



CTL CORNER

Center for Teaching & Learning | 5125 Shadowbend Place, The Woodlands, TX 77381 | 832-474-8214

Important Dates

April 3 - School Holiday

April 10 - Join us for Pizza at the Park and Fitness Fun at 11:45 a.m., followed by our Parent Council meeting at 12:30 p.m.

April 20 - Field Trip to Main Street Theater to see *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing*. More information to come.

Important Reminders

*Please ensure your child is at school no later than 8 a.m. for our daily Morning Meeting that begins promptly at 8 a.m.

*Make sure your child has a snack, lunch, and water bottle every day and tennis shoes on PE days.

*Encourage your child to show CTL school spirit by wearing his/her CTL t-shirt each Friday.

PLEASE NOTE:
We invite you to email any of our CTL team members by clicking on their names in this newsletter, which are now linked to their email addresses.



Happy April!



It's hard to believe we are already finalizing enrollment for the 2015-2016 school year! Our first year here at CTL is flying by, and we know that's because of our amazing team. By **TEAM** we mean our CTL teachers, students, and **YOU** — our incredible families. Together, we have created a special and unique school culture that ignites a love of learning in each of our students.

March is full of many examples of the kinds of activities that have made CTL the place to be! We celebrated Dr. Seuss's Read Across America Week, National Oreo Cookie Day, Texas Independence Day, Fire Safety and Awareness, Kid Entrepreneurs, Pi Day, School Pictures, Texans Celebrity Ball, and much much more. This is in addition to the rich academic learning you will read about throughout this newsletter. We even had a special guest, Dr. Jamie Marsh, a CTL Board Member, visit from Los Angeles this week!

Looking ahead, student learning in April will extend beyond the classroom as we embark on enriching field trips — more information to come. We are also busy finalizing our location for next school year and will let you know updates as soon as possible. Thank you for hanging in there and offering to help and support this process however you can!

As always, we truly appreciate you continuing this journey with us!

Linda Ellis and Jennifer Chamberlain





K-2 Class

This month our class did so many fun things. We celebrated Dr. Seuss by reading many of his books and even making green eggs and ham! We had a green out party to celebrate filling our animal jar. It was a great way to celebrate St. Patrick's day as well! The kids even found the leprechaun's gold!!!



We are learning about Life Science. The class discussed the life cycle of a seed and the parts of a plant. Their sunflower seeds just started to sprout, and they are so excited! We will send them home soon. Also we are waiting on the delivery of our caterpillars so we can observe the life cycle of a butterfly!!!



Mrs. Blakeslee has been working with the second graders to teach regrouping in addition and subtraction. We have begun our section on geometry and 2 and 3 D shapes as well. The class has done some review to keep their basic math strong.

Please look for information to come soon about our FIRST FIELD TRIP!!! We can't wait!



I am so proud of all of their hard work! The students really crave learning which makes it so much fun!

Lisa Lipar

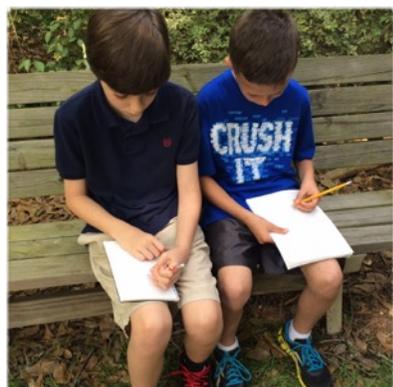
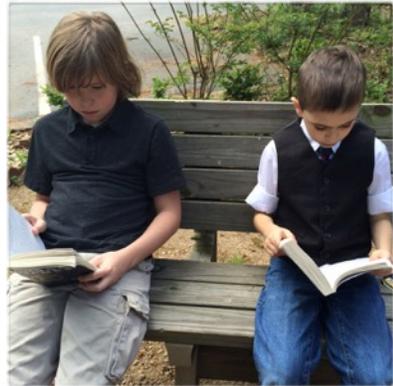
3-8 Language Arts

The third through fifth grade class completed their read aloud *The Mysterious Benedict Society* before spring break. I taught many story elements through this shared text. Students enjoyed the book's suspense and unpredictable ending. Many are interested in reading the second book in the series. The last book chosen for our read aloud is *The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan. This will offer opportunities to teach additional story elements and dive deeper into character and plot analysis.



The sixth through eighth grade class completed the read aloud of *The Underneath*. Students enjoyed the lyrical language and vivid descriptions used to





draw the reader in and many experimented with this style in their own writing. Our next read aloud is *The Paperboy* by Vince Vawter. This will introduce students to another style of writing that they may be inspired to explore in some of their future writing.

We are very proud of the growth we've seen in the books students are selecting to read independently. We will continue to support each reader's development through the class read aloud and individual reading conferences.

Thank you for encouraging your children to read at home every day. This has a great impact on their progress as readers and writers!



Since returning from Spring Break, students have worked on developing their stories in writing workshop. Their stories have become more complex and developed over the course of the year. In the coming weeks, students will learn revision strategies to further enhance their stories. We will continue to teach conventions through individual writing conferences and mini-lessons.

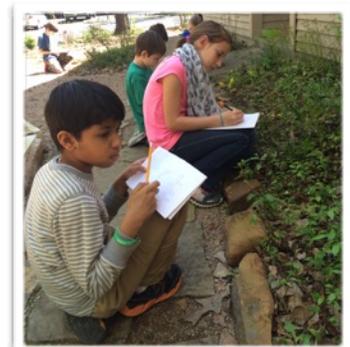
During the last months of school, third through fifth grade students will be introduced to cursive writing. A brief lesson will be taught in class and a practice sheet will be sent home. Students who have mastered cursive writing will not be required to complete the practice sheets.

In the coming weeks, sixth through eighth grade students will complete a multi-genre research project. They will choose a topic that interests them, research the topic thoroughly, and present their findings in several different genres. I will send home soon more information regarding this project.

Angela Bailey

3-8 Math/Science

The third to fifth graders started the month by studying the sun and water cycle in science. Many students already knew the four basic stages of the cycle: evaporation, condensation, precipitation, and accumulation. So, we learned how water molecules can travel through the cycle in other ways, such as through plants, animals, and glaciers. We also created models to help us see how nature filters water through the processes of filtration and evaporation. After spring break, we studied the planets and the rotation and revolution of the Earth and its moon. We learned about the lunar phases and discussed some of the current projects by NASA and other organizations. We are now starting our life science unit. We will begin by learning about





different ecosystems. We are excited to be participating in an interactive study online with other schools from all over the United States where we will be able to share what the ecosystem is like around our school and compare it to theirs. In the last two months of school, we will also learn about food chains and food webs, structures of plants and animals, adaptations, inherited traits and learned behaviors, life cycles, and producers, consumers, and decomposers.

The sixth to eighth graders have been working on different topics within earth and space science. At the beginning of the month, they finished work on the rock cycle, watersheds, and the electromagnetic spectrum. More recently, the sixth and seventh graders have been studying space and space exploration. The sixth graders study the planets and other celestial bodies. They really enjoyed finding out their weight and ages on other planets! The seventh graders learned about the characteristics that make a planet habitable. They used a NASA simulation online to try to create a planet that was different from Earth and would still have characteristics that would make it habitable. We have begun our life science unit by investigating different ecosystems that exist around our school. We are learning about the importance of biodiversity within these ecosystems. In the last two months of school, we will continue to learn about ecosystems, adaptations, and systems of the human body. We will also be participating in an online collaborative study of genetic traits.

Last month in math, the third to fifth graders continued working on measurement skills and also worked on decimal concepts. Depending on the needs of the student, these are some of the skills they may have worked on:

- Memorization of multiplication facts
- Measuring and converting length, weight/mass, and volume/capacity within the customary system and metric system
- Area, perimeter, and volume
- Comparing and ordering decimals
- Adding and subtracting decimals
- Adding and subtracting money
- Locating points on a coordinate grid
- Graphing additive and multiplicative functions on a coordinate grid



Next month, we will work on concepts in geometry, including 2 dimensional and 3 dimensional shapes, area, perimeter, volume, lines, rays, and angles.

Last month, the sixth to eighth graders studied 2 dimensional geometry, including characteristics of different polygons, especially triangles and quadrilaterals. Most recently, we have begun a study of linear functions. We will continue that unit next month and then study probability and data.

In Algebra, we continued studying quadratic functions and their



equations. We have now learned about three types of functions: linear, exponential, and quadratic and situations that can be represented by them. We are currently looking at scatterplots and how a line of best fit can be found for that data. We are talking about how this can represent a correlation, although not necessarily causation, between two variables. Next month, we will continue this concept and then will complete a unit where we will extend what we've learned, applying those skills to expressions and functions.



Stephanie Phipps

3-8 Social Studies and K-8 Art

	<p><i>Month in Review</i></p> <p>Month of March 2015</p>	<p>Month of April 2015</p>
<p>SOCIAL STUDIES</p>	<p>During the month of March 2015, the students in grades 3 – 8 studied and began the following topics and activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Famous Texans Celebrity Ball That Will Include: Dressing Up In Costume Like the Famous Texans, Writing 1-2 Minute First-Person, Biographical Speeches, and Creating Business Cards for the Famous Texans o Creating Business Cards for Famous Texans o Researching the Life and Accomplishments of Self-Selected Famous Texans o Making the 7 Sub-Regions of Texas Informational Brochures o Student-Choice Written Expression Projects o Self-Assessments to self-reflect on our progress and learning 	<p>April 2015 marks the beginning of a new and fresh unit for the students of Grades 3 – 8: The History of the United States of America! They will be engaged in the following Social Studies Inquiry projects and learning activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The Pilgrims, The Decision to Leave England, The Mayflower, & The New World o Researching and Understanding the American History o Researching and Understanding the American Revolutionary War (The Reasons, The Opposing Sides, and the Outcome) o Researching and Understanding the Declaration of Independence o Facts and Brief Histories of the 50 states o Student-Choice USA States' Art & Biographical Projects o Student-Choice Written Expression Projects o Self-Assessments to self-reflect on our progress and learning
<p>ART</p>	<p>March 2015 was our month to explore fresh art concepts and learn more about art history through famous artists! Here is a snapshot of what our CTL students did:</p> <p>K-2 Class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Abstract Art + Pointillism Paintings and the Artist Georges Seurat + American Modernism and the Artist Georgia O'Keefe <p>3-5 Class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Heart-Mapping + Abstract Art and Photo Distortion + Surrealism Paintings and the Artists Salvador Dali and René Magritte + American Modernism and the Artist Georgia O'Keefe <p>6-8 Class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Inside My Thinking + Surrealism Paintings and the Artists Salvador Dali and René Magritte + American Modernism and the Artist Georgia O'Keefe + CTL Young Artist Mini-Lessons with Peter M. 	<p>During the month of April 2015, we will continue to study various art concepts and learn more about art history through famous artists!</p> <p>K-2 Class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Playdough-Making & Creating Sculptures + "Faceless" Abstract Art with Synthia St. James + Photo Distortion + Pablo Picasso's Many Art "Faces" + Lines, Shapes, and Color with Vasili Kandinsky + Nature-Art <p>3-5 Class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + "Faceless" Abstract Art with Synthia St. James + Abstract Art and Photo Distortion + De Stijl and Neoplasticism with the Artist Piet Mondrian + Pablo Picasso's Many Art "Faces" + Lines, Shapes, and Color with Vasili Kandinsky + Nature-Art <p>6-8 Class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + "Faceless" Abstract Art with Synthia St. James + De Stijl and Neoplasticism with the Artist Piet Mondrian + CTL Young Artist Mini-Lessons with Mia B. + Pablo Picasso's Many Art "Faces" + Lines, Shapes, and Color with Vasili Kandinsky + Nature-Art

CTL Parent feedback is encouraged and greatly appreciated! You are welcome to contact me anytime with questions and concerns.



Mrs. Treva McKissic, M.Ed.

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Treva McKissic



Physical Education

In like a lion and out like a lamb? Not so in PE for the month of March. Lions all the way! We began the month wrapping up the Balance, Tumbling, and Stunts Unit. I was very impressed with all our “gymnasts” and most importantly how everyone gave the new skills a try.



Volleyball fundamentals in the older classes and a unit including dribbling, volleying, and striking for the K-2 class was our next focus while the fitness and warm-up components have been all about games. Students are using skills from previous units, teamwork, and strategy — all while staying active and keeping that heart rate up.

Next month's skills: soccer and kicking! Important reminder: It is getting hot out there! Please remind your child to bring a water bottle and maybe even a hat for PE. As always, don't forget the sneakers!

Marci Murphy

Music

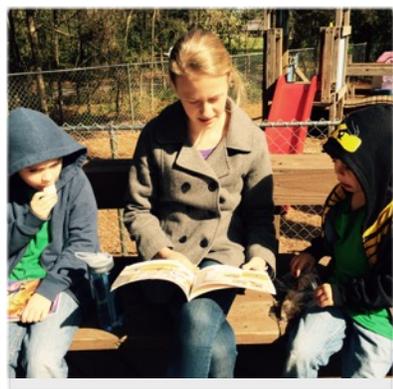
The K-2 class have been learning about symbols that are used in music and how they are like road signs to help us know HOW to sing something. They learned many new ways of playing the rhythm sticks - even behind their backs! This helped them keep a steady beat while working on their hand-eye coordination. They had a great time with Mrs. Blakeslee learning the rhythm pattern and a dance to a song called *John Tanakanaka*. Last week they were allowed to participate in the Famous Texans Ball and sang *I'm a Texas Star!* which has become one of their favorites.

Each week the 3-5 graders have learned about new composers from their classmates and listen to samples of their work. They learned how to read notes on a staff and are continuing with new chords on the ukulele. At the Famous Texans Ball they sang along with Michael Martin Murphey in *The Yellow Rose of Texas* and discovered the meaning of the song.

It was a celebration in 6-8 grade class last month as they each passed off five ukulele chords with me and played the *CTL Sunshine* song as a class at morning meeting for three days while I was gone. They finished up their composer presentations, learned to read notes on the staff, and performed *Red River Valley* with Gene Autry at the Famous Texans Ball.



This month each class will learn two songs in preparation for the class



talent shows that are happening in May. Each student will have the opportunity to audition for an individual talent so start preparing now, and look for more information to come.

Melissa Abbott

Enrichment Clubs

On Fridays CTL students are enjoying participating in the following self-selected enrichment clubs for this trimester:



- Paper Airplanes/Craft Club
- Basketball/Soccer Club
- Jump Roping Club
- Zumba Club
- Cake Decorating Club
- Logic Puzzles Club
- Board Games Club
- Ukulele/Guitar Club
- Oral Reading/Drama Club

A big thank you to our 6-8 grade student and parent volunteers who are helping lead our clubs this trimester! CTL students are continually having fun and learning from each other and you.

