

Shark Bites

News from the **The Smart Sharks** in the Black/Smith multiage classroom

<http://TeacherWeb.com/MI/WylieElementary/MsBlackackandMrSmith/>

Vol. 14, No .3

October 12, 2009

Announcements

- **We will begin MEAP testing this week.** This year the State of Michigan has mandated that the test be given in all school districts on the following days: Tuesday, October 13, Thursday, October 15 and Tuesday, October 20. In addition, our olders will have a fourth day of testing on Thursday, October 22. Each day will include one or two test sessions each morning. As always, children should get plenty of sleep and eat a nutritious breakfast before coming to school. If you typically DO NOT send a snack to school with your child, we encourage you to do so on test days. We will also allow gum chewing during the test. Prior to the testing we will encourage all of the children to do their best, and reassure them that we are confident of their success. Should your child express any anxiety about the testing we urge you to do the same.
- **Early next month we'll travel to Hill Auditorium in Ann Arbor to see Keith Terry and the Slammin' All-Body Band.** This event is being presented by the University Musical Society, whose website notes that Keith Terry builds his music out of a surprisingly varied register of sounds and clever rhythmic variations, including hand clapping, palm rubbing, finger popping, foot stamping, belly slapping, cheek popping and chest whomping! We will be leaving shortly after school starts on Friday, November 6, and will return by lunchtime.
- **Professional Development Day took Wylie teachers across Baker Road to Creekside,** where we learned more about Dexter's new Social Studies curriculum, "History Alive!". We also considered ways that the collaborative nature of this curriculum could be applied to other subject areas.

Curriculum Notes

- **The bread was delicious!** It was a great way to wrap up our "Sarah, Plain and Tall" reading unit. **Kudos to student teacher Barb Libra** who planned and organized this activity, and a big THANK YOU! to all the parents who "put on aprons" to help out in the room, and all the families who sent in supplies and ingredients.
- **Depending on your child's spelling group,** he or she is bringing home "Word Wall" words and/or "Nifty Thrifty Fifty" words. The Word Wall words are commonly used words with irregular spelling, and are also commonly misspelled by young writers. The Nifty Thrifty Fifty words are a list of 50 words which include nearly all of the prefixes and suffixes that children encounter in their daily reading and writing.
- **We're forging chains and weaving webs in Science:** food chains and webs! Our study of a pond ecosystem will reinforce our understanding of the "circle of life". In **Social Studies** we're learning about five **Core Democratic Values:** Truth, Common Good, Patriotism, Diversity and the Pursuit of Happiness.

Important Dates

- **October 13, 15, 20 and 27** - MEAP testing, mornings
- **November 6** - Music Field Trip, one parent chaperone from each class