

Mrs. Wilson's Fourth Grade Newsletter

Volume 15 Issue 14

206.935.0651 X110, or cwilson@guadalupe-school.org

December 7, 2020

StoryPath Setting

Last week fourth graders created a frieze (fancy word for mural) to represent the setting of our StoryPath unit, Pacific Northwest Coast, 500 years ago. It was our first time using a shared google slide in real time. Fourth graders were given a background of water, hills, mountain and sky. They filled in the rest. Our image now includes forests, bushes, mushrooms and seaweed...elk, eagles, bear and squirrels...salmon and shark. Fourth graders used what they've learned about natural resources to discuss how to meet basic human needs. First in small breakout groups and then as a whole class, we discussed ways to meet the needs for food, shelter and clothing. This led to the question, "What skills and talents would be necessary to live in this environment?"

This discussion of setting informs our characters, ready to be created this week. Each fourth grader will work within an assigned family to form a character with his or her own personality, physical features, occupation, skills and talents. Fourth graders will compose interesting anecdotes and construct "paper dolls". Students have already asked if they can insert their handmade characters into our digital scene. Yes! I have faith we can figure this out.

Our first trimester read aloud, "The Birchbark House" plays a part in our thinking. I chose this historical fiction intentionally, for the voice of author Louise Erdrich. She is a member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Ojibwa. We finish the book today, but it enters our discussion time and again in the weeks ahead.

Math:

Fourth graders have broken open a new chapter in Math, "Whole Number Multiplication and Division". In this chapter, your child will study multiplication and division of whole numbers. Some skills include multiplying and dividing larger numbers with regrouping, estimating larger products and quotients and solving real-world problems using the bar model method. You might want to peek at a few of my videos to better understand the Math in Focus approach. Fluency with basic multiplication facts is vital, so keep that basic fact practice routine going!

This week we take a huge step forward, double-digit X double-digit multiplication. Next week we continued with more practice. After Christmas, if all goes as planned, we begin our in-depth study of division. Again, look to my videos or links on our classroom webpage to video clips of teachers from all over, eager to explain various methods to support understanding "long division". Know that we eventually reach the traditional algorithm, very similar to what you and I learned back in fourth and fifth grade.

Christmas Party in a Bag, Plus!

Along with our Christmas Party in a Bag (thank you Danica Kustok and Elicia Howell) we are finding ways to mark the holidays. Friday's pick-up (12-11-2020) will include our party in a bag AND several crafting projects that fourth graders and I will complete together over zoom. Help your child resist the urge to break these open early. I hope to create shared experiences to make this season special.

Another way to mark the season is our class reading, "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever". It's a modern day classic!

Friday, 12-11: Pick up includes picking up Christmas in a Bag for Holiday Zoom

Friday, 12-18: Half Day, Merry Christmas!