

Specialists' Newsletter

THIRD GRADE

September/October 2010

ART



In conjunction with their language arts unit on personal identity, third graders studied **symbols** and **logos** across cultures. Specifically, they examined the art of the Japanese **Mons** and **Kamons** which are Japanese family crests. Kamon specifically denotes a family crest whereas mon refers to any crest. They learned that Samurais used these crests as family identification as well as on their battle armors. Merchants and artisans began to put crests on items for business too. There are 300-400 basic designs and at least 7000-8000 crests. Each student created her own Mon using a simple symbol or a "**motif**", repeating it multiple times in a circular pattern to create a unique design. Next, students will transfer these patterns onto a silk hoop and learn the art of silk painting.

MUSIC



It has been wonderful to welcome the third graders back and get started on a new musical year! I hope you had a chance to read through the music curriculum overview you received in conjunction with Curriculum Night and have noted this year's music performance dates in your calendars.

Third Grade got reacquainted with rhythmic name games such as "Cookie Jar" and folk dances including "The Mixer Dance" and "The Virginia Reel." They honored the 8th graders and welcomed the kindergarteners with the songs "Bashana Haba'ah" and "Sansa Kroma" at our All School Assembly the first week of school.

In the music room the girls danced "Les Saluts," a French bowing dance. We talked about respect for friends, instruments and equipment, and the teacher. As part of this unit on respect, the girls began learning the opening bow sequence they will perform as part of the Lion Dance at Chinese New Year.

The big news in third grade music is that the girls are preparing to play recorders in class! While the girls will explore recorders during class they will not bring them home or be expected to practice outside of class. This unit will continue through November and includes learning the pitch names of the treble clef lines and spaces.

Third grade music brings many new delights and challenges. I look forward to working with your daughter this year. Please feel free to contact me with any questions as the year progresses.

Ms. Mandelstein, x322, Lisa.M@KDBS.org

PE



Third grade girls begin the year learning to work together in cooperative games. They are challenged to accomplish a task. Each member has to have the opportunity to be heard and be involved in solutions. Playing Ultimate Ball and Team Juggling with three or four balls, or transferring marbles in pipes from one place to another are examples that took planning as well as multiple attempts. More than one solution is a goal. Teams are randomly chosen

and change daily with each new challenge.

We also practice lead-up activities for Volleyball. The girls learn a handgrip for the bump pass. They practice bumping on their own, to a wall, and to a partner. They have a choice of beach balls, other light balls, and volley-lites. This allows them to build their confidence. We have mini contests, "How long can you keep the ball in the air on your own, with a partner or in a small group?" We play lead up games in small groups so each person has many opportunities to handle the ball.

SCIENCE



Since the third grade students have taken on the responsibility of educating, encouraging, and promoting recycling on campus we have started the year by turning our attention to composting and recycling in science. We began with an experiment that looked at the impact that trash can have on the environment. The girls pretended to be seagulls feeding on a litter-strewn beach, and discovered that it was difficult to "eat" enough real food without also eating the

trash! The girls also invented a process of sorting different types of trash with magnets, fans, and water as a way to understand what goes on at Recycle Central, the hub for all the city's recyclables. We also examined our own lunchboxes to see how close to a zero-waste lunch we could come. This study culminates in one of the most exciting field trips of Lower School: a visit to the Transfer Station (commonly known as "the dump") and Recycle Central to get an in-person look at San Francisco's trash!

The girls have each adopted a plant in our native plant garden! All the plants in the terraced garden, located in the courtyard between the bluetop and the art and science building, are native to this area and were used by the Ohlone. We will tend to and observe the garden throughout the year. We also are embarking on a study of the purpose of flowers, along with the use of a dichotomous key to identify different flowers around Burke's.

During the girls' design technology lab time, we discussed the difference between a discovery and an invention. Now we have begun to study our first simple machine, the lever, by building different types of lever machines from Lego/Dacto kits. The girls have been working in half classes with great enthusiasm and interest.

TECHNOLOGY



The third grade began technology classes this year talking about the computer 3 R's- Respect for yourself, Respect for others and Respect for the equipment. As part of media literacy the students are creating a small cartoon using Stykz, a frame animation program, which you may download at home <http://www.stykz.com>. The girls will export it to Quicktime and then import it to Garageband to add music and vocal sound effects. Third grade is the first year that the students get their own folder on the school server so they are learning how to manage files.

As a part of their study of themselves and their connections to San Francisco, the girls used Kidspiration to create a visual map of all the people, places and things they feel linked to. In the center of the map they each drew a symbol of themselves, and all their connections extend from there. Because touch-typing helps in the composition of writing on computers and some research has found that third grade is an ideal age to learn, we encourage use of the built-in touch-typing program in the Writer word processors from the classroom. In addition there is an amusing free program from England that students may enjoy: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/typing>.

LIBRARY



Welcome!

Library

THIRD GRADE
SEPTEMBER/
OCTOBER 2010



Think. Apply and Create. Share, Collaborate, and Act Ethically. Grow.

Welcome! Third Graders are off to a great start! We began the year by focusing on fiction stories about girls. In Library, each girl chose a book for independent reading at home. The girls also prepared for a writing response to be done in the classroom, and they did hands-on activities to see how fiction books are arranged on the shelves. Thus, with the girl books front-and-center, we covered library organization (fiction), wise book selection (Tip: Use the Five Finger Rule),

note-taking with purpose, proper citation, and characterization. The girls have practiced learning skills that have to do with processing information, appreciating the social context of learning (sharing work, collaboration, and ethical behavior), and pursuing personal and aesthetic interests (literature appreciation). We are now moving into biographies. Note: We are also reading aloud from **CLEMENTINE** by Sara Pennypacker. It ties-in with girl

books being read in the classroom and at home.

Questions:

What is fiction?
What is a call number?
How are fiction books organized on the shelves? How are biographies arranged on the shelves? Why?
How do I find a book that is "just right for me?"
How do I take notes for purpose?
What is characterization?
What is a citation?

21st Century Learning

Process Information.

Use information for good purpose.

Appreciate social context of learning-sharing, collaboration and ethical behavior..

Pursue personal and aesthetic interests.



2010

Lower School students may have out up to 4 books at a time. Third Graders may have fifth book in order to fulfill an assignment. They may borrow up to 2 books during each library class period plus an extra book for a specific assignment. A book is due 3 weeks from the borrowing date, but it may be returned any time before that. You are, of course, invited to use the Library as well. You have a card on file, and you may borrow as many books as you like. It's best to come before school or at the end of the school day on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 3:10 and 4:00. Should you have any questions or requests, please call me at 751-0177, ext. 311 or e-mail me at susan.f@kdbs.org.