



# CTL CORNER

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

## Important Dates

**January 9** - CTL parents are invited to join us for Pizza at the Park and Fitness Fun starting at 11:45 a.m., followed by our monthly Parent Council meeting at 12:30 p.m.

**January 19** - School Holiday (Martin Luther King Jr. Day)

## Important Reminders

\*Please have your child at school before 8 a.m. every morning so he/she does not miss our Morning Meeting that begins at 8 a.m.

\*Please make sure your child has a snack, lunch, and water bottle every day and a jacket on cold days.

\*Invite your child to show CTL school spirit by wearing his or her CTL t-shirt on Fridays.



## Welcome Back CTL Family!

How exciting to see our CTL students return from the holiday break and eagerly share their holiday stories with their friends in Morning Meeting.

CTL teachers met together Monday for a fun day of professional development and preparation for the students. Then today the students quickly got back into the learning groove. The building is filled with excitement once again!

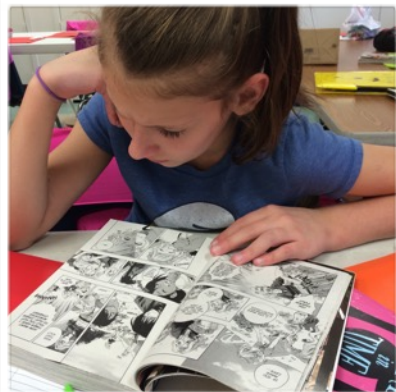
Mrs. McKissic launched Morning Meeting this week with a quote by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'" and a challenge to CTL students to share ways they show kindness. Throughout the week they will be adding to an interactive chart, I Can Give Kindness By..

We look forward to seeing our CTL parents on Friday, January 9 for Pizza at the Park and Fitness Fun followed by Parent Council. We encourage you to share your celebrations and ideas with us. If you aren't able to attend, we welcome your suggestions by email. We truly want you to be partners with us in the education of our children.

Thank you all for your generous holiday gifts as well as your contributions to the Scholastic pajama drive. CTL donated 66 sets of pajamas to the Humble Area Assistance Ministries (HAAM). Wow!

***Linda Ellis and Jennifer Chamberlain***





### *K-2 Class*

December was a whirlwind! What a great month! The class had a fantastic time studying holiday celebrations and researching individual countries. Their holiday program was a hit as well!

We worked on many new math skills last month and will review them as we begin more new skills this month. We will focus on addition/subtraction, time, money, graphing, and fractions. In Writer's Workshop we will begin our new writing journals. The older students will be working on editing and revising their favorite stories! Please keep them writing at home. Also, in reading we will continue working on our reading strategies. PLEASE check out the Scholastic Book Club

order forms, as we will order each month. This is a great way for the kids to add to their personal book collections as well as help our classroom library grow! We earn many free books through the club with every order placed! We are going to continue our science unit on rocks, soil, and water and will start exploring space in the upcoming weeks.



Also, please check my website weekly, as I post our weekly class newsletter that contains curriculum, important information, and upcoming events. I post pictures of our class in action for you as well.

If you have any question, please feel free to contact me at [llipar@centerforteachingandlearning.com](mailto:llipar@centerforteachingandlearning.com). We are excited to start the New Year in the Explorers' classroom!

**Lisa Lipar**

### *3-8 Language Arts*

How thrilling it was to hear students excited to share the many books they read, received and/or purchased over the holidays and the many stories they wrote. We are elated that our language arts vision—*We are dedicated to igniting and growing a LOVE of reading and writing in every child*—is demonstrated every day in our classroom.







We continue to model deep reading through the daily read-aloud book. At the request of the 3-5 class, Ms. Bailey is continuing to read aloud *The Mysterious Benedict Society* and beginning a new read aloud with 6-8 entitled *The Underneath* by Kathi Appelt. Students read for

approximately 30 minutes each day in class from self-selected books, and we ask them to read 30 minutes each night. This not only improves their reading fluency, stamina, vocabulary, and comprehension, but it creates avid readers. Reading improves both reading and writing.



Students are also happy to get back into their writing and sharing this week. Many wrote over the holidays and came back ready to share that writing with their peers. We will spend about two weeks teaching mini-lessons addressing fiction writing and then about two weeks on poetry writing during the months of January and early February leading up to the next portfolio preview. We are planning a February publishing party where students publish and share their books with their peers. These will go in the classroom library for others to read.

It is wonderful to see the students in their reading and writing zones again, and we are enjoying conferencing with them individually to move them forward as engaged and avid readers and writers. Thank you for supporting this effort by encouraging them to read and write at home for pleasure. If you have any questions, please contact us at [lellis@centerforteachingandlearning.com](mailto:lellis@centerforteachingandlearning.com) and/or [abailey@centerforteachingandlearning.com](mailto:abailey@centerforteachingandlearning.com).

**Linda Ellis and Angela Bailey**

### *3-8 Math/Science*

I hope you had a wonderful holiday with your child! I appreciate all of the sweet notes, gifts, and goodies you shared with me the week before break! My family has been enjoying lots of reading, board games, snuggles with our puppy, and warm drinks in front of the fire, but it will be nice to get back into a routine. We are all looking forward to another semester at CTL!





Recently, I shared with you that Mrs. Pam Blakeslee was joining us to assist with the third to fifth grade math time. She has done an amazing job so far, and we are excited that she will now be with us full time for several months as she completes the student teaching portion of her teaching degree. She will be working with me during the third to fifth grade math and science class and then will spend the remainder of the day with Mrs. Lipar's class.

Last month in science, the third to fifth graders studied soil properties and landforms and began to research volcanoes. This month, they will complete their research on volcanoes and earthquakes and then will explore natural resources, fossil fuels, and alternative energy sources. The sixth to eighth graders completed their study of force and motion with an exploration of Newton's 3 laws of motion. Then they began a PBL (Project Based Learning) on alternative energy sources. Each group is researching an alternative energy source and is preparing a presentation for an "energy council" to determine the best alternative source of energy for our country. Then we will move into our unit on Earth and Space. Last month in math, the third to fifth graders worked on multiplication and division. Depending on the needs of the student, these are some of the skills they may have worked on:

- \*Concepts of multiplication and division
- \*Ways to represent and solve multiplication and division problems
- \*Memorization of multiplication facts
- \*Fact families
- \*Interpreting remainders
- \*Multiplication and division with decimals
- \*Partial products strategy and/or standard multiplication algorithm
- \*Partial quotients strategy and/or standard division algorithm)

This month, we will complete our unit focusing on multiplication and division strategies. If your child has not memorized the multiplication facts, he/she needs to continue to practice for fact fluency at home. Our next major focus will be fraction concepts. The sixth to eighth graders have been working on measurement concepts including volume, surface area, perimeter, and area. We began our study with a focus on the two-dimensional shapes of squares and rectangles and the three-dimensional shapes of cubes and rectangular prisms. As we continue this study, we will learn how to find the measurements of additional 2D and 3D shapes.

In Algebra we completed our unit focusing on linear equations and inequalities last month. This month we begin working with quadratic functions and quadratic equations.




If you have any additional questions about what we are studying in math and science, please feel free to contact me at [sphipp@centerforteachingandlearning.com](mailto:sphipp@centerforteachingandlearning.com). I look forward to another semester with you and your children in 2015!

**Stephanie Phipps**





## 3-8 Social Studies and K-8 Art

	<h3>Month in Review</h3> <h4>Month of December 2014</h4>	 <h4>Month of January 2015</h4>
<b>SOCIAL STUDIES</b>	<p>During the month of December 2014, in Grades 3 – 8, our students have been engaged with the following Social Studies inquiry projects and learning activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating maps of their neighborhoods where they currently live</li> <li>Reading about the histories of their cities, towns, and townships and creating historical informative brochures</li> <li>Completing a self-assessment about their experiences creating their historical informative brochures and their maps of their neighborhoods</li> <li>Writing a personalized creative poem about their city, town, or township to express their feelings and discoveries about the history</li> <li>Learning about the history and customs of various cultural winter holidays from around the world (Christmas, Hanukkah, Boxing Day, Kwanzaa, New Year's Day, Chinese New Year)</li> <li>Creating Venn Diagrams to compare and contrast the facts and histories of two cultural winter holidays               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drawing and detailing Historical Sketchnote Maps of their winter holidays, based on the work of Ms. Sunni Brown's book, <i>Unlock the Power to Think Differently: The Doodle Revolution</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>CTL Art and Social Studies Updates &amp; New Student Artwork Displayed On the Website:  <a href="http://www.ctlandss.weebly.com">www.ctlandss.weebly.com</a></p>	<p>To kick-off 2015, students in Grades 3 – 8, will be engaged in the following Social Studies inquiry projects and learning activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our Great State of Texas!—Learning more about the origin and history of our state</li> <li>How Texas Became a State</li> <li>Important Historical Texan Leaders and People Who Made an Impact</li> <li>Texan Wars and Conflict in the Past</li> <li>State Historical Timeline</li> <li>State Symbols</li> <li>Texan Government</li> <li>State Events and Celebrations</li> <li>Texas Yesterday and Today—comparing and contrasting Texans</li> <li>Student-Choice State Art Projects</li> <li>Student-Choice Written Expression Projects</li> <li>Self-Assessments to self-reflect on our progress and learning</li> <li>Social Studies and Music Class Collaboration—Learning the significance of state songs</li> </ul>
<b>ART</b>	<p>All CTL Students were involved in creating winter art throughout the entire month! Each week brought a new Winter Project for the students to engage in. Check out what they created:</p> <p><b>K-2 Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Snow Globes</li> <li>Cardinals in Winter</li> <li>Elf Yourself</li> </ul> <p><b>3-5 Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cardinals in Winter</li> <li>Winter Scene Paintings &amp; Ornaments</li> </ul> <p><b>6-8 Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Birds of Peace</li> </ul>	<p>2015 will bring about some pretty awesome art-creating and learning opportunities for our CTL students! Also, we will be sending out more information about our Spring Art Showcase.</p> <p><b>K-2 Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seeing the "2015 Me"</li> <li>State of Texas Art Project</li> <li>"I Have a Dream" Profile Art</li> </ul> <p><b>3-5 Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Newer Glimpse of Myself in 2015</li> <li>I Have a Dream Inside My Heart Art</li> <li>State of Texas Art Project</li> </ul> <p><b>6-8 Class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Newer Glimpse of Myself in 2015</li> <li>I Have a Dream Inside My Heart Art</li> <li>State of Texas Art Project</li> <li>Artist Investigations...A Closer Look at the Life &amp; Art of Vasil Kandinsky with Malzee C.</li> <li>CTL Young Artist Mini-Lesson about Manga with Alex M.</li> </ul>
	<p>CTL Parent feedback is encouraged and greatly appreciated! Please feel free to contact me at anytime regarding your child's progress and learning. You are welcome to contact me with any questions or concerns using the contact information located below:</p> <div data-bbox="824 1354 950 1505">  </div> <div data-bbox="971 1369 1307 1505"> <p>Mrs. Treva McKissic, M.Ed.            Social Studies Teacher, Grades 3-8 &amp; Art Teacher, Grades K-8            Center for Teaching and Learning            P.O. Box 131541            The Woodlands, TX 77381            Phone: 832-474-8214            Email: <a href="mailto:tmckissic@centerforteachingandlearning.com">tmckissic@centerforteachingandlearning.com</a>            Website: <a href="http://www.centerforteachingandlearning.com">www.centerforteachingandlearning.com</a></p> </div>	

**Treva McKissic**

## Physical Education

Basketball was the name of the game for the upper grades in December. Students practiced fundamental skills such as ball handling, dribbling, passing, and shooting. They worked on their defense and teamwork in games such as "3-Catch Basketball"





where two opposing teams try to complete three passes in a row. We will wrap up this unit the first week back. Grades 6-8 will play a mini modified game and grades 3-5 will practice shooting at different targets in "Around the Court." Together, teamwork again will be important as the classes will be challenged to complete a series of basketball skills while holding onto a group rope. Next skills unit - Dance!

The K-2 students have learned and are practicing the fundamental skills of catching and throwing. Students progressed from two hand underhand to one hand underhand to one hand over head. Some games involved throwing for distance and others for accuracy. We discussed activities and sports that used different throwing techniques. While playing catch with our partners, we learned the most important rule - make sure they are looking before you throw! First week back we incorporate our skills into a circuit and try our hand at "Toaster Tag." Next up for the K-2 - Jumping and Dance!

Although different sport and activity skills may seem a big part of CTL's PE curriculum, fitness is equally, if not more, important. The beginning of each class is spent with a warm up and for the upper grades an activity that enhances one of the core fitness components: cardiovascular endurance, muscle strength, muscle endurance or flexibility. Both the American Heart Association and the Center for Disease Control recommend children get 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity EVERY day. My goal is not just to provide activity opportunity during school but also that the child takes what they learn home.

If you have any questions regarding CTL's PE curriculum or physical activity and nutrition as it relates to your child, please contact me at [mmurphy@centerforteachingandlearning.com](mailto:mmurphy@centerforteachingandlearning.com). I am happy to discuss these topics.

Important reminder - Dress appropriately. Sneakers and comfortable clothing are imperative. So too is a water bottle!

Until next month - stay active!

**Marci Murphy**

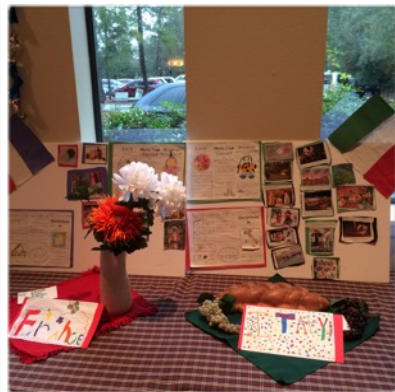
## Music

What a wonderful Holiday Program we had in December! CTL students really worked hard to master their songs, and they had a great time in the process. The end result reflected their enthusiasm for music and learning. I thoroughly enjoyed leading and teaching them. Thank you everyone for making it a success!



In December, 24 ukuleles were donated to CTL, thanks to Julie Rogers, one of our CTL parents! What a great addition to our music program!





The 6-8 students began learning how to play some basic chords, and it has been really exciting to watch. This month the 3-5 students will begin a ukulele unit—a request they have had since 6-8 began learning! Both classes this month will start a music history unit that will include student research and reports on composers. I will teach an overview of music history, and then each student will teach us about his/her composer and why he or she is important. Their research and reports will be done at home. There will be no time at school to do this. I will give them instructions, but please contact me at [mabbott@centerforteachingandlearning.com](mailto:mabbott@centerforteachingandlearning.com) if you have any questions about the assignment. Ask your child who their composer is, what they need to do, and when they need to have their reports completed.

This month the K-2 students will begin a unit on rhythm using our brand new rhythm sticks and maracas. This helps them feel and internalize the rhythms and beat. I plan to be able to do some rhythmic composing with them after they learn some basic notation. We will continue to learn fun songs they can share with you at home.

January is Texas History month in social studies, so our music will support that as every class learns some great songs about Texas. We plan to have a hoot hollerin' time as we learn some old cowboy songs!

***Melissa Abbott***