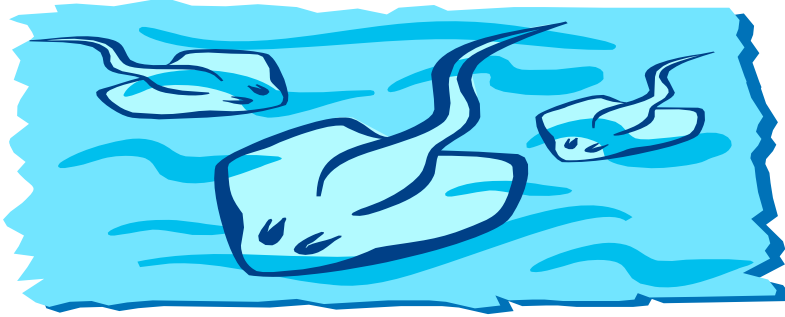


High Tide



“News You Can Use” from the Stingray Classroom

Gillen Brewer School

February, 2007

Classroom Update

This month we implemented the **100 Acts of Kindness** into our classroom. It was a smashing success, and we reached our goal in a week and a half. We celebrated with an afternoon of movies and are currently working hard toward their second 100 acts of kindness. We count up the acts each day and reward outstanding acts of kindness with stickers at the end of each week. The boys feel good when they are “caught” being kind, and it is great to hear “Hey! That’s an act of kindness!” blurted out throughout the day. Maybe we’ll reach 1,000 before the year is through....

We have begun our **Penny Harvest Round Table** meetings. Every Friday the Stingrays host students from both the Dolphins and Sharks classroom. At the **Roundtable** children discuss which charities should receive grant money raised during the **Penny Harvest**. They have the awesome responsibility of awarding \$1,000 in grants by April 17th! We have already discussed the meaning of “philanthropy” and how it feels to help someone in need. It is also a good opportunity for our students to work on consensus building and leadership skills.

On March 21 the Stingrays will be taking a trip to **Our Name is Mud** to paint ceramic pieces for the Gillen Brewer auction in May. Students will also make pieces to take home.

Social Studies

In social studies we introduced the idea of **culture** by looking at the songs and customs of American slaves. We learned about “The Drinking Gourd” which refers to the Big Dipper and was used to navigate the Underground Railroad. We sang the song “Follow the Drinking Gourd” with Robert Kennedy and tried to “decode” the lyrics.

A major focus in social studies will continue to be world culture and how immigration to the United States has greatly influenced American culture over the past 200 years. We will take an in-depth look at the experiences of several immigrant groups who settled in New York City, beginning with the Irish. Some members of the Gillen Brewer staff have volunteered to share stories of their own family’s journey to New York. If you have family immigration stories you’d like to come in and share, please let us know!

We continue the pleasure of having Don Pearlstein visit our classroom. He fabricated a corrugated cardboard model of a Lower East Side block circa 1930 for the students, and the Stingrays helped assemble it. The model is complete with push carts, fire escapes and clotheslines. We will send pictures of both model projects soon. Don will be accompanying us on our field trip to the Lower East Side Tenement Museum on April 16.

We have also been discussing the Bill of Rights. Students collectively created a Children’s Bill of Rights and learned the importance of rights for individuals. Our new student teacher Ivy will be helping students create a Power Point presentation further exploring the ideals of American Democracy.

Language Arts

The Stingrays have begun to dissect realistic fiction by using “story elements”. They have learned about main characters, setting, main events, problem/conflict and resolution/solution. Please talk to your child about these five elements when reading at home.

We read the book Freckle Juice by Judy Blume and it was a big hit. We are now reading Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing, also by Judy Blume, during our read aloud sessions.

Science

In March our science unit will be “Earth and Space”. Students will work towards understanding the relationship between earth and the solar system through a series of readings, experiments and videos.

*Regards from Linda, Sarah V., Sarah G.,
& The Stingrays!*