

**Teacher Notes**

It's hard to believe tomorrow is May 1. Over the past few weeks, our days were filled with numerous activities and great learning opportunities.

The students did an extraordinary job working with Cathy and Randy during their Artists-in-Residence visit. It was truly amazing to see everyone enjoying "old-fashioned" dancing (that's what the kids called the square dancing). Teamwork and cooperation were two skills I personally witnessed the students working on each class session. I have to admit, when Cathy began teaching several dances in the first session, it was intimidating to me. However, as you saw firsthand at the Community Dance, this class embraced this experience and shared their knowledge with ease. From visiting Elmcroft (sorry for the late notice), to performing for the school and community, this fifth grade class succeeded overwhelming in meeting a challenge and then sharing their accomplishments with others. I'm still saddened that I was unable to attend Friday evening's dance; my asthma and allergies are taking a toll this spring. Many thanks to Partner-In-Education for supporting this wonderful experience for our entire school.

The class enjoyed traveling to Victoria Theater to watch *From the Mixed Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*. Currently, we are reading the novel in class, writing chapter summaries, and working on a web quest. Students are also learning about adjectives and working on an explanatory writing piece. In Math, Geometry is now our focus. This is fun, but also heavily laden with terminology. I've encouraged the students to study for any upcoming quizzes. In Religion, we are studying the Sacraments of Holy Orders and Matrimony. I hope your child asked you or their grandparents about their marriage; we'd like to share stories. In Science, we began our unit on Sound. Many thanks to Officer Harold Matheson for his important role as our D.A.R.E. officer. He brought pizza, pop, and snacks on Monday to celebrate the completion of the program. Certificates were handed out at that time also. This was a rare treat; previously we didn't have pizza parties, but the kids loved it. In Social Studies, we are studying Ancient Egypt and creating mummies. Messy, but oh so fun!

Your child may have mentioned that our seating arrangement changed yesterday; we are back in rows. Everyone is excited about the warmer weather, playing outside, and hopefully, less homework. I've emphasized the importance of getting work completed when time is given during the day. Hopefully, having some personal space will help.

There continues to be small problems arising in the classroom. It may be inappropriate language, remarks, a game among the students, a misunderstanding, or physical contact. I spoke with the students about taking responsibility for their own actions, but also being respectful and aware of other students. If someone is having a bad day, it may take only one little thing to get him/her irritated. At the same time, some of us must work harder to make the right choice, but do not need everyone's negativity, but help in doing so. We've discussed letting the teacher know if there's a problem they can't or don't want to handle, walking away from a situation, and letting others know, in a kind way, what's bothersome. I'm sure your child may speak with you about various situations; if not, please talk with him/her. We are striving to make this classroom a safe and comfortable learning environment for all students.

This week we celebrated Right to Read Week with an Olympic theme. Some of the activities included learning about an Olympic sport or athlete, visiting the library, reading at home, and having a night without television or video games. One activity, donating books, resulted in over 100 books for fifth grade alone. Students who earned ten points have an out-of-uniform day on Monday, May 3.

As always, please let me know if you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions by e-mailing, calling, or sending a note. Thank you for your support.

Yours in Christ,

Mrs. Hartz