

# Reading First News

Volume 2, Issue 1

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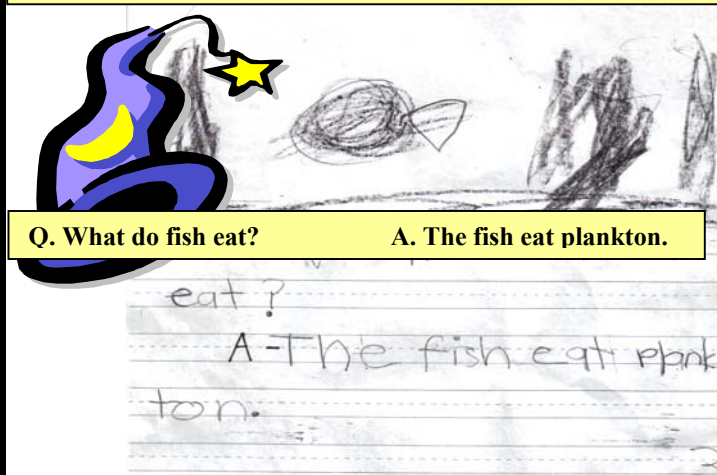


## READING FIRST SCHOOLS

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

## CONTRIBUTING NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

Roosevelt, McKinley, Sutter, Lee, Whittier



Q. What do fish eat?

A. The fish eat plankton.

## OPEN COURT SUPPORT TRAININGS

**K** 11/14, 11/17, 11/23, 12/6, 12/12, 12/14,  
1/17, 1/19

**1<sup>st</sup>** 11/9, 12/14, 1/25

**2<sup>nd</sup>** 11/16, 12/14, 1/25

**3<sup>rd</sup>** 11/2, 12/7, 1/18

Location for all trainings is the Teacher Resource Center. You can check registration numbers, times and room numbers by going on-line to the Professional Development Guide.

## *Whittier Highlights Students' Successes During Weekly Television Show...*

Ed Garcia, Principal and Vice Principal Lucy Salazar at Whittier are co hosts for "Wizard T.V", Whittier's weekly television show. The broadcast airs live every Tuesday from 8:30 to 8:50. On each show they also have a special co host, the Whittier Wizard (who is actually Whittier's head custodian using their wizard puppet).

Two kindergarten students were on Wizard T.V. during one of the summer broadcasts. The two students had completed the eighth unit in Open Court and their teacher had been focusing on the inquiry process. The students shared some of their writing about what they had learned about Sea Animals. As they read one of the pages from their inquiry book they were both very specific about saying the word "question" just before they read their questions and the word "answer" just before they read their answers. It was obvious by the proud look on the students' faces that they were experiencing a wonderful opportunity to show the many successes they had achieved during their first year of school. Their oral language development as they were speaking to the audience and the evidence of their development in phonemic awareness displayed through their writing would put a smile on anyone's face? (see a sample of their writing to the left of this page)

Ed Garcia said that this year they are focusing on writing, particularly using writer's notebooks and writer's folders. They will invite students to share their writing work with the rest of the school, such as notebook entries, drafts of writing work they are working on, how they get their writing ideas, and books they use to help with their writing.

Ed also uses the TV show to model for the teachers writing conferences as he does a mini conference with one of their student guests. So far this year he has modeled how to launch writer's notebooks, where to find writing ideas, and he shares good books that may inspire a writing idea. They have also spotlighted inquiry work as they did last year when several classes appeared on the show to talk about their inquiry projects

They also have a segment of the show called "shout outs". Teachers submit names of students who deserve recognition (shout out) for passing a benchmark, math facts tests, doing something kind, making a good choice, etc. They also present Wizard Star Awards to students who make good choices. The students are nominated by their teachers and each award recipient receives a certificate and a coupon for a free item at the student store.

**Great Job Whittier – For providing an innovative opportunity for all students to showcase their many successes!**

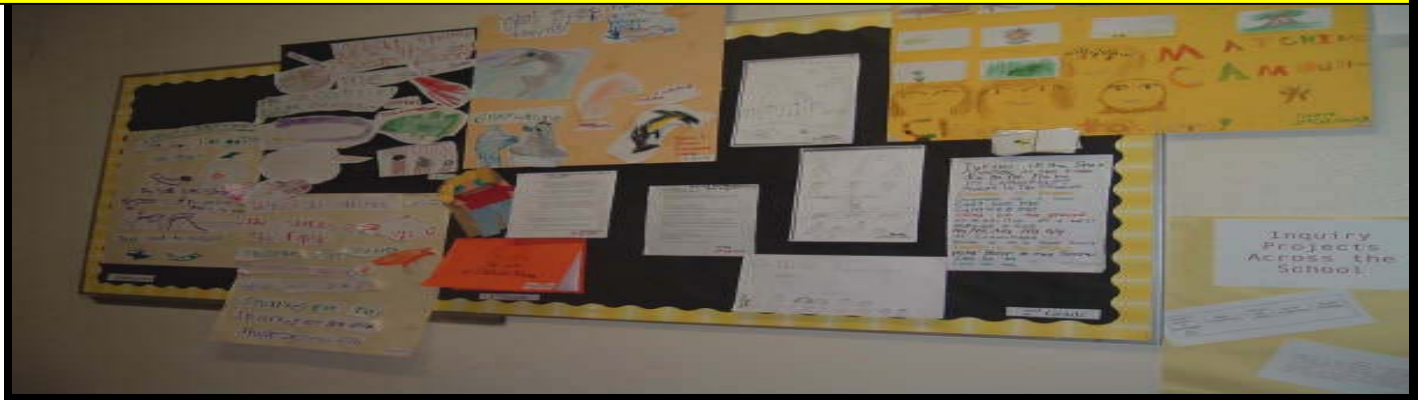
## Roosevelt Celebrates Inquiry

If you walk down the hall at Roosevelt Elementary, you will see a school united in the Inquiry Process. Students in Kindergarten through fifth grade participated in the Inquiry Process and created amazing products of their learning. While they may look like simple posters, books, and scripts, each artifact had a story behind it. A story of motivation; a story of struggle; and a story of self-discovery.

When studying the Weather Unit, some first graders asked, "How does the sun go down?" Their conjecture was that God has the power to push the sun into the ocean. After emailing a scientist, they discovered the scientific explanation. The look on their face would give any teacher the chills! They decided to create a book for Kinders to teach them what they had learned.

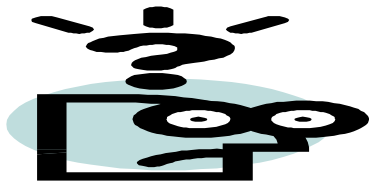
Roosevelt teachers are amazed at the motivation Inquiry has created in their classroom not only for the students, but for them. A third grade teacher explained, "It makes the units a little bit different from year to year because you never know what questions each class will have." Students began to see the need to go to the public library on their own to find more books. One second grade teacher stated, "They want to stay after school to find the answer to their question!" Now that's intrinsic motivation.

### Inquiry Projects Across The School



## Parent Comments At Lee

On Back to School night in Kim Mason's first grade room, a student and father stood chatting. The student explained to his dad that he knew many hard words from kindergarten and first grade. The father requested that the student share the words and the student replied, "oh, the concept/question board, how to use clarifying and practicing fluency." The father then looked at Ms. Mason and replied to his son, "Can you teach ME what all of that means?"



## McKinley Coaches Offer Weekly Tips To Staff in Their Coaches' Corner...

### *Steal a Minute*

Where can you steal a minute for small-group instruction and Workshop? If you are having difficulty getting to all your groups, here are a few suggestions:

You can meet with a small group or two in the computer lab

You can use the Open Court Resource Page for fluency, vocabulary, and Inquiry/Investigation during Computer Lab time as Workshop (the OCRP is already bookmarked on the lab's computers)

You can meet with a small group in the Library during your scheduled library time

You can meet with a small group during Music time

If you wanted to steal a minute using the suggestions listed above, try not to call the same group every time. If you have questions, please see Trudy or Richard



## ***Second Graders Share Stories at Sutter Academy***

At the beginning of their unit on Sharing Stories, 2<sup>nd</sup> graders at Sutter Academy brainstormed all the ways that stories can be shared.

Sharing a story through reading a book was obvious, but what about all the other ways? Students learned to share stories through music, dance, puppetry, drama, acting, singing, reading different versions, and writing.

One class participated in an experiment where a story was told orally, and then read, enhanced with music and sound effects. Their task next will be to pick a favorite story and enhance it themselves with sound effects, background noise, and/or music.

Teachers are working diligently to help their students develop a lifelong love of the many facets of reading. Got stories?



## **Coaches Form Committees for the 2005-2006 School Year**

**During a recent Reading First Coaches meeting, the coaches decided on some specific goals and then formed committees to address the needs for meeting their goals. The committees will meet regularly throughout the year and present and share information during the monthly coaches meetings. The committees and their purpose are:**

- **Writing Committee** - Design Lessons Using Open Court as a Springboard and Resource of Trainers for RF Schools to Call for Staff Development “IF” needed
- **Vocabulary Committee** - Book Study using Building Background Knowledge for Academic Achievement and Building Academic Vocabulary
- **Comprehension Committee** - Book Study using Digging for Meaning: Teaching Text Comprehension
- **Fluency Committee** - Book Study using Getting Up to Speed: Developing Fluency
- **Kaleidoscope Committee** - Generate Materials to support the Kaleidoscope lessons
- **Special Education Reduction Assessments** – Study and become more familiar with the CTOPP, Woodcock, and revised Dibels
- **Voyager Committee** - Meet and discuss the implementation of Voyager...intersession or after school program)
- **K/1 Assessment Committee** - Supports coaches and teachers by being well informed regarding the state Reading First assessments, procedures and instructional support for the K/1 program.





## Tier III and McKinley

By Richard Littlejohn, Reading First Coach

Reading First Tier III for grades 4/5 gave the participants a chance to focus their attention on Inquiry/Investigation, Differentiation of Instruction, and Comprehension Skills. These were the three topics Reading First teachers identified as their greatest need for additional support. Day 1 of Tier III focused solely on Inquiry/Investigation. Day 2 focused on Differentiation and Comprehension Skills.

The participants in the training saw the importance of the following:

*The Unit Read Aloud:* We began with the Unit Read Aloud, and how it is the teacher's responsibility to make the Read Aloud accessible to all students by utilizing SDAIE, Active Participation, and Cooperative Learning strategies. Many concepts and questions can be elicited from the Unit Read Aloud.

*Concept/Question Board:* The Concept/Question Board provides a venue for students to display their enthusiasm. When teachers "sell" the unit theme to their students, they promote student motivation. It is the springboard for Inquiry/Investigation.

*Inquiry/Investigation:* The ultimate goal of Inquiry/Investigation is "the process" which will lead to student independence.

*Differentiation of Workshop Activities:* Keeping Bloom's Taxonomy in mind, teachers provide appropriate independent tasks to meet the needs of our students.

*Comprehension Skills:* Comprehension skills can include the use of graphic organizers/Thinking Maps. Students need the opportunity to practice skills independently using text at their independent reading levels.

Since Open Court is a proven, research based curriculum, McKinley Elementary School is committed to its appropriate implementation. Utilizing the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model, differentiation of instruction, morphology, and fluency building activities, our students will be prepared to meet the California Language Arts Standards. McKinley is dedicated to creating Concept/Question Boards that are engaging, interactive, and meaningful for all our students. McKinley is also committed to the implementation of the Inquiry/Investigation process. The Inquiry/Investigation process is in its embryonic stage at our school, but will be a focus for our students. We are eager to move toward building on the Inquiry process to develop independent scholars ready to tackle the world of literature and research. Students of all abilities and reading levels will be able to participate in the process and achieve goals that many thought impossible for our students.