

Explorer News

Mrs. Swan 228-4779 cswan@cvsd.org

January 3-January 31

Vol. 1 Issue 1

Mrs. Swan's New Year's Resolution: It is my resolution to communicate far better with my student's parents through a monthly newsletter. (Maybe next year I will work toward a weekly letter. ☺)

***** This newsletter, as well as all to follow, will be sent home as well as posted on the school website. Look under Explorer Newsletters.**

I sincerely hope you all had a wonderful Christmas Break! I know mine was relaxing as well as busy. All of your generosity in forms of gifts, cookies, cards and wishes were so greatly appreciated. I am headed down the final leg of my masters and continue to work on my action research paper. I have been implementing whole group phonemic awareness instruction in the classroom since September. As I begin to assess students on the DIBELS and ARI this month I will be evaluating the effectiveness of this whole group instruction. I owe Mrs. Olson a great deal of gratitude for all of her hard one-on-one assessing and instruction with students in reading. Each Monday she is the person writing out note cards for some of your students. She is extremely dedicated to the success of all our students. THANK YOU MRS. OLSON!

In addition to completing my masters, I am also working very hard with the Explorer Team to plan our next expedition, which will kick off the first full week in February. In the mean time, we have planned what we are calling a MINI-EXPEDITION on families. I hope you all had a chance to complete the family tree this break, and if time slipped away, please try to complete it no later than January 8th. This is a key piece to begin the writing and discovery of what each person's place is in a family. Our focus for this mini-expedition revolves around the following guiding questions:

What is family?

What are the roles of family members?

How do families change over time?

It is our hope that through this study students will develop a firm understanding of family, which will connect deeply to our next full-length expedition.

Now that we are nearly at the halfway point of our year you will notice a few changes. We are continuing with phonemic awareness and word study, but will now add in-class fluency practice. Students will practice increasing their rate and fluency in reading by being timed at least two times a week. They will have fluency partners that will listen to them read and keep track of words they

miss, how quickly they read, and whether they understand what they read. As a reminder, word study is a two weeklong study. We practice the words in class (and home too ☺) and after two weeks students are assessed on their retention of the feature being studied. I am aware that they may know the spelling of the 16 words they have at the end of one week, but a beneficial practice for all is to have students learn other words that follow the same feature. This is not about memorizing; it is about learning the patterns of our English Language.

Please see the calendar below to keep up on all our events. Have a wonderful January and I hope 2007 holds the best for everyone!

January

	1 New Year's Day	2	3 Back to School Early Release	4	5 Swimming NO DAD!	6
7	8 Please have all Family Trees done	9	10 Early Release	11 ARI/DIBELS Testing There will be a guest teacher for me to test.	12 Swimming Mr. Myer's w/ the boys	13
14	15 Martin Luther King Jr. Day No School	16	17	18	19 Swimming NO DAD!	20
21	22	23	24	25	26 Swimming Last Day! NO DAD!	27
28	29	30	31			