

4 April 2014

Parents -

Another eventful week in 4th grade – don't even THINK that we are winding things down as the end of the year approaches. This is when we truly begin to reap the harvest of all the hard work which the students have put in so far this year. As Mrs. Harr shared with us at the assembly today, where would we be today if the Wright brothers, after spending over 2 years working just on gliding aircraft, had kicked back and coasted instead of then investing another year of invention and effort to mounting an engine on their plane?

Here are just a few of the highlights of the week - please ask your child for details - do NOT accept that we did "nuthin" or "same old, same old" in class (which is exactly what my own children always tried to tell me!)

- our Classroom Economy auction was almost as exciting as last weekend's Art Auction, with spirited bidding on items including "super" balls, cookies, and the right to sit in Mr. Mac's cushy chair for a week. Every child bought something this time, a first for our auctions. Robbie bid \$750 for my chair, and he says it's worth it every time he sees me sitting on my hard plastic replacement!
- at the auction, Kaedon bid \$471 for the power to set the seating assignments for the next month – the rest of the day was quite an education for him as he was cajoled, sweet-talked, strong-armed, and aggressively lobbied by his classmates (I think in the end he may have regretted his purchase – he certainly learned that "with great power comes great responsibility"!)
- I discovered that this group of children LOVES to read plays aloud – so much so that they chose to rehearse and perform a Language Arts TCAP practice passage during their snack time! I quickly changed our review for the Social Studies test to an American Revolution readers' theater piece – the students enjoyed it, but they did regret missing the chance to earn MacBucks playing Jeopardy.
- The students are putting the finishing electronic touches on the wonderful "legendary" stories they have worked so hard on these past weeks in writers workshop – I will publish the collection on our website once all are complete.
- at today's assembly Kaedon and Jackson both received Excellence in Math awards for the 3rd term – CONGRATULATIONS!

To save time, I have posted the math practice questions for the next unit as one PDF file – please let me know if this format causes you any problems. Some of the students have started working ahead on homework over the weekends to lessen their nightly burden; I understand the desire to get it done all at once, but there is also great retention value in

reviewing every day. Might I suggest a compromise, such as working ahead on the odd-number questions over the weekend, and then doing the even questions on the weeknights?

If you haven't signed on lately, please check out <http://mrmcilquham.weebly.com/> to see what you've been missing. My web site continues to evolve almost daily, and I'm gratified that so many of you are regular visitors. I try to change the home screen and quotes frequently, Ella's interesting (and eclectic) news reports are posted each day, and just this week I added a new Language Conventions page to help with the figurative speech devices we have been covering in class. Regrettably, there have been no attempts to solve my latest Challenge - I guess no one shares my appreciation for NPR's Car Talk!

Have a good weekend, and I sincerely thank you for trusting me with your children's education!

Mr. Mac