

JANUARY NEWSLETTER

December Highlights:

We had a full house for our holiday party and a good time was had by all. The children always have a good time when their parents are there to share their class experiences with them. Thanks to all of you who so generously provided treats for the event.

Once again Ballet Folklorico put on a great show. The program, different each year, gives a glimpse of the different regions of Mexico, as well as showing Mexican Christmas customs. It is so important now to understand the culture of our neighbors. Thanks to all our drivers and the time you took to help us out.

Hopefully you heard and saw their latest poem - a new one has begun and it is almost ready to go. Look for your child's December journal soon (as soon as corrections are done). We are finally catching up with the class time we lost with the smoked-out days. Thanks for your patience.

Upcoming in January:

Traditionally, January is a quiet academic month where a lot of new work gets presented, unencumbered by holiday excitement. I plan to introduce fractions and half past time.

I will begin giving grammar lessons with the presentation of the noun this month. Once I feel that this concept is firm, I will present the article and the adjective. As each child begins to understand the lessons, I will be adding grammar to his or her language jobs. Believe it or not, the children love to do grammar.

The first of two projects that we will be working on during January is learning to write a letter, a skill that we hope will become second nature by June. Each child will be writing to someone special *outside the home* to thank them for a holiday gift. This is a long and arduous process, but well worth the effort.

*Your job is to fill out the enclosed form and return it promptly on **Monday, January 7** (or before). Delays mean that your child gets behind in the project.* Once the letters are perfect and decorated (they will be treasures), we will hand them personally to our regular mail carrier. He gets a big kick out of this every year. You'll be able to view a copy of the letter in your child's January Journal.

In addition to the writing project, we will take the entire month to complete our second project, a book about calendars. This book is about the measure of time. The children love pouring over the stacks of old calendars that we have collected in order to understand how the calendar works. (If any of you have old calendars with subjects that would appeal to boys, we would love to take them off your hands.)

After reading this wonderful book called *Ruby Bridges*, we will be talking about **Martin Luther King, Jr.** and his contributions to our society, and why he is the reason for our January holiday. Ruby Bridges was the little six year old girl in Alabama who went to school every day for six months, by herself, until the population accepted the idea of integrated schools. It is a very moving story and one that the children deeply understand because she was their age.

Please continue to drill those math facts as part of their homework - students should be close to finishing their +3 facts. Doubles are a breeze after +3's.

For you parents, the big event is receiving your child's report card. This will happen on the last school day of January. At that time, you will also receive a packet of your child's current work, as well as an explanation key which explains the marks more thoroughly.

All your child's teachers will be marking your child's report card. I mark the academic subjects and Toni evaluates the progress made in the cultural subjects, and Florence will mark reading skills.

Since you already receive your child's corrected daily work, monthly journals, completed books and projects, weekly math sheets and time tests, and spelling tests, you already have some idea of how your child is doing. The report card is a formal picture of this work.

Happy New Year!

Jo and Gloria