



## 3B February Newsletter



February 1, 2012

Dear Parents,

Halfway Day has come and gone and we are headed into the second half of third grade! This is very exciting, yet challenging at the same time. The students are prepared to work their hardest over the next couple months as we get ready for 4<sup>th</sup> grade! I am so proud of all their achievements so far!

Last week we completed Unit 4 in Math. The students did beautifully on the test. Every child got an A! This is wonderful to see especially with it being their first multiplication focused exam. They succeeded with ease! Our Banana Split Multiplication chart is filling up quite nicely. I want to remind parents to help our third graders study all of their multiplication facts at home each night! They cannot be mastered if they aren't being studied each night. Earning the piece to the Banana Split for a given times table does not ensure a student has mastered it. For example, one could have earned their ice cream for their 4 facts, but forgotten one of them on the test last week. They need to study all of their facts each night to maintain their multiplication facts knowledge for the long haul. We began Unit 5 this week. This unit covers: Place Value through millions, Reading-Writing-Ordering Numbers, Place Value in Decimals, Very Large Numbers, Exploring Estimates and Polygons, Tenths & Hundredths, and Line Graphs.

Our class was very successful with the Social Studies test last week as well. It covered Native Americans, Plymouth, Jamestown, and Early Explorers. I am impressed with all that the students have learned these past few months. They had no trouble sharing what they learned on the test. Congratulations to all for your hard work! We will now begin our unit on

Colonial Life. This unit will take us from where we left off in Plymouth and lead us through the 13 Colonies as they were built and developed. We will discuss colonial occupations and education. It will be exciting for the students to learn how far things have come from the days of the Pilgrims at Plymouth Colony. As always, there will be several hands on activities included in this unit!

Our Science Unit on the Sun, Moon, and Earth is well under way. We've learned a lot of interesting facts about the Sun. We've discussed convection, the Sun's layers, and its size compared to Earth and other stars. Have your child show you the "basketball trick" at home. The students have also learned about the surface of the sun: sunspots, corona, and flares. We are covering solar and lunar eclipses this week which will lead us into darker territory. We will be introduced to the phases of the moon, its craters, size, gravity, revolution, and rotation. The Earth will be discussed soon thereafter. We will review its size, position in solar system, atmosphere, surface, and layers. The students are very intrigued by all there is to know about these massive and amazing pieces in our solar system. A final project will be done in class and a test will be given around February vacation week.

We will be reading novels individually in Reading this month. Each novel is based on Colonial Life and will blend nicely with our Social Studies unit. Students will be reading: The Cabin Faced West by Jean Fritz, The Courage of Sarah Noble or The Bears on Hemlock Mountain by Alice Dalgliesh, or The Matchlock Gun by Walter D. Edmonds. Novels will be assigned based on reading level. There will be a comprehension component to go along with the reading. Students will be responding to what they've read in class. I am very impressed with the reading of Stone Fox at home. Students are working on an in-class comprehension packet this week. We still need to work on sharing what we've read in detail. These next few activities in class will help in this area.

We are continuing the development of our cursive letters. It is becoming easier each week. We are currently learning our loop group letters. I may start sending home cursive practice worksheets to help the students' progress in handwriting. We are doing well, but the extra help would be very beneficial. I will also have extra time devoted to cursive each week. We are continuing our work with poetry. Students will begin their snow essays this week. It will be a five paragraph descriptive essay about the perfect snow day.

As a class, the students have improved in listening and following simple directions. We still have some tough days and continue to work hard. The students know the work load is becoming more difficult. They understand that keeping focused on the tasks at hand is the best way to succeed. I am fostering a theme of independence and responsibility in the classroom. Your help at home would be greatly appreciated. The students know what is expected of them and I know they are capable. I worked with Mrs. Rapoza in 4<sup>th</sup> grade two

years ago, and I know what is to come for your children next year. I want to prepare them as best I can for their future here at Southbrook Academy. As I've said in the past, the transition in third grade is huge! I know the students will achieve greatness!

Thank you for your continued support. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to email me.

Best,

Miss McClellan

[mcclellan@southbrookacademy.org](mailto:mcclellan@southbrookacademy.org)

**IMPORTANT DATES:**

> Monday, February 6<sup>th</sup>: 100's Day... bring in 100 items (all same: buttons, pennies, cereal, uncooked pasta etc.)

> Friday, February 17<sup>th</sup>: Whole School Field Trip (Information will be sent home soon)

> February 18-26<sup>th</sup>: February Vacation ~ No School

