

# Reading First News

## Long Beach Unified School District

Volume 2, Issue 4

March 2006

### Money Comes Alive For Muir Third Graders



Muir Third Grade teacher, Dorothy Nikas, visited Orange County Federal Credit Union to open a savings account for her third grade students. The class was studying the **Money Unit** and she encouraged her students to bring in coins for a class savings project. When their piggy bank was full, she decided it was time to go to the bank.

Ms. Nikas explained what her class was doing with the bank supervisor, who then offered to visit all of the Muir third grade classrooms. She was willing to answer student questions about the **Money Unit** they were studying.

On the day of the Bank Supervisor visit, students asked questions such as “What is the difference between a piggy bank and a bank account,” or “Where do you put money that people put in and what do you do with it?” Students were taught how to open a savings account. They were encouraged to open a Junior Varsity Club Account or a College Saver Account and were quite surprised to learn that all they needed was \$5.00 to start an account.

This was an excellent opportunity for the students to start thinking about their futures and to see how schools and communities work together to provide valuable information.

### Putting Theory into Practice at McKinley



Recent reading research clearly demonstrates the relationship between reading fluency and reading comprehension. Incorporating fluency practice into daily workshop routines takes planning and resolve. The teachers at McKinley School recently had the opportunity to combine professional development with time to “Get the Ball Rolling” professional development sessions.

Following brief background training, teachers watched Reading First Coach Richard Littlejohn train a student to use a tape recorder for a one minute fluency drill. Teachers then immediately applied this demonstration by training two students in their own rooms. Meeting together after a 40 minute classroom training stint, teachers shared their successes and observations. The feedback from teachers was positive as teachers reported that the use of tape recorders to enhance fluency practice in their classrooms was efficient and manageable. The use of tape recorders as an added motivational tool for students is great this time of year!

In another training first grade teachers also took a look at fluency assessments, but with an eye to student processing. After analyzing the most recent OARS fluency passages, teachers returned to their classrooms to take running records while completing one minute fluency timed tests for each student using the passage. The keyword was collaboration as teachers poured over these results as to what errors were being made, and what resources within the Open Court program would support these areas. Teachers reported that having time devoted to this type of analysis and collaboration was valuable. Targeted instruction for workshop groups was the ultimate outcome of this training.

At McKinley, reading fluency, as both an indicator of student achievement and as a diagnostic tool, is getting well deserved attention.

#### READING FIRST SCHOOLS

- ❑ Lafayette
- ❑ Lincoln
- ❑ McKinley
- ❑ Muir
- ❑ Roosevelt
- ❑ Sutter
- ❑ Webster
- ❑ Powell
- Barton
- Burbank
- Burnett
- Harte
- Lee
- Whittier



❑ Schools contributing articles

## Roosevelt Uses the Internet to Teach Author's Purpose, Fact vs. Fiction, and Multiple Resources

Roosevelt received 30 laptops this year and students are using them as another literacy tool, just like paper and pencil. Very recently, they have been hooked up wirelessly to the Internet to allow the laptops to travel between classrooms. Teachers have been able to teach whole class lessons on how to use strategies on the computer and the Internet.

Recently, students were taken to a fictitious website that looked real- with digital photos and links to other pages. Students believed that it was real until they did an advanced Google search for similar links. Once they discovered that there were no other links to that topic, the teacher told them that if there is only one resource that says something, then its fiction. The more resources that can be found saying the same thing, the closer this information moves toward fact. They realized why they are required to use so many resources for Inquiry. One student even said, "Don't believe everything you read!"

Finally, there was an authentic discussion of author's purpose. Why would someone take the time to write a fictitious webpage? Students decided maybe they were trying to get money from us; or maybe they were just trying to entertain us. Students really saw the value of learning author's purpose.

Inquiry is the time when students can apply the strategies and skills they learn in the Open Court Anthology to other text formats and genres. The Internet is a wonderful resource for applying such skills and students need to be critical readers in the digital age.



Students at Roosevelt Using Internet

## Sacramento County office of Education Visits Webster

On February 27, 2006, Roxanne Higgins and Sharon Van Horn, from the Sacramento County Office of Education, visited Webster Elementary. The team toured grades kindergarten through third grades and saw students engaged in powerful literacy lessons.

In kindergarten, the students were actively involved in phonemic awareness activities. Students demonstrated their strong foundational knowledge of rhyming words and pictures. There was evidence of story crafting and students interaction with the sound spelling cards.

In first grade, there was consistent use of whole word blending. Students were actively involved in blending words and using the sound spelling cards to help with the lesson. In one first grade classroom, a teacher stated the purpose for blending. "I know that some of you know how to read these words, but I am showing a strategy to use when you do not know how to read a word."

In second grade, the students were actively engaged in Word Knowledge. Students were blending words and using the words in sentences. There was one classroom where all students worked with partner to share their sentences. The teacher supervised students' language and gave instant feedback. In another classroom the students were using response boards to be actively involved in the Word Knowledge lesson.

In third grade, there was evidence of workshop, teacher modeling comprehension strategies, and students answering comprehension questions. In one classroom, all students were independently working in small groups, while the teacher met with her own group.

The visiting team provided Webster staff with encouraging comments and suggestions to increase student learning. Webster Elementary will continue to focus on educating all children by making all children successful readers.



## COACHES' CORNER.....

### OBSERVATIONS IN AND OUT OF THE CLASSROOMS



- ☺ I could tell my Functional Text lesson had transferred to application, when the next morning in front of my door, was waiting one student with cupcakes in hand! He gave me the cupcakes while explaining how he went home after school, and made cupcakes by following directions and setting the oven to 350 degrees" (Ruby Gaytan, Webster)
- ☺ One of our 3rd graders brought his "invisible friend" for the Concept/Question Board for "Imagination"! He introduced him to the class, and then very carefully pinned him up on the board on the Concept side! (Marcia Fletcher, Barton)
- ☺ After working with Kaleidoscope kids, one girl said to me, "Don't leave!" and wrote it on her whiteboard. Only she wrote it as "don't live!" I guess I have to go back to the long 'e' card again!(Stephanie Webster, Roosevelt)
- ☺ Beginning readers will read to anybody who listens!(Sherry Cassiadoro, Whittier)
- ☺ You know you've taught something well when your students try and sound like you during workshop!(Sherry Cassiadoro, Whittier)
- ☺ Young children need to be guided to rely more on text, not just the pictures, to comprehend the stories.( Camille Wilson, Lafayette)
- ☺ While assisting the kindergarten teachers with their assessments, one gets to hear a variety of creative responses. I was doing the oral blending section where you say the first and last part of the word and the student says the word. In my example, I used the word peanut. So I said "pea" ... "nut," waiting for the reply of peanut. The student's response....well let's just say that he knows the real name of his male anatomy.  
(Barbara Jenkins, Powell)

## Powell.....

### First and Fifth Grade Teachers Work Together With Fluency Practice

Some of Powell's first grade teachers really believe in starting fluency practice early for their students. One first grade teacher has paired up with a fifth grade class to help her students practice fluency. Half of the first grade students go to the fifth grade class. Half of the fifth graders go to the first grade class. The fifth graders become "teachers" in that they time and record errors for the first graders.

The first graders love being able to "beat" their time with their fifth grade reading buddy. The fifth grade students are learning how important it is to attend to the text while reading. They enjoy being in the "teacher" seat, coaching their "students." When the first graders start their official fluency assessments, we'll see how well their practice paid off.

## Roosevelt

### Celebrates Learning With Inquiry Fair

Teachers at Roosevelt have been working hard at scaffolding the Inquiry Process for the whole year. Some classes started with one question for the whole class and then created a product together. For the following unit, they investigated questions in groups and everyone created the same kind of product. After that, students formed groups with different questions and then created multiple presentations.

To celebrate all of the learning, Roosevelt will have an Inquiry Fair at the end of the year, similar to a Science Fair. Each class will submit one group's project per track to compete for best in class, track, and grade level. Teachers will walk their classes through the fair to see what students in other classes are doing. Parents will be invited too! We're hoping this will be the motivation the kids need to survive testing; but also it will open up their thinking to what's possible in the coming years.

## Lafayette Hosts First Annual Family Literacy Night

To celebrate Dr. Seuss' birthday and Read Across America, the staff at Lafayette hosted a Family Literacy Night. Parents and students were treated to room after room of literacy celebrations featuring the likes of Harry Potter, Strega Nona, Frog and Toad and more. The literacy specialists concentrated on functional text, from reading directions to make a craft to following a recipe for a healthy snack. Pirates who dared enter the Pirates of the Caribbean room were challenged to follow written directions to find a hidden treasure. The third grade team did an academy award winning performance of Strega Nona while the Kinder team had a host of activities related to Give a Mouse a Cookie (core lit book) - A read aloud in Spanish and English, students then made puppets, and read their OCR decodables to parents. Also on hand was the Burnett Librarian - Mary Hopman who signed families up for library cards and shared information about the Literacy Centers. Lastly, Hometown Buffet was raffling off free dinner to families. On top of all this fun and excitement, every family who came received a free bag of books to take home to practice their nightly Book It and fluency. The everyday necessity of reading along with the fun and adventurous aspects of it were celebrated during this family affair!



## Muir Third Grade Class Participate In Persuasive Debates *"Country Life vs. City Life"*

Students in Mrs. Silva's class took different perspectives and details to argue their side whether students should live in the country or the city. Students were broken into teams of four and they followed a debate format where they presented their arguments as classmates respectfully listened to their perspectives. Third grade student Linette Murillo quotes, "Who needs theaters and stores? In the country, we don't need a lot of material things." Next, classmates challenged their arguments and ideas and not their peers. A chance for rebuttal followed as students defended their positions. Students asked, "Can I clarify what I stated before?" Each team presented their ideas to the class. Finally, the class voted on the best debate team based on the facts that supported their argument. Teacher Susan Silva was very pleased to hear their debates. She was amazed to hear students using academic vocabulary from the unit theme as well as incredible sentences to get their point across.



# WHAT'S NEW IN FOURTH AND FIFTH GRADES

## SUTTER... EXCEL TEACHERS COLLABORATE MONTHLY

With data analysis as one of our main focus points for this school year, Sutter teachers who are assigned to teach our EXCEL classes, meet monthly to collaborate, examine data, and design lessons using the GATE/EXCEL extension menu icons. Walk into one of our EXCEL classrooms and you are apt to find our Concept/Question Boards addressing the "Big Idea", "Language of the Discipline", and "Details".

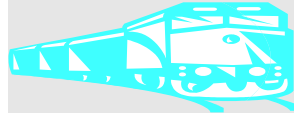
Last week Joseph Sarabia, 4th grade EXCEL teacher, presented, via video, how his Class applied reading and comprehension strategies during Literature Circles using their Open Court anthology. Dividing his students into groups, each with a designed role (Amazing Artist, Word Wizard, Secretary/Recorder, Strategist, Sensational Summarizer, and Bossman/Bosslady) empowers them to take ownership of their learning through reciprocal teaching and collaboration.

Recently Crystal Cheek visited our EXCEL teachers and coached them on successful techniques to use in order to integrate social studies within their Open Court Units. Providing students with hands-on activities that can be used during workshop or given as homework helps reinforce their reading and social science studies. One example that teachers in 3rd grade implemented immediately required students to document "changes over time" within their neighborhood and city of Long Beach.

Our EXCEL teachers are enjoying using their extended menus as they plan and create new lessons to challenge and motivate their students.

## Lincoln Finds Ways To Help Strengthen Their Open Court Reading Program...

AAAAAAAAAAAAA Abooooooooooard !!!!!.....



Choo!! Choo!! Lincoln Elementary has boarded the Reading Comprehension Express Train, to help connect Thinking Maps® and Open Court Reading ...KLAKITY-KLAK, KLAKITY-KLAK. We have been fortunate to send administrators, Coaches and 3 classroom teachers to the Thinking Maps® Training of Trainers. This team has become the conductors who are leading the train of all 65 Lincoln teachers to their destination in their knowledge of using tools to strengthen reading comprehension for all of our students. Some of our stops in our journey have included Staff meetings and a Buy Back. The meetings allowed teachers to examine Grade Level Content Standards, and brainstorm ideas to determine the use of the Thinking Maps® as a visual tool that facilitates critical thinking! Understanding that data drives instruction, teachers have boarded the Data Meeting caboose! Using a PDSA, teachers have collected valuable data in which they have reflected on their teaching, and on students' levels of independence with Thinking Maps®. Teachers and students are excited and having many conversations as they continue their journey in the Reading Comprehension Express Train! Choo!! Choo!! KLAKITY-KLAK, KLAKITY-KLAK.



