

Everett Enrichment -- December 2009

December was a lively month for enrichment groups. Here are examples of some of our activities.

Kindergarten Language Arts Groups: Kindergartners used deductive reasoning to figure out riddles. They read and determined answers step-by-step, using each clue and the process of elimination. Children in some groups read and discussed nonfiction about the formation of snow. In whole classes, I read nonfiction and fiction books about chameleons and their ability to change color. As creative thinkers, the students made and wrote about their own chameleon, determining its colors and related emotions.

Kindergarten Math Groups: The children worked with bears to find multiple ways to add two sets to arrive at a given sum. They used flexible thinking to find patterns and as many different ways as they could to reach 12, for example. They also used number families to make sense of missing addends and subtraction equations.

First Grade Language Arts Groups: First graders have been studying elements of fables. They discussed the meaning of morals and made up some of their own. They have read versions of Aesop's fables, made puppets, and have acted out some fables. Fables are especially helpful for children to generalize meaning through inferential and global thinking. The children have applied the fables' lessons to their own lives.

First Grade Math Groups: The students continued to work on understanding multiplication and division as extensions of addition and subtraction, using skip counting, number lines, sets, and arrays. We worked on determining key words in story problems that help mathematicians decide which operation(s) to use. The children explored relationships among the operations as they found they can use various approaches to arrive at the same solution.

Second Grade Language Arts Groups: Second graders continued studying Chinese folk tales. They have applied the character traits of determination and self-reliance. They are writing thoughtful answers to factual and inferential questions in their journals and are taking great pride in creating dragons that embody special virtues and represent earth and sky elements. Each dragon has powers and a "pearl of wisdom" to guide people.

Second Grade Math Groups: Students in groups have studied the algebraic concept of *balance*, finding equalities and inequalities. They have used their math knowledge to create complex equations. The children also used geometry and flexible thinking to solve visual-spatial problems involving triangles. They used sequential problem solving skills in following rules to make origami shapes.

Third Grade Language Arts: Students are reading and analyzing folk tales and fables from West Africa, Argentina, and Japan. The tales all relate lessons concerning communication vs. miscommunication. They emphasize, through humor and conflict, the importance of expressing ourselves clearly. The third graders discussed Aesop's morals, extending the literal meaning into generalizations for people to consider in living their lives. They have read aloud as actors, with expression and fluency, and are keeping excellent response journals as they read the folk tales.

Third Grade Math: Third graders studied the algebraic concept of *function*, finding one- and two-step rules. They have used the ideas of *input* and *output* to determine sequences, working forward and backward. They applied logical reasoning to solve these multi-step problems, showing their understanding of inverse operations. Some problems use symbols to represent complex two-step functions. Third graders in problem solving groups used and created graphs, coordinate grids, diagrams, and pictures to illustrate and solve complicated word problems.