



# CTL CORNER

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

## Important Dates

**December 5** - CTL parents are invited to join us for Pizza at the Park and Fitness Fun starting at 11:45 a.m., followed by our third Parent Council meeting at 12:30 p.m. (Please note the time changes.)

**December 12** - CTL students are invited to wear pajamas for our Polar Express Day and bring a new pair of pajamas to donate to Scholastic's Great Bedtime Story Pajama Drive. (Please see flier for more details.)

**December 19** - CTL families and friends are invited to join us for our first annual Holiday Program from 11:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., followed by our class Holiday Parties from 12:15 to 1:00 p.m.

**December 22 - January 5** - Winter Break (no school)

## 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.



## Hello CTL Family!

What a journey it has been! Every day at CTL is filled with energy as CTL students learn and play together. November was full of fun and excitement as CTL students brought the first trimester to a close by eagerly compiling their portfolios to share with their parents at our Portfolio Preview. Thanks to you, our CTL families, for making this evening a huge success. The students proudly shared their learning and goals for the year. They began this trimester even more excited, anticipating what they would produce for the next Portfolio Preview.

Now the journey continues! We have an amazing team of teachers who are guiding the process, and each Friday afternoon, when the students go home, we stay to learn, share, reflect, and plan together. Dr. Ellis attended the National Council of Teachers of English conference in Washington, D. C., and Mrs. Phipps attended the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics conference in Houston. Thanks to the CTL Team for a fantastic trimester!

Thanks also to CTL parents for coordinating and providing food for the delicious Thanksgiving Feast! Thank you for sharing the journey with us!

***Linda Ellis and Jennifer Chamberlain***





### *K-2 Class*

November was a quick month! We focused on the Native Americans, the Pilgrims, and the voyage of the Mayflower. Our class wrote stories about what Thanksgiving means to them. Our focus in math was working with larger numbers in number operations, grouping,



sorting by attributes, using a number line, and ten frames. The kids are thrilled about our online math, Front Row. Please have them complete the pretest for each area at home so we can gather information on their strengths and weaknesses to move forward. In science we finished our unit on Balance and Motion. They really enjoyed our hovercraft experiment that showed how friction and movement work together. We will continue our next unit this month that will cover rocks, soil, water, and magnets.



Thanks to all of you who helped with the Toy Drive. Our school donated 40 bags of toys!!!! The Interfaith staff was ecstatic. Our kids did a great job sorting and bagging the toys. What a great way to give back!



We are looking forward to a fun holiday month filled with exciting activities!

***Lisa Lipar***

### *3-8 Language Arts*

November was a month for sharing! CTL students used their creativity to share their favorite books for the trimester with their peers through book projects. In writing, they shared their favorite personal memoir in their portfolios. They eagerly shared representations of their learning with their families at Portfolio Preview.

Even though we all enjoyed the week off to celebrate Thanksgiving with our







families, we're all happy to be back at school this week and have enjoyed hearing about the numerous books students read over the break, as well as the stories they wrote.

This week we are getting back into our reading and writing workshops. Students will continue to read books and share recommendations with their classmates. We will continue to model reading strategies and story elements through our read aloud books and through individual conferences. And through mini-lessons and individual

conferences, we will teach strategies to move students forward in their development as writers, focusing on elements that improve writing such as mechanics and grabbing the reader's attention.

In grades 3-5 during writing workshop, students will be preparing for their first Author Celebration of the year that will take place the week before Christmas break. They will share their published stories with the class and celebrate the creativity and hard work that moved them through the writing process to publication. Students in grades 6-8 have already completed their first published piece and Author Celebration and are currently working on their next pieces of writing.

We are proud of our CTL readers and writers!

***Angela Bailey, Jennifer Chamberlain, and Linda Ellis***

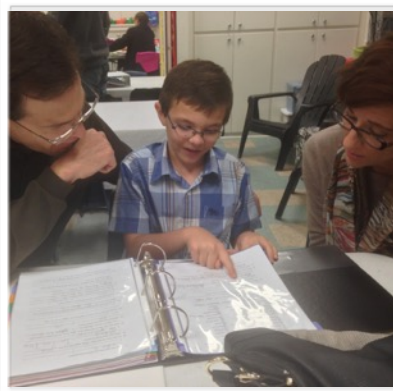
### *3-8 Math/Science*

I am excited to share with you that Pam Blakeslee is joining our class during the 3-5 grade math time! Mrs. Blakeslee comes with a wealth of knowledge about teaching and math. She jumped right in last week and is already

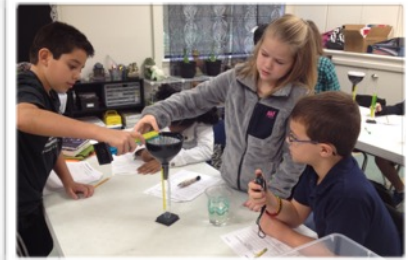


helping me make sure we are meeting the diverse needs of our students. We are excited to have her joining our staff!

In science, the 3-5 graders have been studying the properties of soil. We have been learning how



to identify types of soil and will be testing properties such as how much water they retain and how well they support plant life. The 6-8 graders have been studying force, motion, and energy. Most recently, we have been conducting experiments related to Newton's 3 laws of motion.



In math, the 3-5 graders are currently focusing on multiplication and division. Some of the strategies they learn may be unfamiliar to you because most of us were not taught these same strategies. However, the strategies we learn are intended to build better number sense, develop stronger mental math skills, and provide better mathematical

understanding when we get to the traditional algorithms with which you and I are most familiar. The 6-8 graders are finishing our focus on ratios and will begin a unit on measurement concepts this week.

**Stephanie Phipps**

### *3-8 Social Studies*

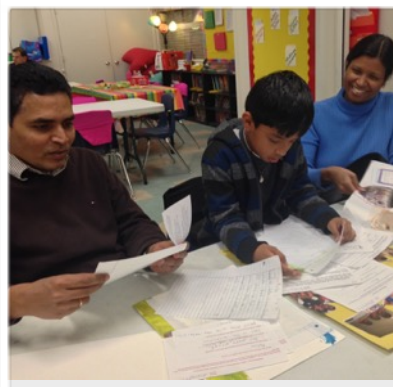
During Weeks 10 - 12, we began to delve into our neighborhoods, communities, cities, towns, and townships. Students have been busily crafting self-made maps of their neighborhoods and researching the histories of their cities, towns, and townships by way of official websites for each town they live in. As students research the history, they are now in the midst of constructing informative brochures to reflect what they have learned through research. Our historical brochures are the perfect opportunity for each

### **Grades 3-8 Social Studies at CTL**

#### *Our Neighborhoods & The History of Our Cities and Towns*







child's uniqueness and personality to shine as they showcase their cities, towns, and townships. Conroe, Houston, Humble, Spring, and The Woodlands are all featured! Also, be sure to check out the students' first student-created newsletter via email.

**Treva McKissic and Stephanie Phipps**

### Art

During Week 12, students in grades K-8 helped to make our CTL Thanksgiving Family Feast a memorable event with their Thanksgiving placemats. All students were excited to have their original works of art debuted for all parents and families to enjoy! Beginning with Week 13, all students will be embarking on a series of Winter Art Projects throughout the month of December as we close 2014. Students will begin this series with the theme "Snow Globes and Cardinals in Winter." Some of the art projects will be sent home for the family to enjoy during the holidays. Other projects will be used for portfolios and for the first CTL Art Gallery Showcase. More details to come in regards to the CTL Art Gallery Showcase—be on the lookout!

**Treva McKissic**

### Physical Education

Manipulatives were the theme for the K-2 class in PE. Using bean bags, hoops, and ribbon sticks, they balanced, tossed, rolled, swirled, and of course hulaed. Ask your child about an "oil slick." We warmed up by pretending to be on a roadway. This week we move to the sea (Ships Ahoy!) with a unit on catching and throwing.



### Inspiring Creativity Through Art at CTL

Week 9 Theme...  
"Families & Thanksgiving"



Week 10 Theme...  
Winter Art Project #1  
"Snow Globes & Birds In Winter"



The 3-8 classes found out how much fun flying discs can be. Students practiced basic throwing and catching techniques. Give and go games combined all the various skills and allowed for small team competitions. We are trading the disc for a basketball this month and will continue to work on improving our aerobic fitness with a walk/jog/run unit.



Reminder: Please have your child wear sneakers on PE days. We will also be going outside whenever possible so have them dress accordingly and bring outerwear. These Texas winters can be brutal!

***Marci Murphy***

### ***Music***

In music we put together our music spirals, which contain all the music that we have learned so far this year. We will continue to add to them every time we learn a new song or concept. These are to stay at school; however, if students would like to take them home to share with family, they may sign them out and bring them back by their next music class.

This month we will learn many holiday songs that we will share at the CTL Holiday Program on December 19th.

***Melissa Abbott***

