



# CTL CORNER

Center for Teaching & Learning | 26131 Kuykendahl Road, The Woodlands, TX 77375 | 832-474-8214

## Important Dates

### December 1 - 14:

Interfaith Toy Drive (Organized by Grades 1-2)

### Friday, December 2:

Jason's Deli Friday Lunch

### Wednesday, December 7:

Parent Council Meeting at 8:30 a.m.

Holiday Music Closed Dress Rehearsal at 6:00 p.m.

Holiday Music Program at 7:00 p.m.

### Friday, December 9:

Polar Express Day

Scholastic Pajama Drive (Organized by Grades K-1)

Holiday Treasure Shoppe

Chick-fil-A Friday Lunch

### Wednesday, December 14:

Staff Appreciation Lunch (Organized by Pre-K)

### Friday, December 16:

Papa John's Friday Lunch

Class Holiday Parties at 12:00 p.m.

### December 19 - January 2:

Winter Break (No School)

### Tuesday, January 3:

Staff Workday (No School)

### Wednesday, January 4:

Students Return Back to School



## Happy Holidays CTL Family!

It's hard to believe that our first trimester has come to a close. My how time flies when we are having fun!

November was the culmination of the first trimester as CTL students led you through their portfolios, representing their learning and goals. I hope you were as impressed as we were at how hard they worked. The process of putting together their portfolios and self-assessments is one of the most powerful forms of learning. It's wonderful during this time to see the excitement in the air as students, parents and teachers realize the power of this process. This is the trigger that will foster more excitement for learning going forward.

November was also a time of thanksgiving and celebration. The Scholastic Book Fair was a huge success thanks to all of your support, and the



## Important Reminders

\*Please ensure your child is at school by 7:55 a.m. All students arriving after 7:55 a.m. will be marked tardy.

\*Please ensure your child has a snack, lunch, and water bottle every day and tennis shoes on PE days (Mondays and Wednesdays).

\*Please ensure your child wears his/her CTL t-shirt each Friday.

\*Please check your child's teacher's Shutterfly webpage for class announcements, homework, and resources.

\*We invite you to email any of our CTL team members by clicking on their addresses. names in this newsletter which are linked to their email.

\*Please check out our CTL Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/CTL.TheWoodlands/> and subscribe to our CTL Parent Council Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ctlparentcouncil/> for updates about our students, classrooms, and school!



Veteran's Day Presentation by the music and drama classes wouldn't have been the same without your attendance. We also celebrated Veteran's Day with a new flag and flagpole thanks to the coordination efforts of Ms. Smith and the CTL teachers. We were appreciative of the many veterans who attended our morning meetings, presented to classes, and taught our CTL students the proper care and respect for the flag.

November 18 was an extra special day as we held a special Library Dedication Ceremony, naming the library the Dr. Joyce Armstrong Carroll Library for her generous donation of her lifetime collection of books to CTL. If you missed it, you can read Dr. Ellis's dedication speech on our website. The Thanksgiving Feast provided by our CTL parents and the CTL team so aptly followed the Library Dedication. Thank you for the huge success of these events.

December will be filled with opportunities for more celebration, service, and shopping. Ms. Lipar's 1-2 class has already launched the annual Interfaith Toy Drive for children in need and Ms. Phipps' K-1 class launched the annual Scholastic Pajama Drive to again help needy children. Ms. Lipar and Ms. Phipps will deliver the donations on December 14. The children will celebrate their service to the community at CTL's annual Polar Express Day on the 9th where the children will wear pajamas, drink hot chocolate and eat snacks while they watch Polar Express, a wonderful holiday classic based on the book by Chris Van Allsburg. Then they will shop at the Holiday Treasure Shoppe, sponsored by our wonderful CTL family. CTL students are already planning their gift lists!

It's nice to hear the merry sound of the approaching holiday season in the building as CTL's music and drama classes prepare for the Holiday Music Program to be presented on the 7th. CTL holiday celebrations will culminate on December 16 with Holiday Parties coordinated by the teachers and their room moms. This is a special time of year with much rejoicing in the air.

We continue to be amazed with our wonderful parents! We welcome you the first Wednesday of each month for Parent Council at 8:30 and on Worker Bee Wednesdays. But it doesn't end there. Each month your volunteer efforts help us so much, and we appreciate you more than you know.

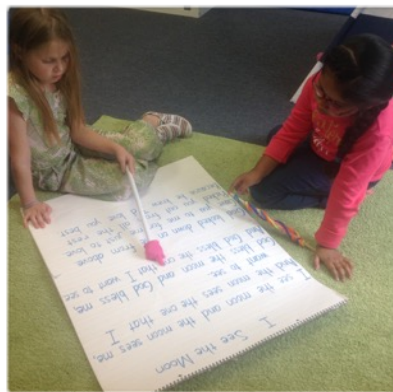
We wish each of you a wonderful holiday season with your families!

Happy Holidays!

*Dr. Linda Ellis, Jennifer Chamberlain, and Paige Lewis*







## Pre-Kindergarten

One would never guess that this was the first time the Pre-k class prepared and presented portfolios. They did an excellent job presenting to their parents. We are so proud of them. Other activities included celebrating Veteran's Day. Pre-K made several art projects to honor our heroes. Additional adventures in November included the making of our very own busy tree, after reading the book *The Busy Tree* by Jennifer Ward. This included various animals that make a tree their home.

We dove into a leaf study by reading one of my favorite books *Leaf Man* by Lois Ehlert. After collecting various leaves outside, the children were able to create and design their own leaf man. In math, they sorted the different kinds of leaves by shapes, size and color. We completed our study by completing a leaf-chromatography experiment (why leaves change color).



I hope everyone was able to see the Pre-K Pilgrims at CTL's Thanksgiving celebration. They enjoyed learning about America's first settlers. We made homemade butter and took turns shaking the cream until it became butter. But the best part was eating it on hot rolls at snack time.

In December, we will be looking forward to lots of fun Christmas activities and will be learning how Christmas is celebrated around the world.

## Becky Billings

## Grades K-1

November went by so quickly as we put together our portfolios and reflected on our learning so far this year. I am proud of the Investigators, and all they have done so far this year. We have so much fun together, but in the process of doing portfolios, we saw just how much we have grown.

In readers workshop, we have been focusing on story elements in the texts we read together. Evaluating the characters, setting, problem and solution helps us understand the story, make connections to the text, and remember what we've read. In December, we will compare and contrast story elements in different versions of *The Gingerbread Man* and read lots of holiday stories.

In writing workshop, we all completed a personal narrative which we took through the writing process, from pre-writing to revising and editing. While we were studying animals in science, we decided to write informational books about animals. Each student selected an animal to research and has begun to write a book using the facts they found. In December, we will finish these books and revisit personal narratives.

In math, we have been working on addition strategies and addition fact fluency. In December, we will be working on strategies for subtracting larger numbers, including double digits for those who are ready.

In science, we continued to learn about different animal parts and how they help animals survive. We really enjoyed creating our own animals and thinking about how their body parts would help them survive in a particular environment. We also started our study of plant parts and how they help plants survive. Next month, we will learn more about plant and animal survival.

In social studies, we learned more about the United States government, citizenship, and the presidential election. We also studied the first



Thanksgiving, focusing on some misconceptions we had. We are now studying several different Native American tribes. Next month, we will continue to compare what we have learned about the different group and also learn about America's economy.

We would love to have some of our parents, family members, and friends be our Mystery Readers next month. December is a fun month to read a holiday book to the class! We're looking forward to spending the next few weeks preparing for the holidays with some very special activities and service projects!

*Stephanie Phipps*

### *Grades 1-2*

I can't believe November is already done. It was a quick month with all of our portfolio preparation and our Thanksgiving festivities. The class was busy as they carefully selected their favorite pieces of work for their binders. They wrote reflections on their learning in all subjects covering the first trimester. Each student also practiced their presentations in class to prepare for their student led conferences.

I was very proud of each and every Explorer as they took the time to prepare and present their portfolios with pride. So much was gained by all during this time of reflection over their learning. Each student really became aware of their strengths and challenges and put clear thought into their goal setting for the next trimester.

As we closed out the month of November, we completed Thanksgiving math games, wrote creative Thanksgiving stories, and made festive turkey placemats with watercolors. The class learned about the First Thanksgiving through real life reenactments in a 2 part video created by a historian for Scholastic. They were intrigued to say the least!

Our feast was a hit and enjoyed by all as we gathered to eat wonderful food put together by all of our CTL parents. Thank you to all who helped to make our celebration a wonderful memory. I would also like to thank all of the parents who have taken time to read as secret readers for our class this trimester, volunteered your time for the book fair and those who came to share your wonderful traditions during Diwali. The kids are truly lucky to have such devoted parents! Your support of our school is reflected in the students' love of learning.

We are looking forward to our upcoming holiday celebrations as we close out 2016. Please be sure to mark your calendars as the Explorer class will be heading up the Interfaith Toy drive again this year. A letter went out with the details. Please know that any toy donation is appreciated-big or small. It supports so many families in need over the holidays and they are extremely grateful.

*Lisa Lipar*

### *Grades 3-4*

November flew by quickly as The Calculation Crew prepared their portfolios for student led conferences. This was the first time for new students to participate in the self reflection process. Students looked back through all of their work in each subject and decided which of their assignments they wanted to share in their portfolio. Besides arranging work samples to place in their portfolios, students engaged in the self reflection process by reviewing concepts learned within the first trimester. Self evaluations required students to synthesis their learning experiences as well as set goals for themselves for next trimester.





In completing portfolios, it seemed that *Deep and Dark and Dangerous* was the favorite overall read aloud, *Battleship* was a hugely popular math game and making catapults topped the charts in favorite science activities. In social studies, we were surprised at the number of classroom visitors we had that helped us to learn about our community. Besides all of the self reflecting we did about our learning, students enjoyed a wonderful Veterans Day program honoring our Veterans as well as watching the inaugural flying of our CTL flag. In preparation for the delicious Thanksgiving feast, students enjoyed making marbled fall leaves with shaving cream and food coloring as well as using watercolors to paint Thanksgiving Owls.

After a restful Thanksgiving break, students are starting off the second trimester with subtracting across zeros in math along with moving into multiplication, reading a variety of biographies in social studies, and moving into life cycles with our Stem Scopes activities. Our Holiday Treasure Shoppe and other Christmas activities will be here before we know it and the two week winter break will be a welcome time to spend celebrating the holidays with family and friends.

Melanie Smith

### *Grades 5-8 Language Arts and 7-8 Social Studies*

November proved to be a busy month! Students published their writing, presented book projects representing their favorite books of the trimester, and worked diligently compiling representations of their learning for their portfolios. The amount of thought and creativity put forth by students was impressive! Students were happy to get back to our regular reading and writing workshop routines this week.

In grades 5 and 6, we began a new read aloud, *The Inquisitor's Tale* by Adam Gidwitz. Students are enjoying the story and its elements of fantasy. We will continue to notice story elements and author's craft in order to grow as readers and writers. Students will analyze these elements in the books they are reading independently and will share their thoughts during Reader's Roundtable discussions. We have begun to explore poetry as a genre in writing workshop. Students will analyze examples of good writing and will learn about voice, audience, organization, and theme.

In grades 7 and 8, one of the highlights of the trimester was our trip to Starbucks to celebrate and share our poems. Students enjoyed going off campus to enjoy a treat! The daily read aloud of *Ghost* by Jason Reynolds offers students the opportunity to understand how author's craft influences the reader's understanding of characters. In writing workshop, we are reading memoirs and looking at them with a critical lens in order to understand what makes them effective. Students have added ideas to their heart maps and are looking forward to beginning their own memoirs.

In social studies, students presented the types of government they researched with a partner. They enjoyed comparing and contrasting different types of governments found around the world. We have begun to learn about the United States Constitution. Students have been surprised by some of the facts they have learned about how it evolved. We will learn about the branches of our government and the importance of each in the next couple of weeks.

Angela Bailey





### *Grades 5-8 Math and Science and 5-6 Social Studies*

November was all about reflection, portfolios, and student-led conferences in Mrs. Williams classes. Students worked hard evaluating their work and determining their own strengths and weaknesses. Student then created their own goals for math, science, and social studies based upon the evaluation of their learning.

In Math, students in Grades 5 and 6 completed designing board games featuring number operations. Students work hard finalizing layouts, creating questions, and adding their own creative touches. In the classroom, matter was all that mattered in science as students continued learning about atoms and molecules. On the playground, engineering design was in full force as students designed their own seesaw during recess. In social studies we began learning how the American Revolution helped establish the government. Mrs. Winter and two of her dogs in training visited from Canine Companions for Independence. She shared with our class the details of raising and training service and therapy dogs. We celebrated Veteran's Day with a wonderful program and raised CTL's American flag for the first time. The trimester ended with a bountiful Thanksgiving Feast.



After returning from Thanksgiving break we jumped right back into our routine. It has been a great start to the new trimester as students have begun studying 3 digit by 2 digit multiplication and long division, beginning to understand the changes in molecular energy, and studying the U.S. Constitution and the powers of each branch of government.

The 7th graders have been hard at work mastering Geometry. Students have mastered surface area and will begin studying proportionality and unit conversions. Point-Slope took over in 8th grade as students learned how to graph a line given only one point and slope. Systems of equations and quadratic functions will be our next unit of study. The students have been creating paper mache replicas of plants and animal cells in science and will be extending their knowledge of cells by learning how they function together to create tissues, organs, organ systems, and organisms.

*Lori Williams*

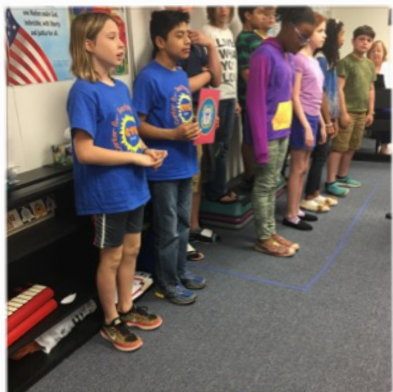
### *Grades PK-8 Music*

The CTL Choir students sang beautifully for the Veterans's Day program. It was an honor to sing the songs of each branch of military service. The veterans in attendance felt special and enjoyed hearing the song representing their branch of military.


All students at CTL have been working on the upcoming music program, "Ye Olde Card Shoppe." We are looking forward to presenting the program on Wednesday, December 7.

*Diane Engle*





## Grades PK-8 Physical Education

NOVEMBER 2016	Coming in DECEMBER 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ Pre/K – 2nd Grade <u>Physical Education</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Throwing and Catching</li> <li>&gt; Group Warm-ups with hula hoops and jump ropes</li> <li>&gt; Running and fleeing games like Pizza Tag and Dragon's Tail</li> <li>&gt; Student Portfolio Reflections</li> </ul> </li> <li>★ Pre/K – 2nd Grade <u>PSHE</u> (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education)           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We read "Keep Running, Gingerbread Man" by Steve Smallman. Students learned about the importance of eating well and keeping fit just like the fox in the story.</li> </ul> </li> <li>3rd – 8th Grade: <u>Physical Education</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; CTL students participated in an lacrosse lessons with guest coach Mr. Mike from The Woodlands Lacrosse Association.</li> <li>&gt; FitnessGram - Students completed push-ups, curl ups, shoulder stretch, trunk lift and pacer tests. 7th and 8th grade students ran a timed mile.</li> </ul> </li> <li><u>PSHE</u> (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education)           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Students continued to work on positive affirmations fingerprint projects.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>CTL Pyramid of Success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ We completed our third and fourth building block of our PE Pyramid of Success. Students learned that FRIENDSHIP and LOYALTY go hand in hand. (Ask your children about Charlie the Chimp and Shep the Sheepdog!)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ Pre/K – 8th Grade: <u>Physical Education</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Soccer Skills</li> <li>&gt; Snowball Game</li> </ul> </li> <li>PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education)           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; We will continue our Health and Wellness unit with a lesson about generosity and acts of giving. We will read Stone Soup.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> 

## Grades 5-8 Drama

NOVEMBER 2016	Coming in DECEMBER 2016
<p>5th– 8th Grade:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>☒ Thank you to all our drama and music students for working hard and making our CTL Veteran's Day Performance one to remember!</li> <li>☒ Drama students began an Elements of Drama unit with lessons about the production process "From Start to Strike" and the "Roles and Responsibilities" of production team.</li> <li>☒ CTL Holiday Show roles and responsibilities were assigned. Students have been busy learning songs and dance movements. Our actors have been busy running lines. Stage crew members have been making props and costumes. We also have students helping with set design and creating a playbill.</li> <li>☒ Student Portfolio Reflections</li> </ul>	<p>5th–8th Grade: <u>Save The Date</u> Holiday Performance Wednesday, December 7th at 7pm</p>

Trisha Brandimarte



## Grades PK-8 Art



Artists and Their Art Styles' Mini-Lessons...



Taking a Deeper Look at "Ourselves" as Individually Unique Artists

The Lives & Artistic Styles the Creators of Play-Doh  
Noah McVicker, Joseph McVicker, and Kay Zufall



Spotlight On A Few of Our Art-Creating Experiences...

CTL Students Have Created One-of-a-Kind Angels, Unique Winter Song Birds, Original Play-Doh Sculptures, Experimented with Earth Clay, Created Watercolor Paintings, & Written Self-Reflections



## Treva McKissic

