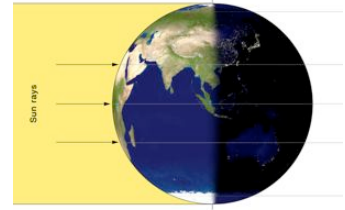




2nd Home/School Connection! Thursday, September 20, 2012



HAPPY FALL EQUINOX

SCIENCE/TRASH TRACKS: As we begin our study of the earth and its environment, we began to examine trash, so to speak. You wrote some ideas and questions on post-its about garbage and recycling. Do you remember what you wrote? Many of you began to wonder how much garbage we use in a day, week, year, etc. Some of you wondered how much trash you would have in your house if it was not collected each week and you thought about how much garbage our school creates. Next we began to talk about the earth and all it gives us. You made a great list of items such as food, water, air, gravity, resources etc. Some of you even knew about the earth's atmosphere and the Goldilocks' Principal- Venus is too hot, Mars is too cold, but Earth is just right. We then had a discussion about how as the population grows, so does the amount of garbage, and the impact of all that garbage is not healthy for our earth. The good news is that there is a lot you can do to reduce the amount of waste and garbage. You watched a little video about a woman named Beth Terry who tried to cut back on her use of plastic. You heard about the 3rd grader who won a contest to redesign packaging and you saw some samples of schools and other designs being made with plastic bottles. All of these can be reviewed on our website.

<http://starkroom302siteforyou.weebly.com/>

TRACKS OF THINKING: You read an article about the history of trash and left tracks of your thinking. Describe some of what surprised you when you read about the history of garbage. We also used the article to learn how to code your questions. Try to explain the codes: (huh? =confused), (V.W=vocabulary word), (R.S.=Research) and (D/W=Discussion/Wondering about). Do you remember any of your questions? What new questions do you have about recycling, plastic or garbage? What questions do your parents have about trash? 5th grade is responsible for collecting the recycled papers in our school. What else do you think might be a good action plan for our class?

ATLAS: For our scientific research and for the social studies we will do on the history of our country, it is crucial that we know about geography. On Wednesday, you had a chance to spend time appreciating an atlas and all that it can tell you. For example, you looked at a *land cover map*, a *political map* and an *elevation map*. Explain what each of these maps tells you. I asked you which map do you think is changing the fastest. What do you think after having discussed it? What do your parents think? What else did you learn from reviewing the atlas?



MATH: We are in the midst of our algebra unit. This week you have solved more complicated input/output tables with multi-step rules and you have started thinking about the commutative property. Do you know which operations have the commutative property and which ones don't? Can you explain why that is? Do you like algebra? How is it connected to other types of math you do? How is it different?

EMPATHY and NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION: Empathy was our Thursday Words-day. Explain what it means. You are also learning to think about how your body language, tone of voice and actions 'say' a lot to someone else. Describe this. Compare it to an animal that cannot talk. How might you make an effort to have more empathy for someone in the class you don't know that well. What does body language have to do with that?

SUMMER BOOK EXPO- SUMMARIES AND REVIEWS: The first book you are going to summarize and review this year is one you read over the summer. In order to do this, you reviewed what a summary is and some key parts of a book such as the main problem, characters, setting, rising action, climax, falling action/ dénouement (pronounced day-noo-maun) and the resolution/end. This is not an easy task. It's easier to do for shorter stories like *The Three Little Pigs*, but tricky for longer stories like the ones you read this summer. You are learning how to use two column notes to help you get your thoughts organized for your presentation. How is it going so far? We will get more practice reviewing books together and summaries will get easier. I promise.

SOCIAL STUDIES/CONSTITUTION: We've had our first Constitutional Conventions to review some of your suggested amendments. We had a debate about whether to add 'Be honest' to our laws. Some people thought it might already be included in our 'Be respectful' law; some thought it's different. You debated and then voted. Even though a little more than half the class voted for it, the proposed amendment did not pass because it didn't get a 2/3 vote. Many of you thought that wasn't fair, but that is how our legislative branch is set up. Perhaps we can have another debate to see if you can convince more of your legislators to change their minds. Some of you also want to add 'Have Fun' to our constitution. I am interested to see how you can make having fun a law. Where do you stand on some of these issues? Be honest. (That's a constitutional joke).

SPECIALS/SOMETHING ELSE: What's going on in your specials? Music, Art, P.E., Library, C.O.B., Chinese... **SOMETHING ELSE?** Morning meeting, Completions, Change Poems, Postcards, recess, hallway noise, exercise, Write what you chose to talk about

_____.

We made a time to do this on: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Comments:

Student rating for how it went: _____

