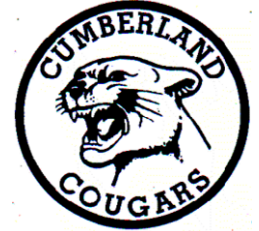




COUGAR NEWS



LEARNING & BEYOND

824 Cumberland Avenue, Sunnyvale, CA 94087

December 2006

Dates to Remember

12/8 Family Movie Night, "Polar Express", 7 p.m., Multi
12/18-1/1/2007 Holiday Recess



January 2007

1/2 School reopens
1/8 PTA Budget Mtg., 2:45
1/9 Teacher Learning Day, all students dismissed 12:45
1/11 Band Performance, 7 p.m.
1/16 School Site Council PTA Mtg., 6:30 International Pot Luck dinner
1/18 4th Grade Perf., 1:30, 7:00 p.m.

Dear Cumberland Families,

As you are shopping for gifts for your children for the holidays, please consider books—several by a favorite author, or a collection of books on a topic of interest to your child. Interestingly enough, most of the reading we do as adults is nonfiction, yet we rarely purchase nonfiction for our children. Consider a subscription to *Sports Illustrated for Kids*, *American Girl*, or *National Geographic World*. Word games that support vocabulary growth for upper grade students (3-5) are excellent choices as well. "Boggle", "Outburst", "Password", "Pictionary", "Probe", "Scattergories", "Scrabble", "Taboo", "Word Yahtzee", and "Word Sudoku" are a few possibilities.

During the holidays, many families send letters to friends and relatives. This is an opportunity to involve students in authentic writing experiences. Write letters, memos, reminder lists, thank you notes, and e-mails together. Even preschoolers can participate in the writing process. Let younger students put their thinking skills to work in planning writing with you. Planning is a form of writing, too, even if you are the one holding the pencil! Engage youngsters in the design process. Discuss content. Choose words together. Talk about length, beginnings, endings, questions your audience will have. Illustrate some things you write together (a great way to build skills in both ideas and organization!). Write letters, memos, reminder lists, thank you notes. Habits you instill in your child today WILL pay dividends later in life as you receive a carefully composed thank you note for a gift you have given!

I wish you and yours a joyful, harmonious holiday season.

Warmly,

Mala Ahuja, Principal

December Character Trait

Cooperation

Combining our energies to work with others toward a common goal is cooperation. Through cooperation we can accomplish tasks more quickly and easily than by ourselves, with the added benefit of enjoying each other's company as we share in the work

From The Values Book by Pam Schiller and Tamera Bryant

Homework Survey

Our parent homework surveys are online! Many thanks to Mrs. Stone for her help in getting this accomplished. The URL for the survey is <http://www.zoomerang.com/survey.zgi?p=WEB225XD9T9YQX> On Dec. 12th from 8 a.m.-9a.m. and Dec. 13th from 2 p.m.-3 p.m. the computer lab is open for all parents that would like to take the survey here at school. The biggest advantage to an online survey is that the results are tabulated for us. However, paper copies of the survey are available in the front office. Either way, we want to hear from you!



Enjoying the Holidays with Your Child

The holidays can be a source of joy and coming together for families to share common beliefs, rituals, and customs. Even so, holiday celebrations, large gatherings, crowded stores, and the increased promotion of toys and gifts can sometimes be overwhelming to children and stressful for adults as well. Also during this time, young children may see and hear things that puzzle them regarding holiday observances that are different from their own. They may ask, “Can we celebrate Hanukkah?” OR, “Is Santa Claus coming to our house?” Taking time to respond to your child’s questions will help reaffirm your own family’s cultural traditions while also helping your child understand that families have different beliefs and celebrate in different ways. Here are some tips for ways to help you and your child enjoy the holidays together.

- **Plan quiet times together.** Quiet times with you are a welcome break from parties, family visits, and shopping malls for your child. If possible, try spending a few relaxing moments together sharing a favorite book, doing some holiday baking, wrapping a gift, or just listening to music.
- **Don’t start too early.** As you know, young children find it difficult to wait for even short periods of time. They live in the “now” and don’t know how to wait “one week” or “one month”, especially if they’re waiting for something special. If possible, avoid starting holiday excitement too soon. To help your child wait, try marking days off a calendar together a few days before the actual holiday.
- **Acknowledge that families celebrate in different ways.** During the holidays, your child may wonder why his or her friends celebrate one holiday and your family celebrates another one or why some families celebrate the same holiday in different ways. Take time to help your child understand and respect that every family is different, and that families celebrate different holidays in their own ways.
- **Keep your plans as predictable as possible.** Talk with your child in advance if there will be guests arriving at your house or if you plan to travel during the holidays. You can discuss what everyone will do together, where people will sit for dinner, and where they will sleep, if necessary. Keep this time as predictable as possible for your child by assuring him or her that certain routines will not be disrupted.
- **Create a craft box.** Together, collect interesting craft material such as stickers, ribbons and bows, colorful gift wrap, old greeting cards, markers, pinecones, shells, yarn, fabric scraps, tape, glue, and safety scissors. Help your child choose a large box to sort everything in. When you’re busy with guests or holiday preparations or anytime your child needs a calming activity, suggest he or she take out the box and make a seasonal decoration or gift.

(This article appeared in a December issue of Scholastic: My first Magazine.)



Quotes from Cumberland Students about "Positive Attitude"

Patrick

"I think positive attitude means to feel confident in yourself and to not look down and say you can't do something. . . .When you want to accomplish something, see yourself doing it, put your mind to it and give it your best. That is positive attitude."

Sara

"I think positive attitude is when you are always happy and you don't mess around. . . ."



Courtney

"Having a positive attitude has made a difference for me. Recently, I broke my leg. I could not run and I could not walk. But, I ignored those things and tried to pay attention to the good things. . . .Without a positive attitude, I wouldn't have found these things. The next time something bad happens to you, use your positive attitude to find and see the good things it brings."



Brooke

"Having a positive attitude means having a cheerful approach to everything you do. People with a positive attitude try new things, show respect and are well liked. A positive attitude helps make homework easier and like a piece of cake."

Megan

"A positive attitude and kind words make people feel better and they help you make friends."

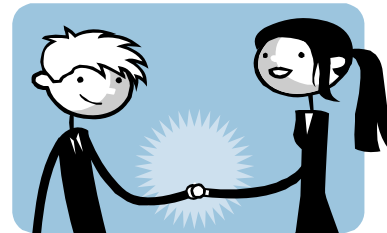
Kimberly

"Attitude is being kind and helpful to other people. It also means to be positive. If you have good attitude you can mostly do anything."



Amanda

"I think having a positive attitude is being nice to everyone. I also think having a positive attitude is not giving up if something goes wrong."



Paskalina

"To me, a positive attitude is smiling, even when you feel furious or sad. . . .Did you know you use more energy when you frown than when you smile? So frowning can tire you. Having a good natured sense of humor can make yourself and others happier and more cheerful. As well as all the other meanings of a positive attitude I mentioned, there is one important meaning that people forget. Having a positive attitude means not being a bad sport, not bragging when you win or crying or saying depressing words when you lose. . . .Most importantly, having a positive attitude means hoping that if today is bad tomorrow will be better."



