

## We're Back!

BSIS at Home is back on track. We will print the front page with important dates and other pertinent details for those without internet access. However, there will be a 4 page issue online twice a month. We will send a reminder out via Teacher Ease.

I hope you have been aware of all the interesting activities your students have been doing in classes. As I walk through

the building I see students mixing simple chemicals, building cars on an assembly line, reviewing multiplication with "Wrap-Ups", exercising in step classes, practicing for the Christmas program. Our school is an exciting place for students to learn. One of our goals is for students to take responsibility for their learning, to ask questions, to be aware of their learning styles and use that knowledge to increase learning. I hope the useful hints we share with you will help them in that goal.

### Best Practices for Parents:

1. Children who are raised in "print-rich" homes become good readers. Even families who do not have many books can create a print rich experience with newspapers, magazines and library books. Take a few minutes daily to read with your child. The time invested is well worth it.
2. Encourage writing at home. Writing should be celebrated. Exchange playful notes on the refrigerator, on your child's pillow or a lunchbox. Enjoy the writing experience rather than trying to correct it.
3. Involve your children every possible opportunity thinking about math in your everyday life.
4. Encourage questioning. This is the real basis for scientific learning. Questions are an opportunity to reinforce kids' natural desires to learn and gain control over this complex world. Remember, it is ok if you don't know the answer. Take the time to search for the answer with your child or allow them to explore.

### Upcoming Events:

**Wed. Nov 19**—6th field trip to Memorial Auditorium. 9:00-1:00

**Nov 26-28** Thanksgiving Vacation

**Dec 1** Interim reports

**Dec 4** Drama club field trip—Chapman Cultural Center. 10:00-1:30.

**Dec 11** BSJH 6:30 pm Band/Orchestra/Chorus Christmas Concert

**Dec 1-18** MAP testing

**Dec. 19**—half day—pajama day. PTO provides refreshments

Club Dates:

<http://www.bsisonline.com/2008/club%20information%202008-09.pdf>

**Christmas vacation**

**begins Dec 19** at 12:00 noon. (Half day school) Return January 5.

## 5th Grade

**In math** we are studying numbers and operations. Students have been working hard exploring real life applications of number sense and division. Our next unit of study before the holiday break will be on fractions. Keep studying those multiplication and division fast facts!

**In science**, we are beginning a new unit on force and motion. Students will be involved in projects that explore forces and motion that require them to apply their knowledge. This should be an exciting unit for students!

**In Social Studies** students are creating their own rucksack with items they would need as an immigrant.

**Some 5<sup>th</sup> grade English** classes are using mini Oreo Cookies to teach the use of the colon (vs the semicolon!). Students create sentences based on the usage rule and create a poster. For the colon symbol, students glue mini Oreos. Each group will share their poster and then enjoy the snack.

## Groovy Grieving

Our school counselors, Mrs. Stone and Mrs. Yates, are providing free group counseling aimed at grief issues or other personal losses. These groups are designed to help students who have lost a family member, experienced a divorce, have an immediate family member

deployed overseas, or have a terminally ill parent/guardian.

If you have questions or would like more information, please contact either Mrs. Stone or Mrs. Yates.

Also, the guidance department teaches Life Skills classes teaching character

skills. Every two weeks another skill is taught and teachers look for a student in their class that exemplifies that skill. They are currently discussing "Effort." See our web site for other skills and lists of students who have shown they can make these good choices.

## Doctors: Vaccines Still Safer Than Alternative

Four common concerns are leading parents to avoid many childhood vaccines, but medical experts have found no evidence for such worries. Multiple vaccines in one day are no more stressful than fighting off everyday exposure to bacteria. In addition, scientific research has failed to connect vaccines with autism.

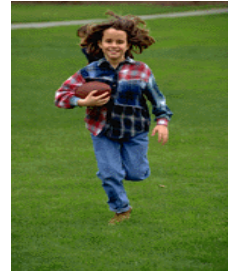
<http://www.cnn.com/2008/HEALTH/family/11/05/par.vaccine.kids/index.html>

Note from our nurse: Seri-

ously consider a flu shot for your child. It is a simple way to avoid illness this winter. Flu vaccines are available at doctor's offices and health clinics, but also at many local pharmacies including Ingles. Remind your children of the importance of washing hands. A simple way is to sing a short song like "Happy Birthday" while they wash hands, using soap.

Also, don't forget to check

your child's immunization records. Especially check for their DPaT—diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus.



Keep them healthy!

### Reminder

Teachers are not allowed to accept late homework. In class when homework is due, teachers go over the homework so students get immediate reinforcement. Therefore it cannot be accepted late because the student would have the correct answers. It would not be fair to those that did the work and had it ready to be checked.

The handbook states that work can be taken late with 10 points deducted for each day late up to three days, but this is referring to projects that are usually test grades, not homework. Please understand that this is a school policy meant to be fair to all.



### Holiday Giving

As the holiday season approaches I spend way too much time worrying about whom I will have to buy gifts for. The holidays should not be a time of high stress. Especially this year, in this time of financial crisis in our country, it is our responsibility not only to manage our finances wisely but also to teach our children about the importance of thinking of others who are less fortunate than we.

One other idea: If you are planning a small gift for teachers, consider a gift for their class. Most teachers would rather have things that would help them teach your children than any other gift. If you would like suggestions, ask the teacher or I can post some ideas.

## Practice Makes Perfect

Children who practice their musical instruments may [outperform their peers in a number of fields](#), according to a Harvard-based study. The study showed students who have played a musical instrument for three years or more scored higher on tests measuring verbal ability and visual pattern completion.

Researchers Schlaug and Winne compared 41 eight- to eleven-year-olds who had studied an instrument to 18 children who had not. Both groups participated in general music classes at school, but the instrumental group received additional private lessons. The instrumental children did better in tests of auditory discrimination and finger dexterity—skills sharpened by playing an instrument—and surpassed normal students in a vocabulary IQ test and visual pattern completion. The longer the children had studied their instrument, the better they scored on these tests.

Based on the initial results, though, teachers and parents may think of turning their students on to a musical instrument to improve achievement test scores.

### Tis the season for math.

We are beginning a unit on fractions. Our focus will be on fraction concepts—finding equivalent fractions, comparing fractions, changing mixed numbers to improper fractions. Shopping allows students refine basic math skills. Use the holidays to create math field trips. Allow children to estimate the total price of your purchase at the grocery store. Let them figure the surface area of a gift box. Ask how much flour is needed if you double the cookie recipe. Use everyday activities to create interest in math. In the classroom we are studying fractions. Allowing your child to help cook Thanksgiving and Christmas treats will reinforce using fractions in their world and help you out as well (he who cooks must clean!) Remember to check agendas for information about class work and home work. Happy Holidays!



Sometimes cutting an onion can be so emotional!

The reading classes just finished reading *The Cay* and are having a “Cay” celebration. We hope students learned about perseverance and the

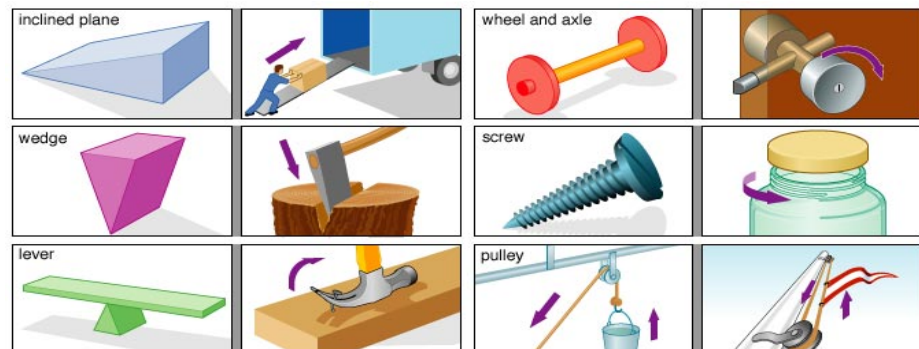
value of good friends. Ask them to share. We now transition to a new unit. This Friday is Book Character Dress-up Day. We look forward to their creativity in these outfits and also plan a bit of review before Thanksgiving. After the break we will study bias and propaganda and the power it has. Students will study 8 different types of propaganda and read two stories to help understand literary symbolism.

**English classes** have been writing scripts and then performing them. They just completed their group production of *The Monkey's Paw*. After studying the story, groups were responsible for creating, writing and performing a scene filling in details with predictions of what might happen next. Soon they will embark on business projects enabling them to work with partners and create a business of their own. They will advertise with signs, logos, business cards and brochures as well as write persuasive ads pertaining to the 8 propaganda techniques, write friendly and business letters and persuasive letters (some to Mrs. Greer!) Students are working in literature circles reading and discussing a book of their choice. Students are also participating in read-alouds as well as in their literature circle. They are

learning new reading skills and strategies which they will then apply to their chosen novel.

**In science** we have been studying simple machines. We studied levers, pulleys, screws, inclined planes, wedges and the wheel and axle. Students made and used many pulleys and learned about mechanical advantage. Now we move on to complex machines, then electricity. Concluding our unit on Energy, Simple and Complex Machines, we have built and tested a rollercoaster. We also have a guest speaker Nov.25 demonstrating the “Chemistry of Fire.” After Thanksgiving, we will begin our unit on Electricity and Magnetism using hands-on activities to reinforce learning.

**Social studies** has been exploring world cultures and experimenting with native written languages and how ancient civilizations communicated. They have written in the Phoenician alphabet, Egyptian hieroglyphics and Chinese pictographs. Next students will create a River Valley Storyboard project using notes from class to design a summary of cultures studied. All work is done in class. Next, we will study Mesoamerica—Incas, Aztecs and Mayans looking at cultural similarities and differences in music, art and food.



© 2006 Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.

**We're on the  
web!  
[www.bsisonline.  
com](http://www.bsisonline.com)**



Needs:

With the economy in the state it is in, there seems never to be enough money for items used in the classroom. We appreciate all that our teachers do for our students. In this column I will put special requests—things you might have at home or can pick up reasonably. Thank you for your generous support of our school I am proud to tell people I work here!

1. Kickball for demonstration on Force and Motion Unit.
2. Heavy rope for Tug-o-War demonstration.
3. CLEAR 2 liter soda bottles—clean and with the lid
4. Egg cartons (1 dozen size) - again, clean.

Please send any supplies to the science lab. Thanks

# 责任

WHEN YOU ARE CONTENT TO BE SIMPLY YOURSELF AND DON'T  
COMPARE OR COMPETE, EVERYBODY WILL RESPECT YOU.

- LAO-TZU



I've always wanted to be a doctor, but I believe fate has changed for me. I think my destiny is not to be a doctor, but to save people with words. Author's craft is feelings... should I let my life depend on something so delicate?

This year is the only year I've actually considered it. All the other times I've said it's just a hobby. But what if it's really a talent? Will it feed me, possibly my family? Will it just be temporary, or long lasting? Maybe writing is just a really long stage I'm going through. If it is, then why have I done it since I could write? Authors' words are inspiring me to join their rankings. The choice may not be mine, but fate's.

Bethany Spencer