

February 7, 2008

Mr. C

The students in Mr. C's first and fifth period classes continue to work hard. They are both nearly finished with Unit 15 in Book C of the *Language!* curriculum. As related to decoding and spelling skills, the recent focus has been on words that follow a vowel consonant vowel pattern. Also, the students continue to practice spelling common sight words and continue to learn common prefixes and roots. Additionally, the students have been reading passages to compliment their work in *Language!* related to all types of heroes. Both classes have completed Norton Juster's *The Phantom Tollbooth* and will begin another novel after a short break from weekly reading assignments. Finally, the students are now working on their second five-paragraph essay. The goal this time around is to complete the assignment with greater independence.

The students in Mr. C's third period are nearly finished with Harper Lee's *To Kill A Mockingbird*. They are all proud to have made it through this difficult yet important book. Shortly they will be writing five-paragraph essays on one of the book's themes. They continue make progress through the *Language!* curriculum's book E, unit 25. They are studying the two sounds of oo, advanced morphology, writing and reading comprehension skills. After a short break from weekly readings, they will begin another novel.

Mr. C's fourth period Texas History class is making swift progress through the textbook. The group recently finished chapters on the Civil War and Reconstruction. They have begun a new unit that will chronicle the growth in population and expanding settlements of Texas leading up to the early 1900s. The students have class discussions, answer questions, take tests, create depictions, and write paragraphs to reinforce their understanding of the subject matter.

The seventh period Language Arts class is working with the Diana Kings' grammar program. They continue to reinforce parts of speech, basic sentence structure and they have recently begun working on expanded paragraphs. They are also reading the *Phantom Tollbooth* on Fridays. When time permits, the students have been creating short films to reinforce their understanding of the parts of speech. They class hopes to create a video for each one.

Mrs. O.

The Science Fair has come and gone. I appreciate the guidance parents have provided for your students to be successful in this project. Although a significant amount of classroom time was spent explaining the scientific method and reviewing, editing, and rewriting individual assignments, the bulk of the work was done with your supervision and help gathering materials, conducting the experiments, scribing, editing, and typing. I hope you were able to see the displays at school or at the Austin Fair on February 21.

Mr. D.

Over the last several weeks in world cultures, we have been immersed in our examination of the Asian countries. We have studied different aspects of the Asian culture within such countries such as China, Japan, and Indonesia through short videos, current events, and textbook reading. Students designed their own colorful currency of a specific country based on Internet research.

In math, students have mastered many different concepts including: multiplying decimals, estimating, and rounding. We were able to take a field trip to Starbucks to experience first-hand the real world application of these skills. In addition, students measured the area and perimeter of their own created shapes to help reinforce the concept. We also spent time calculating the area and perimeter of objects in and outside of the classroom.