecrows with our 8th grade buddies. My brother, Mark works for a wood turning company and very kindly donates the wood every year. He even sands it so that the kids will not get slivers. My husband screws the pieces together. Your child will need to bring clothes for their scarecrows which will be about their height. Long pants and long sleeved shirts work best. Some kids also like to bring hats, shoes, etc. to personalize their scarecrows. We will need two, possibly three bales of straw. Please let me know if you can donate any. You are more than welcome to join us. 8th grade buddies are a huge help with this project. We will be making scarecrows in the parking lot next to school.

Other Important Information

- ❖ Monday, September 24th is a non-uniform day and picture day.
- ❖ Saturday, September 22nd is the School Carnival from 6:00-9:00. See you there!

Have a wonderful weekend!

In God's Peace,

Mrs. Pieri