



CTL CORNER

Center for Teaching & Learning | 25925 Budde Road, The Woodlands, TX 77380 | 832-474-8214

Important Dates

Friday, March 4

Brother's Pizza Friday Lunch
Parent Council at 12:15 p.m.

Monday, March 7

Yummy Club and Dr. Seuss Club
Showcase at 8:00 a.m.

Tuesday, March 8

Film/Photography Club and Touch Rugby
Club Showcase at 8:00 a.m.

Student-led Conferences (Early Dismissal
at 12:00 p.m.)

Wednesday, March 9

Sewing/Needle Work Club and Instant
Challenge Club Showcase at 8:00 a.m.

Student-led Conferences (Early Dismissal
at 12:00 p.m.)

Thursday, March 10

Rubik's Cube Club and Origami/Paper
Airplane Club Showcase at 8:00 a.m.

Student-led Conferences (Early Dismissal
at 12:00 p.m.)

Spirit Night at CorkScrew BBQ from 6:00 -
8:00 p.m.

Friday, March 11

Drama Club Showcase at 8:00 a.m.
Quiznos Friday Lunch

Monday, March 14 - Friday, March 18

No School - Spring Break

Friday, March 25

No School - Good Friday

Welcome to a Marvelous March at CTL!

"Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited to all we now know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world, and all there ever will be to know and understand."

-Albert Einstein

Thanks to one of our wonderful CTL parents for putting together a lovely video for our February Parent Council night, now posted on our CTL Facebook pages, of our future home at 26131

Kuykendahl Road in the Village of Creekside Park.

The video's ending, *Imagine...the Possibilities*, caused us to ponder the imaginations of those thirteen passionate educators who met in the South Montgomery County Library in January of 2011 to dream our *dream school*, a school where we would *ignite and grow a love of learning in every child*, a school where children could discover and pursue their passions, a school where only best practices would guide instruction. This video takes us back to our roots.



Imagine...the possibilities took us on a journey of quotes that have inspired us. It is our hope that none of us ever loses what children have so readily at their fingertips--imagination. For it is only through imagination that dreams come true. Our learning challenge this month--Google the theme *Imagine...the possibilities* and share the quotes with your family. This is the root and the future of CTL and every child and parent who walks through our door!

Morning Meeting is such a wonderful time for us to build unity across the campus. In February's Morning Meetings, we wrapped up our study of *7 Habits of Happy Kids* by Sean Covey and Stacy Curtis. *Habit 6--Synergize: Together is Better* reminded us that we need to learn from others, value other people's strengths, get along with people different from us, and work in groups to create better ideas. *Habit 7--Sharpen the Saw: Balance Feels Best* taught us that we must take care of our bodies; eat healthy, get sleep, and exercise; find meaningful ways to help other people; and learn from many places, not just in school. Students had numerous opportunities to practice these habits throughout February.



Important Reminders

*Please ensure your child is at school by 8 a.m. All students arriving after 8 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 encourage your child to wear his/her CTL t-shirt each Friday.

*Please check your child's teacher's RenWeb page for class announcements, homework, and resources.

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

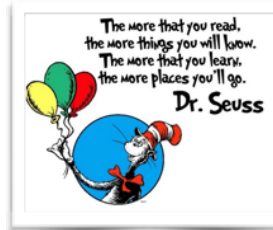
*We invite you to email any of our CTL team members by clicking on their names in this newsletter which are linked to their email addresses.



We also celebrated *Random Acts of Kindness Week* with challenges for our children that opened up a myriad of celebrations and actions around being kind to others. The theme actually encompassed our thoughts and actions throughout the month and certainly tied in with our exploration of the *7 Habits*. We are all children, and we are not perfect, but opportunities to develop social skills at home and at school makes for happier kids and adults.

Imagine a world. Where people look out for each other. Where we all pay it forward. Where success is measured in selfless acts. Where kindness is the philosophy of life.

-Random Acts of Kindness.com



March began with a celebration of Dr. Seuss and his legacy through books, and on March 2 we celebrated *Read Across America Day*, a nationwide reading celebration that takes place annually on Dr. Seuss's birthday. Dr. Seuss would be proud that CTL students read choice books every day, and we encourage them to continue to read at least 30 minutes outside of school each day.

We had many other celebrations in February--enjoying Valentine's Day, a 5th through 8th grade field trip to Main Street Theater in Houston for a live theater production of *Bridge to Terabithia*, Presidents' Day, and Go Texan Day. Thanks to all the parents for supporting your children and the CTL Team through each of these events. We appreciate also your support at the February Parent Council Meeting--Math Night and to the Grades 1-2 parents who served a delicious Friday lunch to the CTL Team.

We look forward to next week's Enrichment Club Showcases and Student-Led Conferences (SLCs) to wrap up Trimester 2 and to the launch of Trimester 3. SLCs are always a special time of celebration of student growth. Thank you for sharing your children with us and entrusting us to partner with you in their education. Please know that we are always here for you to support you in their journey.

We wish you an amazing Spring Break and Good Friday with your family! And take time to *Imagine...the possibilities!*

[Linda Ellis and Jennifer Chamberlain](#)

Kindergarten

February was full of celebrations in Kindergarten! We had Groundhog Day, Valentine's Day, Presidents Day, the 101st Day of School, Go Texans Day, and 3 birthdays. What a fun month!

In reading we have been enjoying traditional literature, including folk tales and fairy tales. In addition to reading traditional versions of the stories, we have really enjoyed reading some versions with a Texas twist. These stories are called fractured fairy tales, and one of our favorites was a version of *The Three Little Pigs*, called *The Three Little Gators*. We've been comparing and contrasting these stories with the original stories.

In writing we continued to learn about the features of "all about" (nonfiction) books. Our author study this month was Gail Gibbons who has written many nonfiction books. Looking at her books helped us think about things we could do in our own writing when we write nonfiction!

In math we have been working on concepts including combining shapes to make new shapes, measuring and comparing height and length, collecting data, making and interpreting graphs, and features of 3D shapes. Next month some of the topics we will work on are addition and subtraction strategies and developing strong number sense with numbers beyond 10.



In science we continued our study of Life Science. We worked hard on a major research project where partners selected an animal to study. They prepared a poster together, created costumes at home, and then presented their research to CTL's teachers and students in our "Animal Museum." They did an amazing job and truly sounded like experts on their animals! We have just begun a focus on plants and are looking forward to growing some of our own in the coming month!



In social studies we continued learning about where we live. We have learned that our homes are in neighborhoods which are in cities in states in countries in continents on our planet. We have especially enjoyed learning about Texas and its state symbols! Next month we will learn about our nation's symbols and how people live around the world.

I have truly enjoyed seeing the confidence that is building in this group. It was amazing to see them present their animal research and perform a Readers Theater for the entire school! They love showing everyone what they have learned and the "big kids" have been such a kind and encouraging audience for them!

Stephanie Phipps

Grades 1-2

Although we had one extra day last month, it sure felt short. The class had many memorable celebrations this month from Groundhog Day to Valentine's Day to our 101st Day Celebration to Go Texan Day. The class had a great time! Thank you to all the parents who helped with our Valentine's party and the 101st Day Celebration.



We also were lucky enough to have two special presentations this month. Shanice Loke, Lea's mom, shared a special Chinese tradition with the class in honor of Chinese New Year. She taught the class about the Tray of Togetherness. The students really enjoyed it. We also had the pleasure of Dr. Carroll joining us to teach a lesson on poetry. We found out that we have some wonderful poets in our class.



Some of the things we have focused on for the month...

In writing we worked on correct punctuation and capital letters, creative ways to come up with new writing topics, and how to write many types of poetry. The class wrote their first Haiku poem. In reading we continue to work toward finding and sticking with just right books. We studied the author Doreen Cronin and her writings as well.



In math the class continued to challenge themselves in workshop—learning how to sort and find the characteristics of 3D shapes, add and subtract two digit numbers with and without regrouping, and use various forms of measurement tools to measure around the classroom and graph data on a bar graph.

We looked at the many characteristics of animals in science. They completed a lab where they discovered the advantages and disadvantages of those characteristics. The students then created a "Super Animal" where they were asked to be creative with the animal's characteristics, giving them special features. They also had to write about why their animal was extraordinary.



We have been hard at work making sure that our portfolios are complete. Please make sure you check the email with the portfolio preview sign up dates. You will need to sign up for a 15-minute time slot to meet with your child for his/her presentation. I am looking forward to seeing you next week!

Lisa Lipar

Grades 3-4

Celebrating Valentine's Day was not the only reason for the Discovimators to love February! In reading workshop our class finished the read aloud book, *The Raft* by S.A. Bodeen. Wow! What an intriguing and suspenseful story. Robie, a young fifteen year old girl, is the sole survivor of a horrific plane crash. Left alone in the middle of the Pacific Ocean floating for days on a raft, we experienced Robie's agonizing story of desperation and survival. Each day we wanted to know, "Will this be the day she gets rescued? Or will this be the day Robie doesn't make it any longer?" With the ending of each intense chapter, students begged for Mrs. Smith to "keep reading!"

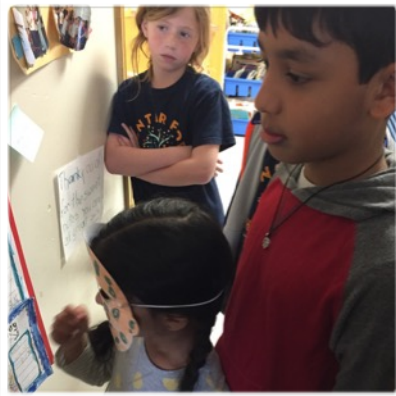
Besides our suspenseful shared read aloud, students gave a make over to our classroom library thanks to the help of Mrs. Reese (a librarian herself) and several students that volunteered to stay after school. The group reorganized a large portion of our classroom library. Books are now arranged by nonfiction and fiction. Students are able to browse by nonfiction topics such as animals, science, and history. Fiction books are arranged alphabetically by author's last name. By sorting the books in this manner, we were delighted to discover we have multiple books by several authors such as Tedd Arnold, Kevin Henkes, James Marshall, and of course our favorite, Mo Willems. More students have browsed and read our picture book section than ever before.



Our next goal is to sort and organize our chapter books. Thanks to all of the generous donations, we now have almost twice as many chapter books as we had from the beginning of the year. We are all looking forward to browsing through the new titles once they are organized by author and genre. As we closed this trimester with self assessments, we discussed the qualities of good readers. Students agreed that sharing favorite titles and authors with their peers was the mark of a good reader. Our classroom library, with its plethora of choices, has allowed us to hit that mark.

Prodigy has been the name of the game in math. Although I try to offer a plethora of math websites for students to practice math skills, Prodigy has garnered the most excitement. Students have begged to play this game during class as a way to review multiplication, mixed operations, data relationships, and fractions. Building on our in-depth review of multiplication, students moved into multiplying two digit times one and two digit factors. Understanding factors and multiples helped us move into division, especially the process of long divisions. Once we grasped the concept of division, we quickly tied in the concept of fractions. Students are beginning to see how fractions and division are related. As one student explained while we discussed our math self assessment, "Fractions are divided parts of a whole number." Bingo! We will continue next month with adding, subtracting, and finding equivalent fractions as well as area, perimeter, measurement and geometry.

In science we have continued our life science studies with lots of inquiry and



independent research. Students have researched different types of vertebrates and invertebrates. Building on our knowledge of animal classification, students have used the iPads and laptops to discover the classification of specific animals such as Blob Fish, Leafy Sea Dragons, Tapirs, and Panda Ants to name just a few. Rounding out our second trimester with science portfolio preparation, we revisited several experiments we conducted. We used STEM self reflections to review our crystal experiment and our density lab. Students pushed their thinking about the investigations to discover how they connected with the fields of technology, engineering, and math. We realized that by conducting experiments, we are using skills that scientists, meteorologists, and engineers would use on a daily basis along with incorporating our math skills.

In social studies we have concluded this trimester by discovering the main regions of the United States. Students have collaboratively researched the five major regions of the United States while learning the reasons it is important to have an awareness of which states are in each region. We also had a wonderful lesson with Mrs. Rebecca Masciola. She read the beautiful *Harriet's Underground Railroad in the Sky* and taught students about the Underground Railroad. As we end the trimester we celebrated Texas Independence Day and began learning the history behind the birth of our great state.

Melanie Smith

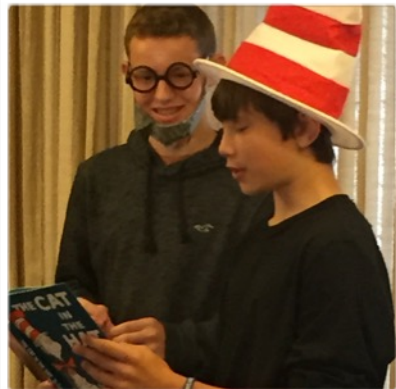
Grade 5 Language Arts

February turned out to be a busy month in Language Arts. Students enjoyed our read aloud of *Bridge to Terabithia* even though it meant giving up a couple of days of independent reading time. It was a treat to see the story come to life in the form of a play at Main Street Theater. We had great discussions about the similarities and differences between the book, the play, and even the movie. This led perfectly into our Reader's Roundtable topic of perspective, which proved to be one of our best roundtable discussions to date. We have had numerous Book Talks about favorite titles read by students recently. As students have become more comfortable with presenting to the class, they are eager to tell classmates about the great books they've read. These book recommendations are powerful advertisements because they come from peers. We now have titles with a waiting list!



Writing workshop has been especially busy as students have been working toward the completion of their second final draft of the trimester. Peer and teacher conferences have been an important part of the process as students worked to polish their pieces. Students enjoy sharing their writing with the class during our author share time at the end of each period. The feedback and suggestions given by peers is powerful. It's exciting to listen to the students speak like true authors. They are taking the lessons learned during class and applying them to their own writing and are even finding ways to help classmates grow as writers.

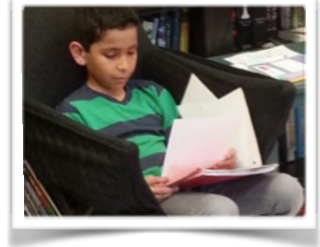
It's portfolio preparation time in our classroom. Although getting the portfolio put together takes a great deal of time, it's extremely beneficial as it gives



students time to reflect on their own growth over the trimester. We are looking forward to sharing these creative works with parents soon!

Grades 6-8 Language Arts

The Illuminators had a month of growth in reading workshop. They enjoyed the conclusion of *Bridge to Terabithia* and had great discussion about the similarities and differences between the book and the play performed by Main Street Theater actors. Most students preferred the book over the play or movie. Our Reader's Roundtable discussions have really taken off! It's exciting to listen to the deep and thoughtful discussions had by students. Their understanding and view of books has developed and matured over the course of the month. Because roundtable is led by the students, they push each other to think more critically about books. The knowledge gained during reading translates directly to writing where students have also shown a great deal of growth.



Using the information gained through Reader's Roundtable discussions and writing minilessions, students have been hard at work polishing drafts. Several students have experimented with new genres in writing workshop and have been eager to create meaningful pieces. A focus this month has been on using conventions properly in writing. Students have shown a great deal of growth in this area. Teacher conferences have been mostly focused on individual editing needs as students work to complete final drafts.

It's portfolio preparation time in our classroom. Although getting the portfolio put together takes a great deal of time, it's extremely beneficial as it gives students time to reflect on their own growth over the trimester. We are looking forward to sharing the creative works with parents soon!

Grades 6-8 Social Studies

February was a busy month in the Social Studies classroom. Students completed their research of a topic in ancient history and wrote an expository essay to showcase their new knowledge. We enjoyed learning about a variety of topics as students presented their research to the class. Look for the creative brochures and letters created by students in their portfolios. After spring break, we'll begin a unit on Ancient India.

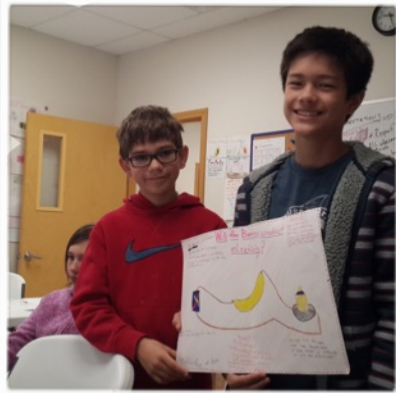
[Angela Bailey](#)

Grade 5 Math and Science

February definitely has been a month filled with love and friendship. From an incredible Valentine's Day planned by our AMAZING 5th grade room moms—Cecil Wright, Laurie Robertson, and Diana Chavez—to the most phenomenal Acts of Kindness week.

In math we have been working on multiplying fractions. It has been quite an in-depth concept to get into as it is completely changing the way we think about fractions—moving away from common denominators to simplifying before multiplying. I am proud of all the extra work the 5th graders have been putting into learning this concept, especially the amazing lessons they shared with us after 'teaching' mom and dad about math class. And our 5th graders are solving for x —WOW, algebra is now known as unicorns. I absolutely love how changing the name and adding some color has brought out the true mathematicians all our 5th graders can be.

In science AMAZING students presented research projects this month to end off our unit on MATTER. The 5th graders partnered with a class mate and



were able to choose a property of matter that interested them most. The experiments that were demonstrated for their presentations were outstanding and loads of fun facts were shared with their classmates. They explored in detail everything from conductivity, insulations, magnetic forces, solubility of different kinds of sweets, flow of electricity through all types of fruits and vegetables, repulsion and attraction of magnets and density of liquid. What fun being able to observe these creative scientific minds of my 5th graders!



Grades 6-8 Math and Science

In math what an interesting term with LOADS of new challenges and excitement. Algebra, solving for x, linear functions, pizza projects, statistics, graphing on a computer—almost too much to imagine in one month—but our 6th through 8th graders have managed to yet again cover it all. Everyday brings with it its mathematical challenges and hurdles. Sometimes it does not seem that these hurdles will ever be cleared, but with perseverance, passion and practice we will get there.



In science one day, the 6th through 8th graders got me talking about how the fax machine blows my mind and it led us into an in-depth conversation about all the scientific inventions/theories/discoveries that we would absolutely love to know more about. This was the brain child of the ‘WHAT BLOWS OUR MINDS’ projects. The 6th through 8th graders were each then tasked to come up with one unique scientific question that they would like to explore and research. One thing I can say about the presentations is that everyone left class that day more knowledgeable AND asking more questions. It always invigorates me as a teacher when I see the thirst for knowledge and the soaking up of information from their peers. It’s been a great month. I cannot wait to see what amazing discoveries we will experience after spring break.



Grade 5 Social Studies

This month the 5th graders dove into the history of Colonial Williamsburg. The quote that is attached to Colonial Williamsburg is, “So that the Future may learn from the Past.” This led to the 5th graders asking many questions about their own family’s past. They went home and interviewed family members about great moments in their lives. The interview process is one of the most primary fact-gathering tools that our young historians need to learn. It was incredible to hear about the life and times of our CTL grandparents, aunts, uncles, and parents. What a privilege it was to hear them share their family’s history. The presentations were outstanding, and our 5th grade class learned so much about the amazing people that shaped and molded our amazing CTL students.



Chantal Dos Santos

Grades K-8 Physical Education

Another month has flown by, or in the case of PE, it may be more accurate to say “danced by.” February was all about rhythmic movement. Kindergartners and Grade 1-2 danced like chickens (The Chicken Dance), bunnies (The Bunny Hop) and around a hat (The Mexican Hat Dance). Meanwhile the older grades learned not just one, but two versions of Cotton Eye Joe (who knew Texas had their own?). Everybody “peeled off” in a Virginia Wheel and “do-si-doed” in a square dance that included a Texas star. Students performed awesome, and it was great to see even those not so keen on dancing having a little fun. At the end of the month, we danced a little “nae nae” with added jumping jacks and



kept active with a few games. Our kindergartners went on a bear hunt while some of the older grades found themselves stuck in a swamp during “Swamp Ball.”

March brings a return to fitness exercises and volleyball skills exploration. The younger students will finally have a chance to try out the 4 Square in the Air game as they, like the older students, practice striking objects and keeping the ball in the air.

Not sure what spring weather we will have so please remember to have your child dressed appropriately for outdoor PE on Mondays and Wednesdays!

Marci Murphy

Grades K-8 Art



<p>Artists' Techniques & Art History Mini-Lessons...</p>	<p>The Life & Artistic Style of Zentangle Artist Julie Erin Ehrmantraut</p> 	<p>The Life & Artistic Style of Zentangle Artist Jaimee-Ann Driver</p> 
<p>A Few of Our Art-Creating & Reflecting Experiences...</p>	<p>Continuing Zentangle Creative Portraits</p>  <p>We Continued Creating Our "All About Me" Books Inspired by Patricia Polacco</p>  <p>Art to Remember Self-Reflections</p>  <p>Creating Liquid Watercolor Hearts for Parents and Families</p>  <p>Artist Self-Reflections Inspired By Our CTL Learning Experiences During Trimester 2</p> 	
<p>Community-Building Empowerment Questions & Discussions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining Expectations with Consistency and Excellence (Continued) • How to Not Compare Your Work with Others (Continued) • How to Celebrate Your Own Creativity (Continued) • Creating Art That Speaks from Your Heart 	

February has been a month of excavation for CTL Young Artists—excavating deeper understandings, deeper meanings, and deeper thinking. All activities our students have participated in during art class have been to promote intrinsic motivation and the value of metacognition, reflection, and review through fresh and unique learning experiences and opportunities. They are proud and excited about the art they have created and how much they have learned during Trimester 2. As we continue to journey forward, we will continue to cultivate a classroom where students will question, research, create, and try out new techniques and art mediums.

The table overview is a quick snapshot of what we have accomplished in Art



Class for the month of February 2016.

With enthusiastic anticipation, March 2016 will be the month where students will perform more investigative duties and participate in exploratory art. The artists that your children will be exposed to will offer them multi-perspectives on how to create art. They will also be challenged to rethink what is art to them. CTL students will engage in “inventing” and creating abstract art based on themes and individual interpretations.

Special thanks to all CTL Parent Council members who have helped spearhead our Art to Remember fundraiser for this school year! Also, many thanks to all parents who have ordered “published” mementos of their children’s art. This experience has been such a wonderful opportunity for each child!

Students in grades 5-8 have already begun to sign up to teach “CTL Young Artist Mini Lessons” during art class, with guidance from Mrs. McKissic. This is always an energetic time because students get to learn from each other and teach their teacher and peers! Pictures will be taken to offer you a glimpse into their presentations.

Be on the lookout for CTL Young Artists’ Investigations guidelines coming home during late March, where students will be able to research an artist of their choice to discover more about his/her childhood and life as an artist.

Treva McKissic

Grades K-8 Music

Wow! February may be a short month but the CTL music department accomplished a lot! We started the month off with a bang with the two performances at the Harvest Home Nursing Center. To say I am proud of the kids and what that did that day is an understatement. The residents were thrilled by their music and were asking us to come back the next week. I think the kids enjoyed watching the residents and the joy their performance gave them. I loved seeing the smiles on the students’ faces. Thank you for giving such a wonderful, heartfelt performance. I especially enjoyed what the students shared with me in music class about the experience the following week. Of course a good time was had by all at the family cookout that followed. Thank you to everyone who helped make it a fun time. I look forward to doing it again. We spent the rest of February learning some square dancing. Yee-haw! Every grade level worked on at least fourteen different calls. I was pleased with how everyone participated and worked together.

Our last music class for the month was an introduction to drumming. We will be spending time in upcoming classes learning to play together on congas, djembes, bongos and various other drums. The classes work to learn different rhythms within a piece so we can play it together as an ensemble. I think everyone loves to play and feel the beat of the drums.

I’m looking forward to a music filled Spring!

Debbie Kinzel

