

Classroom News

February 5, 2022

Nuts and Bolts

- Smile Ski Day; Tuesday Feb. 8
- Cochran Ski Day; Thursday Feb. 10
- Students who have signed up to ski will eat lunch at 10:00AM and will leave for the mountain at 10:35. Students should leave their skis, boards and poles in the entryway. Their boots and helmets should be brought to class. We'll also have some fun activities for the students who are not skiing on that day. See the calendar of upcoming events on the class blog for additional Smilie Ski days as well as Cochran (Snow Motion) Ski days. **ALL students will be attending the Cochran days.
- Good News!!! The NAEP testing for 4th graders has been moved to Wednesday March 16th!
- Please get in touch with me if you have any questions or concerns about things going on in the classroom or things I need to be aware of at home. I can be reached at steven.menz@mmuusd.org or you can call the school directly.

4th Grade Math (Mr. Menz)

Parent Letters and Activities To Try At Home for ALL units can be found on the class blog under the "Math" heading. Click on the unit you want to see under "4th Grade Math."

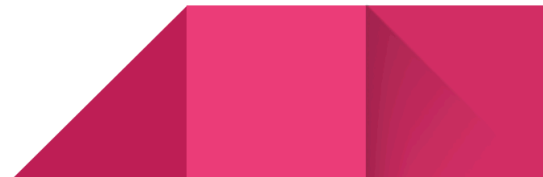
In 4 grade math we are continuing to work on our fraction unit. Understanding fractions can be tricky since there are so many applications. There can be fractions of a set or group of objects, fractions of a “whole” (think cake, pizza or brownies, fractions in measurement and also the relation between fractions and decimals (think money or sports timing) This week, students made models showing equivalent fractions and have learned to quickly recognize fractions equal to 1 and fractions equal to $\frac{1}{2}$. We have also been practicing adding and subtracting fractions with like and unlike denominators. While working with like denominators is pretty straightforward, adding and subtracting with unlike denominators is a little trickier, especially for students who are not solid on their multiplication. The reason for this is that students need to come up with a common multiple of both denominators. Students are using arrays that are common to both denominators to model fractional parts of a group or addition and subtraction. They are also learning to solve these types of problems without an area model. Video for both strategies to follow in the next newsletter.

3rd Grade Math (Mr. Dubois)

This week in 3rd grade math students continue to work on finding the area of rectangles and complex shapes. The big focus in this unit is getting students to visualize what rows and columns of square units would look like inside of a shape, without actually seeing them, or drawing them in. Students are learning about how the dimensions of a rectangle **are not** the same as the area. However, they can use the dimensions to help visualize the area. If we know the length of the bottom of a rectangle is 5 inches long, we can picture rows of 5 squares in that rectangle. This week we will finish our area and perimeter unit.

ELA (English / Language Arts)

Reading: I am just about finished with assessing students’ current reading level and should be able to wrap those up this week. While I have been doing that, students have been continuing to read books of their choice independently. During our WIN block, students are continuing to work in “book clubs.” These clubs meet with their WIN teacher at least 2 times a week to discuss summaries, unfamiliar or “juicy” words,



interesting passages, connections etc. During the other 2 WIN days, students are reading their assigned chapters and preparing for their group meeting.

Writing: Students have finished writing and publishing their first non-fiction writing pieces of the year. This week we'll make those available for our classmates to read. We'll send them home on Friday. This activity was good practice for our next nonfiction writing piece which will be a report on a specific biome. I'd like to get those reports finished by winter break. That's only two weeks away though and considering we're not starting them until Monday that may be wishful thinking. We'll see.

Spelling / Word Study: No word study this week. We will take the spelling test we missed on Friday this Monday. Students will also get new words for the week on Monday. I'll post those to the blog this weekend in case anyone wants to get a head start.

Theme

Students finished coloring the geographical regions on their maps (deserts, forests, rainforests etc.) We talked a little bit about biomes and what they are. We learned that a biome is a place with a specific temperature and climate. This climate determines the specific plant life (producers) which in turn determines the specific animal life (consumers.) Next week students will begin to research a biome of their choosing.

**Questions? Concerns?
Let me know!**

Smilie: 434-2757
steven.menz@mmuusd.org

Book Order Code: LWC9B

