



# Montclair Moments

## Curriculum Newsletter



November 2009

Volume 3, Issue 1

### Media ~ Mrs. Tella

Students have been listening to a variety of interesting stories read aloud. Reading aloud is a wonderful way to begin the year in library class because listening to stories is a pleasurable experience. To become a lifelong reader, a child must find pleasure in reading. Children begin to develop favorite authors and stories and they are introduced to a variety of titles.



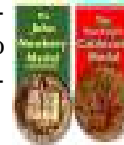
Listening to stories aloud helps with language development, learning new words and

enhances listening skills. The structure of a story, that every story has a beginning, middle and end, are learned. Exposing children to literature aloud for enjoyment, increases the chances that a child's reading life, turning to books for pleasure and for continued learning, doesn't end with high school graduation.

As the year continues, students will be introduced to various aspects of the library at the appropriate levels.

Some of the areas to be covered are: library citizenship, proper care of books, how to locate books on the shelves, parts of a book, fiction, nonfiction, Dewey Decimal System and how to use an encyclopedia.

Students will listen to stories of various lengths for increased time periods. Students will learn about, characters, setting and plot. Students will be exposed to a variety of literature genres and to award winning books.



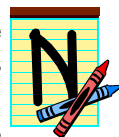
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### Kindergarten ~ Mrs. Anderson, Mrs. Pettinelli, & Mrs. Diauto

Kindergarten students are working very hard and doing a wonderful job. We completed our first three Trophies Reading themes which were Getting to Know You, I am Special and Around the Table. Our next Trophies reading theme is Silly

Business. This theme includes stories about people and animals who find themselves in silly situations that could happen in real life. The children will be learning the letters "n" and "d".



In Social Studies

the children learned about Fire Safety and had a special guest, Firefighter Malvesti! The children had the opportunity to try on real firefighter gear!

*Kindergarten news is continued on page 2!*

## Kindergarten Continued...

This month in Social Studies the children will read and learn stories about the Pilgrims and the Native Americans and the way they celebrated the First Thanksgiving. The children will have a special friendship gathering and celebrate with special foods that the children will make and share. Of course, you should be on the look out for turkeys and pilgrims to arrive home in their folders.

For our special activity com-



ing in December the kindergarten classes will have an imaginary trip on the Polar Express. On Wednesday, December 23rd, the kindergarten children are encouraged to wear their pajamas to school and we will watch the Polar Express together. We will share hot chocolate as the children do in the movie.

A very special "thank you" to all the parents who have helped make the first couple

of months so positive! We are pleased at what the children are doing at home on their homework to support what they are learning at school. We would like to remind parents to please check your child's backpack and blue Teachers...Parents Communicator folder each day.

Lastly, we want to wish all the Montclair families a healthy, happy, and safe holiday season.



## Grade 1 ~ Ms. Figueroa/Ms. Gao, Mrs. Kane, & Mrs. Connolly

We have had a busy start to the new school year. The children are working on staying organized and following the daily routines of the classrooms. On October 26th, the first grade enjoyed a beautiful day at Ward's Berry Farm. The children experienced a hayride



through the farm while learning about several different crops and picking their own pumpkins.

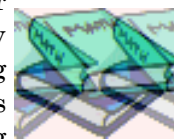
We completed our first two Trophies reading themes which were I Am Your Friend and Just For Fun. Our next Trophies reading theme is It's My Turn Now. This theme includes

stories about growing, trying new things and learning new things. Parents are encouraged to discuss with their children how they have grown and changed over time. Children can work at home to create a time line that shows what they could do at different ages. The children have weekly spelling words and high frequency words that increase their volume of vocabulary knowledge. Practicing and learning these words will increase their reading

fluency and reading comprehension. To learn more about this program visit the website [www.harcourtschools.com](http://www.harcourtschools.com). You will find some great activities

to share at home with your child. Please continue to read 15 minutes per night. These books should include the take home booklets sent home each week.

In Math we will be working on addition and subtraction facts and strategies through ten. Children should be able to write and identify numbers 1-100. Some math vocabulary words first graders should be familiar with are: match, sum, difference, addends, number sentence, count on, count back, number line, related facts, fact family, pictograph, bar graph, tally chart, greater than, fewer than, and equal to.



## Grade 1 Continued...

In Social Sciences the children will read and learn stories about Pilgrims and Native Americans and the way they celebrated the first Thanksgiving. As December approaches the students will learn about the many different holiday cus-

toms and traditions that are celebrated around the world, including Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa. These activities will tie into our Holiday Music Program, which will be held in December. We will also be studying about animals,

their natural habitats, and life cycles.

As the year comes to a close we hope you all have a wonderful holiday season! Thank you for your continued support and interest in your child's learning.



## Guidance ~ Ms. Lam

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome back and hello again! It is hard to believe that the students have already been back to school for two months. As in previous years, I would like to use this opportunity to share a variety of topics and resources with parents to help their children succeed in school.

School tardiness: It's very important that students come to school, on time and ready to learn. Being chronically late for school, even by 10 minutes, really affects a student's learning. A student who comes to school late not only misses part of the instructions but also interrupts classroom activities. Punctuality is a lifelong habit that affects all aspects of a person's life, so it's important that parents start emphasizing this concept to their children as an early age. If you need help or suggestions for getting your children to school on time, please feel free to contact me.

Self-esteem: For students, succeeding in school requires more than just learning in math, reading, science, and writing. Developing a healthy self-esteem is as important as having a strong academic background for children to succeed in school and later in life. Students who have healthy self-esteem tend to take more risks in learning and

are not afraid to make mistakes. They are able to handle conflicts and pressure better than students who have lower self-esteem.

Children with lower self-esteem tend to give up easily when faced with conflicts. Without even making an attempt, they may easily adopt an "I can't" attitude when encountering difficult tasks in school. Building a strong and healthy self-esteem starts at home. Here are a few Web sites that I have gathered for parents to help their children develop healthy self-esteem.

<http://www.nncc.org/Parent/esteem.parent.child.html>—This Web site outlines the developmental tasks related to self-esteem from early childhood to adolescent children.

<http://www.parenting-ed.org/handouts/self%20esteem.pdf>—This Web site offers tips and how-tos for parents to do to help increase their children's self-esteem.

Behavior management: Many parents in the past have asked me for suggestions on how to discipline their children appropriately at home. I have gathered a few Web sites on preventing misbehavior and concrete strategies on disciplining. <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/FY/FY54100.pdf><http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/FY/FY54200.pdf><http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/FY533>



### FY534

Below is a list of Web sites to help students practice in various academic subjects that I have listed in my previous newsletters. <http://math-drills.com/> - a website that let parents download printable math worksheets.

<http://www.greatschools.net/cgi-bin/showarticle/ca/204/improve> -

Help with organizational skills.

<http://www.studybuddy.com-> This Web site offers help for both students and parents on a variety of academic subjects.

<http://www.eduplace.com/kids/mhm/>- A fun and interactive Web site focuses on improving math skills.

<http://mathforum.org/library/drmath/drmath.elem.html>- This Web site lets students search for answers for math concepts or math problems.

<http://www.math.com/students/advice/anxiety.html>- This Web site offers help to those students who are not comfortable with learning math.

[http://www.internet4classrooms.com/grade\\_level\\_help.htm](http://www.internet4classrooms.com/grade_level_help.htm)- K-12 students can practice their math, grammar, reading, history, and social science skills on this website.



## Grade 2 ~ Ms. MacLean, Ms. Marx, & Mrs. Wetherby

The second graders began the new school year with enthusiasm and excitement!

They are well into an established routine and our Trophies reading program. We have completed spelling, writing, vocabulary, writing and grammar activities for the theme, "Being Me". The second theme "Helping Hands" introduces students to genres such as photographic essays, realistic fiction and fantasy fiction. We have been working hard to build our writing skills. We have learning to write friendly letters, thank you notes and invitations. In the next theme, we will learn to write paragraphs with "colorful words" (adjectives).

We have many wonderful mathematicians who are busy learning new skills and concepts everyday. Our focus has been on number sense and solving word problems.

In the next few weeks, we will be working on place value. Place value is challenging for the students and is the basis for understanding all mathematical concepts. If you have access to a computer, we suggest that you visit [www.eduplace.com/parents/mw](http://www.eduplace.com/parents/mw). This website will give you access to math games and other learning activities related to our work at school.

Learning addition and subtraction facts is very important for your child's future success in mathematics. This year, Montclair is privileged to have a group of UMASS Boston graduate students assess and monitor each student's progress in this area. We ask that you continue to help your child maintain their addition and subtraction facts by practicing often with them at

home.

In Social Studies we continue to work on map skills. We have learned about compasses, directions and soon we will be learning about the continents of the world. In Science, we are studying life cycles of plants and animals. In addition, we will begin to learn more about animal classification. On December 7<sup>th</sup>, we will go to the Hayden Planetarium at the Museum of Science to see the show, "Winter Lights". We'll learn about the cycle of the seasons and the constellations that change accordingly. After the holidays, we will begin a Simple Machines unit.

As always, thank you for your continued support and interest in your child's learning.



## 21st Century Grant Programs ~ Mrs. Joyce & Mrs. Hurley, Co-Facilitators

Aspiring writers, actors, chefs and artists joined our athletes in rapidly filling over 200 openings in Montclair's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Programs this fall with the return of a few long time favorites and the creation of a number of new offerings. Thirteen programs provide students in grades 2-5 with the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of academic enrichment activities and projects that enhance daily learning in taking place in our classrooms.

This fall Montclair's students have the opportunity to create their own after school snacks and

then challenge their peers to a game of basketball, kickball and soccer, or exercise their minds while working a continental math league problem or brain teaser. Our own group of environmentalists has created a mini-compost pile and is exploring alternatives to styrofoam, while the artsy crowd are designing and creating crafts, preparing for their first dance performance, and painting masterpieces of their own in our 21<sup>st</sup> Century programs. Students also have a quiet, supervised homework time to get started on their nightly work with instructional resources and a teacher available to assist

with questions about assignments.

21<sup>st</sup> Century Programs encourage Montclair staff joined by staff from other community agencies to share personal interests and hobbies with small groups of students as they take part in activities and projects that the limitations of the school day do not allow.

If you see a program director of one Montclair's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Programs please thank them for sharing those personal interests and special talents with our students in these out-of-school hours activities.



## Special Education ~ Ms. Little

Once again, special education is supporting the literacy program with specialized instruction in reading. Special education uses the Lindamood-Bell programs to help children with sounds and symbols in reading. Visualization-Verbalization is a teaching approach that is based in the theory that thinking involves the activity of two systems, the verbal system which deals directly with language and the nonverbal system which deals with objects and events. Reading involves both systems. Therefore encourage your children to visualize as they read. Tell them to turn the words into pictures. Ask them to “make a movie” in their head as they read. This idea of visualization is also useful to practice vocabulary. Instead of defining a word, ask your child to give a verbal description of what they would see for the word. For example: to visualize angry you might see a person with a frown, maybe folded arms or stamping their feet in a temper tantrum. To visualize delighted you would get a very different picture. You might say visualizing-verbalizing improves brain function. If you have any questions about the programs please feel free to call. I'd be happy to give you some suggestions to help your child at home.



## Grade 3 ~ Mrs. Meade, Mrs. Cox, Ms. Egan, & Mr. Perfetuo

Third grade has had a wonderful start to the school year! Mrs. Meade, Mr. Perfetuo, and Ms. Egan have welcomed Mrs. Cox to the team of teachers. There are many exciting things in store for third graders!

Please note that spelling tests are on Fridays, and children should review their words each night. The students' Take-Home folders and Homework Checklists help them stay organized during a busy week. In addition to written homework, students should be reading 20-30 minutes daily, as we feel that this is important to improving reading skills.

We have finished our first theme in the Trophies reading program, “Something Special.” The children have enjoyed reading stories from a variety of different genres. They are learning to use strategies and focus skills that are used by good readers. Our language arts studies have included writing descriptive paragraphs and using colorful words. Grammar lessons included types of sentences and proper punctuation, subjects and predicates, and compound sentences. We are in the middle of our second theme, “What a Team!” In this theme



children are reading about animals and people who work together to help others. Grammar lessons include all types of nouns: common, proper, singular, plural, and singular possessive. Students will work on writing an effective paragraph. The third theme in our Trophies reading program will be “Friends to Grow With.” During this theme, children will see how people grow and change through their relationships with others. They will do this by reading how friends and family influence real and fictional characters.

In math, children have learned about place value and money. They wrote numbers in three different forms: standard, expanded, and word. They compared, ordered, and rounded whole numbers. Students enjoyed many hands-on activities involving counting coins and bills. In Unit 2, *Addition and Subtraction*, students are learning about the properties of addition, the rules of subtraction, how to estimate sums, regroup ones and tens, and add and subtract greater numbers. After the holidays, students will begin their multiplication studies. We will be

exploring the relationship between repeated addition and multiplication. They will use the Commutative Property, Associative Property, and Properties of One and Zero to find missing numbers. They will be learning to skip count, draw a picture, and write a multiplication sentence to find the product. When multiplication lessons begin, it is very important that your child practice their facts each day.

*Massachusetts Our Home* is the topic of the third grade social studies program. The first topic has been History Close to Home, which includes topics like State Symbols and the first people to settle in our area.

Third grade has a new Science program! The first unit, How Living Things Function, includes parts of plants, classifying animals, and how living things grow and Reproduce. The children have enjoyed learning about how plants survive and the characteristics of vertebrates and invertebrates. Future studies include survival of living things and food chains.

Thank you very much for your support throughout the year and we hope that you enjoy the upcoming holiday season.

## Grade 4 ~ Mrs. Bargar, Ms. Collura, & Mrs. Hurley

Fourth grade students in Mrs. Bargar's reading classes recently concluded their first reading theme "You Can Do It!" The unit included five fictional stories in which characters encountered challenges and tackled them creatively, relying on their own unique ideas, interests, and abilities to do so. Students learned approximately forty new vocabulary words throughout the unit, but one word in particular resonated most powerfully for fourth graders: **sportsmanship**. In their reading story students learned that as a superior athlete, Lou Gehrig demonstrated the qualities of sportsmanship with humility and honor. Our fourth graders have made improved sportsmanship a goal of their class and they are working on their behavior during lunch recess to reflect this new goal. "You Can Do It" is a theme our fourth graders have connected to in a very positive way!

Our next reading theme is "Side by Side". In this unit students will explore situations that highlight the benefits of teamwork. Students will read a play, a folktale, a realistic fiction piece, as well as two nonfiction magazine articles that demonstrate how cooperation strengthens relationships. Here are some suggested activities to complement our upcoming reading unit:



Bake muffins, a pie, or a cake with your child and use the experience to practice math activities ("The Baker's Neighbor")

Visit a library and learn how to build a homemade kite ("The Emperor and the Kite")

Visit an animal shelter to learn firsthand how animals are cared for there. ("The Night of the Pufflings")

Choose a community volunteer project to work on together, such as a local food drive, or neighborhood clean up day, such as Cleaner Greener Quincy Day. ("The Garden of Happiness")

With your child review upcoming shows on your local public television network to find documentaries about rain forest habitats, great apes, or other topics related to wildlife and conservation. ("How to Babysit an Orangutan")

On a final note, please remember that your fourth grade child is not too old to be read to!

Excerpted from our Trophies technology page, "The Learning Site" ([www.harcourtschool.com](http://www.harcourtschool.com)) is a great suggestion for parents who want to further instill a love of reading in their child:

*Children who are read to grow to love books. Over the years, these children will have good memories to treasure. They remember stories that made them laugh and stories that made them cry. They remember sharing these times with someone they love, and they anticipate with joy the time when they will be able to read for themselves.*

*By reading aloud together, by being examples, and by doing other activities, parents are in a unique position to help children enjoy reading and see the value of it.*

In Social Studies, students in Grade 4 have been exploring the United States. Students have learned about the American landscape, climate, and natural resources in the U.S. Fourth graders have also been studying American government and economy. As the year goes on, students will explore the regions of the United States in depth as they focus on geography, people, and history of the regions.

In Spelling and Grammar, students are learning common spelling patterns in words as well as sentence parts, such as subjects and predicates. Also this year in Grammar, students are taking an in depth look into figurative language. Spelling and Grammar are incorporated into the writing as well to make it meaningful and useful to the children. In Writing Class children are learning to become creative and thoughtful writers. Students are brainstorming ideas, writing first drafts, revising their work using focus areas, and publishing their compositions.

Students have also been very busy in fourth grade math! We have spent time learning the classroom procedures and adjusting to switching between three different teachers. We have learned the importance of place value and enjoyed adding and subtracting money. The children have practiced rounding large numbers and have created bar graphs. The focus recently has been on multiplication. Please spend any time you can reviewing the multiplication facts with your child. A great website to use is [multiplication.com](http://multiplication.com). Ask your child to show you some of the fun games they can enjoy while practicing their facts on this website. Your child's mastery of the multiplication facts will ensure they are well prepared as we begin multiplication and division of larger numbers. The next few months will be spent mastering these skills as well as algebraic reasoning, customary and metric measurements, and time and temperature. We are off to a great start and looking forward to growing and learning together.



## Literacy ~ Mrs. Iredale & Mrs. Maver

Montclair school welcomes Mrs. Eileen Maver this year! Mrs. Maver and Mrs. Iredale are currently delivering specialized instruction in phonics and comprehension, using a program called *Project Read*. This program is designed to improve decoding fluency. Children need to master the rules of phonics in decoding before they can read sentences or passages with increased speed or fluency. Since there is a direct corre-



lation between fluency and comprehension we need to strengthen the decoding stage of the reading process first. Project Read includes special take-home Bonnie Kline Readers for rereading practice which further increases fluency. We encourage parents to assist their children in monitoring the Bonnie Kline rereads and rereads of familiar books or stories as well.

This fall the DIBELS tests and GRADE test for grades two and three were administrated.

Both tests are used to determine instruction. The GRADE test is used primarily to determine a child's comprehension level. Many of our students can decode words but fail to understand what they have read. We will be working continuously throughout the school year using various methods to improve comprehension. We are looking forward to increasing our decoding, fluency and comprehension as the year progresses.

## School Nurse ~ Mrs. Joyce

Hello from the nurse's office. It was a pleasure to meet many parents during open house, please feel free to stop by my office any time to discuss health concerns.

**Flu Season** ~ H1N1 and seasonal influenza are a worry for many, in addition to frequent hand washing and good cough etiquette there are other steps you can take to lessen your chance of coming down with the flu. Talk with your doctor about getting the flu vaccine for your family. Maintain good health practices such as daily exercise, nine to eleven hours of sleep for children and nutritious meals. If your child becomes sick; rest, plenty of liquids and fever reducing medicine will help your child feel more comfortable. At least 24 hours of good health without medicine is required before return to school.

**Medications** ~ If your child requires medication during the school day, written permission must be received from you and **your child's doctor**. An adult must deliver medication in a pharmacy labeled container to the nurse. Children may not bring any medication to school; this includes Tylenol, cough and allergy medicine, eye drops and any other medicine.

**Physical Exam** ~ All grade four students are required to submit a current physical exam with immunization record. Please make arrangements for your child to have a physical exam now, if you have not already done so.

### **Communicate with the Nurse!**

Please notify me if your child:

- Has a change in health status.
- Is taking medication, even if only at home.
- Has been injured outside of school.
- Has any **allergies**, particularly to foods.
- Receives any immunizations.
- If you have any questions or concerns about your child's health at school.



Any communication you have with me will remain confidential unless I have your permission to share information with school staff. By working together, we can help your child to have a successful year.

Mrs. Peggy Joyce 617-984-8928 Mjoyce@quincy.k12.ma.us

## ELL ~ Mrs. Fung, Mrs. Wu, & Mrs. Haraska

ELL program is designed to assist students acquiring English in four domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students who do not speak English at home, or their first language is not English are defined as English Language Learners (ELLs). They receive English language development instructions from ELL teachers on a regular basis. For the high English proficiency level students all instructions are delivered by their subject teachers. However, they are monitored closely for two years. If they are able to perform all the grade level work independently they will be promoted out of the program. In 2009 the majority of ELLs performed very well in MCAS.

We are very proud of them.

As for teaching, *Into English*, published by Hampton Brown, is our reading program for English acquisition. Some units of this program are bound to the significant American festivities which students can compare and contrast them with their own culture. At the same time they can learn the associated vocabulary words and apply them to their social language and academic work. For the beginners, English acquisition component is focus on the phonics. When they acquire more skills in English the focus is shifted to grammar and writing.



Aside from teaching, Massachusetts Elementary and Secondary Education Department administers the Massachusetts English Proficiency Assessment (MEPA) to evaluate the English proficiency of all ELLs in reading and writing, and the Massachusetts English Language Assessment-Oral (MELA-O) in listening and speaking. The results of the assessments are used to support your child's education and help improve our services. Thank you for your involvement of your child's education in school and the hard work of all attended students.

## Art ~ Mrs. O'Brien

Art activities help build children's skills in every area of development: physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and creative.

Children strengthen their perceptual-motor and eye-hand coordination when they do art activities. Art gives children wonderful opportunities to express their feelings, build a sense of accomplishment and respond to experiences. This term the students explored and interpreted the themes of lines, shapes, color, design, proportion, and composition. Natural and imaginary landscapes and environments were created in response to the world we live in; stressing foreground, middle ground, and background. The sky was emphasized in landscapes, as in the background that not only encompasses the space on the top of the paper, but extends to the horizon line. The season of autumn was explored by the changing color of leaves through collage, leaf people, and bag puppets. Also, the fun activities of Halloween were expressed in designer bags, masks, houses, paper wall hangings, and midnight landscapes. In the future, family, food, harvesting, fall fun and fantasy will be themes to study in an art experience to create meaning.

Your child's an artist! Ask for permission to take a special creation of theirs to your work place for hanging or display. Start a family tradition of sending their matted and framed art to aunts, uncles, and grandparents for holidays and birthdays as special and personal gifts from your child.



## Speech ~ Mrs. Harkins

Speech and language sessions have begun! Students work on a variety of speech and language areas. One area that is addressed is articulation. Articulation is the correct placement and production of speech sounds. Students first achieve correct placement of speech sounds in isolation, then in single words, then in short sentences, then in conversation. Because the



production of speech sounds is stored in the procedural memory system of the brain, daily practice sessions, out loud, are necessary in order to achieve correct speech sound production during all speaking situations.

Other students address keeping track of the order of sounds in words that they are decoding by using feedback from placement of

lips, tongue, and teeth. This approach makes their reading decoding faster and more accurate.

Another area addressed in Speech is the task of remembering what you hear. Students practice strategies like attention, repetition, and visualization. Students need to pay attention to their own speech and to remember everything that their classroom teacher is saying.

## Grade 5 ~ Mrs. Joyce, Mr. Mullen, & Mrs. Ronayne

We began our year in Social Studies creating geography notebooks. Now that they have been completed, these books are a great resource for our weekly "Grow" sheets. Check them out, they're fantastic!

"United We Stand" is our annual community service-learning project. Our mission was to promote voting awareness through song and movement. Learning is always more fun when you incorporate the arts! We brought our message to the entire school and encouraged our classmates to persuade all adults to exercise their right to vote.

We are now moving our studies across the United States and exploring the areas of America where millions of people called home between 28,000 BC to 1500 AD. Learning about the ancient civilizations of the Aztec, Maya and the Inca helped the students create a contrast and comparison poster. The regions of the Southwest, Plains, Woodland and the Northwest Coast will be our focus. We will discuss economic, social and cultural activities of the people in early America.

Please ask your children to share their social studies notebooks. You will be able to follow along as we work our way through the Harcourt Social Studies text, "Making a New Nation."

Learning the fundamentals in language is an important focus of the fifth grade Language Arts curriculum. Understanding the parts of speech, spelling and usage will help our students develop solid communication skills. This term we have been working with different types of sentences, nouns, pronouns, verbs and ad-

jectives. Knowing these parts of speech has assisted your child in creating writing samples that would make you proud.

We will continue to build and advance spelling, grammar and mechanics skills as we apply them into different writing styles and essays. Each child has a portfolio located in Room 17. This folder will be sent home at the end of the year filled with various writing samples. However, feel free to stop by anytime and take a look at your child's collection of work.

Have you asked your child what they've read lately? We've just begun our second Harcourt Trophies reading theme of the year "Teamwork" which includes selections that will take readers to the Iditarod, the world's most famous sled dog race. We will learn about the lives of the mushers (racers) and their sled dog teams as they prepare for and participate in this event. Student literature circles will also read Stone Fox written by John Reynolds Gardiner to compare the life of Willie and his faithful dog Searchlight to the lives of today's junior Iditarod competitors.

In addition to completing their Harcourt Trophies reading selections each week, students are also working on the six basic reading comprehension skills of sequence, conclusion, facts, main idea, context, and inference. We have recently completed sequence and conclusion and now will begin learning to "read between the lines" looking for the hidden meaning of an author's words.

You might be surprised to discover almost all of our own 5<sup>th</sup> grade book critics have read at least 5 books (some have read many more) in the first two months of the school year. Andrew Clements, author of Frin-dle, Lunch Money and the Report Card, has pulled out in front of J.K. Rowling as the favorite 5<sup>th</sup> grade author but Jeff Kinney's Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Dog Days is a hot commodity during any reading class. Students recommending favorite reads to other students have become common practice. Could student guided book clubs be far behind?

Each week, 5<sup>th</sup> grade readers are completing written projects in their reader's response journals that encourage students to put themselves in the place of the characters they are reading about or ask the author questions about events that take place in the book, or even write the next chapter to a book that doesn't end the way they think it should. If you haven't seen a reader's response journal yet, ask to, you'll be amazed to read about the connections your student is making to his/her own life experiences as he/she thinks about what he/she is reading.

During the first term in Grade 5 math we have been working on different areas that are somewhat of a review for the students. We have covered place values, addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and some basic algebra. We have also worked on estimating and checking actual answers to estimates. Mr. Mullen has stressed to the kids the necessity of their knowing the multiplication facts.



## Grade 5 Continued...

As the year progresses, the course content will become more challenging, and the students need to know their facts.

We have been practicing how to go about solving problems, many of which involve words – in other words - word problems. The students need to understand that they need to take all of the proper steps, show all of their work, label their answer, check their work etc. There have been weekly assignments called Continental Math that consist of several word problems. The students have been working on problem solving strategies needed to solve the problems.

As mentioned the course will be getting more challenging. During term 2, we will be working on things such as measurement, graphing data, statistics, fractions, decimals, and percents. New topics that we will cover over the course of the year have also been introduced. These include term 2 topics, geometry, area, perimeter, volume, and probability. Please note that Mr. Mullen will *introduce* these topics. He would like the kids to have a bit of exposure to impor-

tant concepts prior to covering them in the textbook.

Please look for letters that explain new units that will be covered in Math. These can be helpful when you are working with your children. Also, please let Mr. Mullen know if you have any question, concerns, ideas etc.

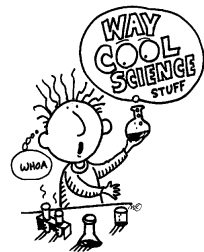
Do you and child have anything common? Some days you probably don't think so, but, Mont-

clair's 5<sup>th</sup> grade scientists can prove you wrong. After spending September identifying traits passed from generation to generation in some families and others that are acquired in response to changes in the environment, students completed a family dichotomy proving in black and white the parent and siblings with whom they share common attributes.

October science classes were spent observing the structure of plants and how these structures function together like a team to keep the plant alive. After reading about how seeds travel students constructed their own in-

ventions to aid in the safe movement of a seed from one location to another. Next students will experience the job of an agricultural engineer as they create tools intended to assist insects in the pollination process. To complete our study of plants students will participate in a scavenger hunt to locate and identify examples of the many types of leaves, stems and roots they have learned about in class.

Looking ahead, 5<sup>th</sup> grade scientists will combine their observation skills and knowledge about traits to explore the world's ecosystems and biomes. Students will recognize the relationship between living and nonliving elements necessary for all members in an ecosystem to thrive and understand how changes in air, climate, soil or water conditions can drastically affect plants and animals in an ecosystem. After developing a clear understanding about the components common to all ecosystems students will read one of Jean Craighead George's One Day in the ..... series in preparation for creating ecosystem murals.



## Physical Education ~ Mr. King

The boys and girls at Montclair got off to a wonderful start in Physical Education class. The students have been learning the importance of being physically fit by participating in a variety of sports, games and dance. The past two months we have been learning the fundamentals of soccer, each class starts with a series of cardiovascular warm-ups such as jump rope, running, tag games and shuttle run. The students then learn basic skills of soccer such as passing, dribbling, trapping and shooting. After each class the students review what they have learned. My goal as a Physical Education teacher is to focus on the improvement of each child's fundamental motor skills and give each student a positive experience so they can maintain a health lifestyle in school as well as at home. I look forward to working with your child throughout the year and encourage you to help your child learn the importance of physical fitness.



## QPAC to Special Education

If your child is on an IEP, 504 Plan, placed “out-of district” or receives any special services through the Quincy Public Schools, you may want to attend the QPAC to Special Education Meetings.

The Quincy Parent Advisory Council (QPAC) to Special Education is a formally organized group of people committed to the best possible services for children with special needs. The council, established in 1977, functions under the state mandate for MA regulations.

QPAC meets monthly to provide

information, insights, techniques, and encouragement through informal discussions and special presentations.

All meetings are open to the public and are advertised in the Patriot Ledger, Quincy Sun, and on Quincy Cable Channels 22, 10, and 8.

See [www.quincypac.org](http://www.quincypac.org) for updated meeting agenda, minutes, or changes.

The next General QCAP Meeting will take place on Tuesday, December 15, 2009, from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

### **QPAC to Special Education Meetings**

3rd Tuesdays of the Month

September—June

7:00pm—9pm

From 6:30pm-7:00pm a volunteer will be available to address any specific questions or concerns you may have.

Meetings are held at

Broad Meadows Middle School

50 Calvin Road, Quincy, MA

## Quincy School-Community Partnership

The Quincy School-Community Partnership works to bring our schools, businesses and community organizations together to enhance the educational lives and opportunities of Quincy Public School students through the many strengths of each partner. Business and community partners gain positive exposure in the community, while students gain valuable insight into business and community practices. Every-one benefits from this exciting initiative.

“The Quincy School-Community Partnership has raised over \$250,000 for Quincy School students.



Every dollar directly funds teacher mini-grants, provides instrument and instruction for QPS music students, supports technology in the classroom and many other programs which make a difference in the education of our students.”

Several of our teachers were the proud recipients of mini-grants from funds raised through the Partnership. Congratulations to: Mrs. Nancy Joyce (5th Grade Teacher), Mrs. Mary Hurley (4th Grade Teacher), Mrs. Kathleen Meade (3rd Grade Teacher), Mrs. Stephanie Torrey (Band Teacher), Mrs. Tina Iredale (Literacy Specialist) and Mrs. Eileen Maver (Literacy Specialist).

Below is the first Quincy-School Community Partnership celebration scheduled for this school year:

**’Tis the Season...**

**Symphony & Song!**

**Celebrate the sounds of the holiday season** FEATURING THE QUINCY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA and Combined High School Choral Group Tuesday, December 8, 2009 at 8:00 P.M. Festivities begin at 7:00 P.M. in the Hotel Foyer featuring strolling carolers, a gift bazaar and raffle. Ticket Price: \$25.00

Please contact me at school for tickets or questions regarding any of the Celebrations.

# Montclair School

8 Belmont Street  
North Quincy, MA 02171  
Phone: 617-984-8708

*Renée Lalumiere-Malvesti, Principal*  
[rlalumiere@quincy.k12.ma.us](mailto:rlalumiere@quincy.k12.ma.us)

*Nancy Joyce, Assistant Principal*  
[njoyce@quincy.k12.ma.us](mailto:njoyce@quincy.k12.ma.us)



**Montclair School ~  
A Great Place to Grow!**

We're on the Web!  
[www.quincypublicschools.com](http://www.quincypublicschools.com)

Greetings to All Montclair Families!

With the close of the first term, I am happy to say we have had a successful start to the 2009-2010 school year. Students have quickly grown accustomed to the routines and expectations of their teachers and have been hard at work in their classes.

I am energized to continue the excellence of education and established traditions of the Montclair School. I am quite proud of the first edition of the 2009-2010 Curriculum Newsletter. The teachers and staff made terrific contributions for you to enjoy! During this month of November, students are learning about Thanksgiving and sharing what they are thankful for. I am thankful for the fantastic Montclair School Community. I am thankful for our students who come to school and give the best that they can every day. I am thankful for our teachers who dedicate their time and energy and to our secretary, nurse, custodians, and paraprofessionals who care for our students. I am thankful for your continued support and the parent volunteers who give to our school so freely. May you find things to be thankful for this holiday season and have a very Happy Thanksgiving!

I encourage you to access the school website for up-to-date information and news. Additionally, please feel free to call the school or drop by with any questions you may have. I am always here for you and your child.

Sincerely,

Renée Lalumiere– Malvesti, Principal



Above are a few pictures of the 21st Century After School Clubs happening at Montclair School!