

November 29, 2011,

Dear Parents,

I hope all of you enjoyed the Thanksgiving holiday and time off from school. It will only be a blink of an eye before we are off again for Christmas break. In the meantime, we have a lot to cover.

Spelling/Vocabulary: We will be having our usual spelling routine this week. I hope that the students took at least a few minutes during their time off to study their words, definitions, and word study components.

Writing: This week will be spent working on a narrative writing prompt and creating small group myths similar to Mayan, Aztec, and Incan mythology that we will be reading.

Reading: We will read some Mesoamerican mythology and other fictional pieces during the week, while working on our questioning and inferencing skills. These strategies help students to gain a better understanding of these stories.

Math: Our next math test will be on Tuesday, December 6th. I am looking at giving selected students some supplemental practice on the areas that are giving them the most trouble. This would mean that they would still learn the lesson with their group, but they would not be responsible for the entire problem set while they are working on the supporting materials. I hope that this will enable those students to fill in their skill gaps, while not creating the need for another group. This would take place between now and Christmas. After break, I will then determine whether additional groupings are necessary.

Red group --- Fractions, fractions, and more fractions!

Blue group --- Decimals and more decimals!

Science: New this year for CCA is a graduated science fair process. In years past, 5th graders were required to do individual science fair projects. Now, we will be doing a few small group projects to be judged and displayed at our school fair in January. We will be working on these projects during our science blocks between now and Christmas break. Students may be asked to bring items from home to facilitate the experimentation process. However, this should be all of the parental involvement needed to complete these projects as the work will all be done at school with their assigned groups. Hopefully this will be easier for all involved.

Social Studies: The next three weeks will be spent learning about the Mesoamerican people --- Mayas, Aztecs, and Incas. Our focus will first turn to the Mayas. We will look at the geography of their homeland, read about their history, draw our own hieroglyphics, marvel at their advanced scientific knowledge, and ponder what caused them to vanish.

Mr. Ewing: The PTO is sponsoring a reception for Mr. Ewing after school on Wednesday. All parents and students are invited to attend.

Christmas program: The annual CCA Christmas program will be on Friday, December 2nd at 6 p.m. at Weld Central Junior High. Students need to be in the auditorium at 5:40 p.m. that evening. Please let Mr. Perakos know if your child will not be able to attend the program.

Christmas gift exchange: For several years I have tied our class gift exchange into the December character education trait of kindness. This year, we began using the 8 keys from Quantum Learning, which are different. I would still like to incorporate "random acts of kindness" into our gift exchange, so we will be discussing this process as a class. The students will be drawing a classmate's name out of the hat and they will be responsible for showing kindness to this person during the last week before break, plus bringing them a gift for our Christmas party. These kindnesses should not cost money, but be things as simple as stacking that person's chair in the afternoon or bringing them a sheet of paper for an assignment. As for the actual gift to exchange, it should not cost over \$10. If your family is not able to purchase a gift for the party, please let me know so that we can make other arrangements. I don't want any child to be left out due to financial circumstances.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns about your child, please contact me at school or by e-mail (lisarupple@re3j.com).

Sincerely,

Lisa Ruppel

Reminders:

- Breakfast burritos are available every Wednesday for \$3.00.
- Bookmobile on Thursday
- Chick-fil-A hot lunch on Friday
- Classroom Christmas parties on Friday, December 16th. Look for a sign-up sheet outside our door if you are interested in supplying any treats for our party.
- Character Ed. Assembly on December 16th at 8 a.m.
- Christmas Break December 17th - January 4th