



Roger Sherman Elementary

December 2009

Principal's Corner

L. Moss

As we approach the holidays and find ourselves caught up in the bustle of all we have to get accomplished before the vacation, I wanted to take the opportunity to wish each and every Sherman family a happy holiday season and warm wishes for a Happy New Year. If you are looking for stocking stuffers for your children, consider purchasing math fact cards, all operations depending on your child's grade level, books to practice reading, and board games where families can interact and students can use strategic planning.



Over the holiday break, encourage your children to play safely outside, dress warmly, and to practice PBS rules. Students should read every day for at least 15 minutes and include a written response to what they are reading. Written responses can include an illustration of

the major story elements, or include inferences based on story evidence or personal feelings. Journal writing is an excellent way to practice writing with specific details. Students can write about what they did over vacation, where they traveled, or what they liked best about the holidays.

The goal is to keep students actively engaged in activities that support our school curriculum while they are not in school.

Pre-K and Kindergarten

S. Conway, M. Rarey,
K. Nitkowski, R. Nutcher

The preschool classes of Mrs. Rarey and Mrs. Conway have been busy for this holiday season.

Mrs. Conway's students are learning about all the holidays December has to bring. We will also discuss our new up-coming season, "WINTER," as it falls upon us next week. The students are learning spatial awareness this month as well.

Mrs. Rarey's students are doing a unit on "helping people." They are learning what the word "donate," means. The class is making fruit muffins. They will be placed in a bag with a bottled water to be delivered to Meriden's Soup Kitchen. The students are doing chores

around the house to earn money to donate to the Heifer International Foundation.

Students in both classes are going to "Alex's Lemonade Stand," to donate money to help children with cancer. Finally, the children will be showing their families how much we care about them by making gifts to give them this holiday season.

Happy Holiday's to all of you!

First Grade

A. Weaver, W. McKay,
B. St. John, K. Kalber

Over the month of December, the first grade focused on preparing for their Winter Concert that was on Thursday, December 17th! In addition, we have been learning about various traditions that different cultures celebrate during this time of year. We have been learning about how different countries celebrate Christmas in a unit titled: "Christmas around the world." We have also learned about Hanukkah and Kwanza.

As part of our Language Arts Curriculum we read about the Life Cycle of a Butterfly and even had the chance to read a play titled : Did you See Chip? To increase our comprehension, we have been focusing on retelling stories and making inferences. We have been focusing on

reading sight words and **magic e** words as well.

We learned how to subtract numbers in math and we are beginning a unit on place value.

Second Grade

K. Baransky, A. Jensen,
J. Crouse, A. Sharnick

Thanks to all the parents who helped to make Alex's Lemonade Stand a success by donating cookies, napkins, and cups.



The second grade read a story in our Harcourt Anthology Book called Lemonade for Sale. Then we read a true story about Alex Scott, Alex's Lemonade Stand, who had cancer and decided to help find a cure by having lemonade stands and donating the money for cancer research. Many heard about her lemonade stand and began having their own. Second grade will donate the money made from the 10th – 18th to Alex's Lemonade Stand to help support research for a cure for childhood cancers. All the students enjoyed helping to serve the lemonade and cookies, be a cashier and take the money, tally the amount of cups sold, and create graphs to show how many cups were sold per

day. Students really felt a sense of pride and community by doing this activity. Thank you for helping us raise over \$650.00 for the Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation.

In Language Arts we have finished up working with non-fiction elements, such as captions, headings, table of contents, and practicing listing details, and summarizing information using the non-fiction text. Our current Harcourt Language Arts Theme is Our World, where students read stories about plants and people so we can learn about the world around us and how it affects our lives. In Science, students have begun to learn about plants and parts of the plants, such as apples, flowers, bean plants, and trees and through our current Harcourt Anthology stories.

During math we have been working adding 2-digit numbers and have started to learn how to regroup. Students remember to add the ones first and then the tens place. We use base ten blocks and other manipulatives to help students arrive at the answer. We also have been working on solving and writing our own addition word problems. Students continue to practice their addition and subtraction math facts by taking math fact quizzes where students are given 3 minutes to answer as many math equations as possible accurately. Please continue to have your student practice their addition and subtraction math facts at home.

Third Grade

B. Higley, A. Bryers,
K. Wilson, B. Cabell

Third grade students have begun the **Friends to Grow On** theme in their anthology. They have read The Stories Julian Tells by Ann Cameron, The main character Julian is in need of a good friend and he finds one when Gloria moves in next door. In The Talent Show, by Susan Wojciechowski, a girl named Beanie realizes she has a special talent to share in the school talent show. The students have also read Centerfield Ballhawk by Matt Christopher. This realistic fiction is about a boy named Jose who wants his dad to be proud of him. Ask your child what a ballhawk is. They may be able to teach you something you did not know before.

Not only are students working on their comprehension when they read, they are also working to improve their *fluency*. You can help your child improve their fluency, how smoothly they read aloud, by having them read books, poems and other writings to you. Listen for their expression, tone and attention to punctuation. You may notice a great improvement in their fluency over the past several weeks. The teachers have!

The students have also begun a focus on *nonfiction texts*. They are reading factual books and learning information from them. They can describe the elements of

nonfiction books such as the table of content, index and glossary. They easily notice bold print words and captions describing photographs. The students can explain diagrams, maps and charts found in many nonfiction books. They are truly becoming active, engaged readers and it is exciting to see the growth!

In mathematics the students have begun a unit on multiplication and have learned how to create **arrays** (an arrangement of object in equal rows and columns) to solve multiplication facts. They are very excited about learning the times tables. This year students are responsible for learning the 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 10 facts. They have learned the names for the numbers being multiplied (**factors**) and that the answer is called a **product**. Please help your child learn these facts. Knowing them will greatly help in other areas of math and will also help students to solve real world problems in life.

Did you notice the dictionaries your child came home with? They were donated to Roger Sherman third grade students by the *Rotary Club*. A great big, "Thank You!" to the Rotarians! The students have enjoyed using them, not only to look up the meaning or spelling of words, but also reading them. Yes, Reading them! The dictionaries are loaded with interesting facts, charts and maps!

The third grade

students have worked very hard this first term of the school year and many are anxiously waiting for the upcoming holidays and vacation. Please remember to have your child practice their math facts and reading- just a few minutes each day. Practice during the time away will help to ensure your child's success in 2010.

Happy Holidays to everyone! Enjoy your vacation- may it be a happy, safe and peaceful one! We look forward to 2010!



Students from Miss Wilson's class enjoying their November PBS classroom reward: Pajama Day.



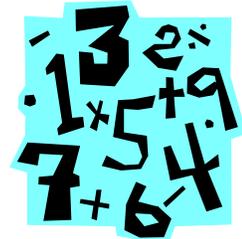
Students sharing their favorite books.

Fourth Grade

A. DiGennaro, K. Fedora, F. Wagner

Happy Holidays from the entire fourth grade team. It has been a busy month as the

students are heading towards a well deserved holiday break. December started with parent conferences, and we would like to thank all the parents who came in and discussed their child's progress through this first term. The second term started with multiplication in math. The students completed their post test this past week, but should continue to practice all basic multiplication facts at home.



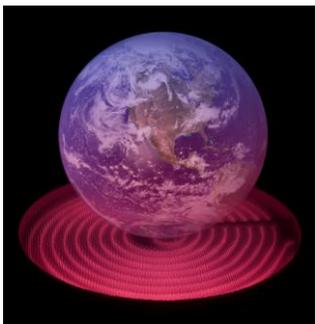
We are moving into division and these facts are vital to the students' success. There will be a math packet sent home over holiday vacation for the students to complete in preparation for the CMTS. In addition to this we would like all students to continue to read over the holiday break.

The end of December is filled with exciting activities and rewards for many students. The holiday store is still accepting donations of gently used or new items that the students can purchase with the yellow tickets they have earned for showing respect to self, others, and the school. The PBS team has a special movie planned for students with no office referrals that will happen on Friday, December 18th. Once again have a safe and happy holiday from all the entire fourth grade team.

Fifth Grade

S. Owen, A. Abbott, R. Tellez

The fifth grade classes of Miss Abbott, Mrs. Owen and Mrs. Tellez have had a very exciting month of December! We have made lots of gains and learned new skills in our academic areas. In Math we have learned all about Geometry. We have studied shapes, lines, and angles. We have learned to name many types of polygons, we have classified shapes according to common characteristics, and we have learned to see shapes in many different ways. We have also continued to work on mastering all of our basic facts in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. As we head into the holidays, we have changed our focus to fractions. We will be working on naming fractions, finding equivalence in fractions, simplifying fractions, and comparing and ordering fractions.



In reading, we are continuing to work through a unit on our Changing Planet. This unit has offered the students the opportunity to read nonfiction texts about many topics related to the Earth. We have read about forest fires, waves

and ocean current, and seeing the Earth from space. Throughout this reading we have worked on summarizing what we read by identifying the main idea and most important details to support it. We have analyzed text features by studying why authors use charts, diagrams, timelines and photos with captions. We have determined the importance of text features to further our knowledge of the topic being presented.



Grade 5 March of Dimes Participants

The fifth grade students did an AMAZING job of reading and raising money to support the March of Dimes reading incentive program! Our students read for more than 10,000 hours and read hundreds of books combined. In honor of their achievement the classes will be celebrating with a pizza party on Wednesday, December 23rd. We hope they continue to work hard with their reading throughout the holiday break.

We were thrilled to see so many parents at conferences this month! It was a wonderful opportunity for the teachers to share the hard work and accomplishments made by the students. We hope that all

of you have a wonderful holiday break! Enjoy time together as a family and celebrate the blessings in life.

PBS

PBS Team



Our December PBS activity is the holiday store! Students who choose to participate paid 15 of their yellow tickets to attend. Students can go shopping and purchase items for their family members for the holiday. Thanks for donating small gift items that students can purchase with their yellow Sherman Star tickets. We appreciate all donations that help make this event a success!

We are really focusing on being respectful to others by speaking respectful language and not using put-downs. All classes had a lesson by a PBS team member about how put-downs can be hurtful. Students are trying to use and recognize compliments.



Remember our three main expectations: Respect for Self, Respect for Others, and Respect for School. Don't forget to review with your child how to show positive behaviors at school.

MLT, Art, Music, Media, PE

M. Muir, M. Ferazzi, B. Kaplan,
B. Starrett, K. Davis, B. Poggio



Grade 1 completed their studies on **free form** shapes by learning about the artist Henri Matisse. When Henri Matisse became older and couldn't hold a paint brush well, he started cutting shapes out of paper and gluing them to another piece of paper. Our lesson was very similar. We have now moved on to learning all about color. Students can now identify the **primary colors**, the **secondary colors**, and how to make the **secondary colors**. Currently, we are painting a city scene using only **primary colors**.

Grade 2 has been using their knowledge of **geometric** and **free form** shapes to complete penguins and polar bears, with some being used for their winter concert. Next, we will begin reviewing color.

Grade 3 is in the process of their color unit. We reviewed **primary** and **secondary colors**, and how to make the **secondary colors**. Students then completed a color wheel, all review from last year. We are now working on a landscape, and will be discussing **warm** and **cool** colors.

Grade 4 is beginning a unit on **sculpture**. Our first sculpture is going to be a clay sculpture. Students have their choice of creating a tile, a wall hanging, or a pocket character. After demonstrating last week, students are working on their sketches for their sculpture. Some students will actually begin their clay sculpture this week.

As Grade 5 continues to work on their **1-point perspective**, we are also thinking about what we will be doing for our **clay sculpture** this year. Students will have the choice of creating a mask (animal, human, or imaginary), a tile or a wall hanging.



Most Kindergarteners have mastered how to log onto the computer, and how to use a mouse and keypad. They have been exploring some age appropriate online programs like Sesame Street and are learning how to negotiate through a website. They are also typing their names using upper and lower case letters and inserting clip art. First graders are creating their own PowerPoint show. They are creating new slides, copying and pasting images, adding color, creating transitions and animations and importing sound. They are having so much fun when they run their slide shows and see all the things that they added to it! Second graders

are transiting into the adult version of Microsoft Office and are having great success. They are enjoying the ability to copy and paste text, and recognizing how it saves time. They have created a pictograph.

The upper grades have been exploring their Social Studies themes in MLT. Third grade is creating a PowerPoint presentation about water, the water cycle, why it is important, and what we can do to conserve water. After exploring Connecticut, fourth graders are now researching other New England states. Fifth graders are researching explorers who came from Europe to what is now North America. They have decided that the explorers lead very difficult lives.

When your child has brought home a project from MLT, please take time to look at the attached rubric. The rubric grades the project and provides an easy way for students and their parents to view the individual student's achievement on each project.



The winter concert was held on December 17, 2009. Thank you to all of the students who participated in the concert. Also, thank you parents for attending and showing support for our students.

Reading Department

J. Flood, M. Larsen, A. Luz,
S. Oneto, L. Torres



Phonological awareness and phonics are essential for reading success. Phonological awareness is the ability to hear sounds in words. Students generally master this skill by the end of first grade. Phonics skills deal with matching printed letters/words with their sounds. Students begin developing phonics skills in kindergarten and will continue refining them throughout elementary school.

To help your child develop phonological awareness, you can:

play rhyming games

Ex. Do *cat* and *hat* rhyme? What's another word that rhymes with *cat* and *hat*? clap the syllables (parts) in a word

Ex. How many syllables are in *yellow*? 2, yel-low

identify beginning sounds

Ex. What do you hear at the beginning of *mom*? /m/
What's another word that starts with /m/?

segment (take apart) words

Ex. Give your child a word and have him break it apart. The sounds in *cat* are /c/ /a/ /t/.

blend (put together sounds in) words

Ex. Give your child the sounds of a word and have him guess your word. If you say the sounds /c/ /a/ /t/, your child should guess *cat*.

manipulate sounds in words
Ex. Have your child change the first sound in *cat* to /p/ to make the word *pat*.

To help your child develop phonics skills, you can:
have your child match sounds and letters

Ex. Show your child the letter M and have him say the sound, /mmm/

at the lower levels, have your child practice writing basic words

Ex. Write the sounds you hear in the word *cat*. Can you change the first letter in *cat* to make *mat*.

have your child notice vowel patterns in words

Ex. Words with Magic e are words that have a long vowel sound and a silent e at the end: take, rate, slide. The vowel says its name.

Ex. Words with vowel teams have two vowels together, where the first letter has a long sound (says its name) and the second vowel is silent: team, lead, boat.

Ex. Words with bossy R have a vowel followed by the letter r. Point out that the r controls what the vowel says: car, bird, fern.

For more information on your child's specific needs, consult his or her classroom teacher.



Math Minute

The Roger Sherman Math Team



The New Year brings us new concepts students are learning on in Math. Kindergartners will be learning about graphing and ordering numbers. First grade will focus on identifying money and begin exploring how to count coins. At the end of the month, grade 1 will begin to explore standard and non-standard units of measure. In second grade, students will begin a unit on graphing where they will collect, analyze and graph information. Second grade will begin measurement at the end of January. Third graders will conclude their unit of multiplication and begin connecting it with division. Students in third grade will also explore fractions through pictorial representations. Fourth graders will finish division and begin fractions. For the month of January, the fifth grade will also study fractions and conclude the month with measurement. All students should be practicing their basic facts in addition and subtraction. Students in grades 3, 4 & 5, should also be studying their multiplication facts. Fourth and Fifth graders should be practicing all operations of their facts. A great website to help parents and students work together in practicing for the CMT is: <http://www.wilton.k12.ct.us/math/library/mathcmt/mathcmt.htm>

The CMT Math strands are listed and websites are given for a specific type of practice. The website is part of the Wilton, CT school system.

Volunteer Information

**B. Higley, B. Poggio,
N. Murray, A. Edson**

Any questions about the Volunteer Program can be directed to Mrs. Edson at (203) 238 - 1286. Save the date! Our annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner will be held on Thursday, April 29, 2009. This event will be held at Platt High School.



TPT

Executive Board

**Dawn McCarthy (President)
Ashley Ramos (Secretary)
Carrie Milslagle (Treasurer)**

Sign up to be a member of the TPT. It is only \$3.00 per family. You can send in a note to your child's teacher to receive another form for membership.

Here is a list of the upcoming events at Roger Sherman. More information will follow for each of these events.

Snow Ball

Friday, January 29th, snow date of February 5th



Movie Night

February 11th,
(with concession stand)



CMT Circus

March 3rd



Ethnic Potluck Dinner

April 8th



Mother's Day Plant Sale

May 6th and 7th



End of the Year Picnic

June 4th



**Next TPT meeting:
Tuesday, January 12,
2010 at 6:30PM**

march of dimes®
reading champions®

Congratulations Roger Sherman Elementary School!

We had 94 teachers and students participate in this year's reading program. We raised \$1,822.89 for the March of Dimes Reading Champions program.



The three top donation earners were Hannah Nocera, Isaiah Davis, and Gillian Galloti.



This newsletter brought to you by the Public Relations Committee of Roger Sherman School.