**Thank you!**

We were blown away by the support and love of Winter Thanks last week! It is impressive that our entire staff can enjoy a breakfast made by the parents and not have to worry about our classrooms. Not only did we have a delicious meal, but we were showered with gifts and cards! It speaks volumes to the level of support that we have here at Wiley. We hope you know how much we appreciate you and how grateful we are for the Wiley parents and the Wiley PTA!

**Math Workshop**

This week the students will be taking a unit test on multiplication and division. Students will be expected to apply the multiplication and division concepts that they have been practicing throughout the last month. Also, don't forget about our weekly multiplication quizzes. Ask your child what set of facts they are working on this week!

After the winter break, we will start a two-week unit on data and graphing. Students will learn about different types of graphs (vertical bar graphs, horizontal bar graphs, pictographs, line plots, etc.). They will be able to create and analyze graphs and data. We will focus on how to create the scale for each graph and how to represent different values in whole numbers, halves or quarters. Lastly, the students will be able to answer one and two-step problems related the graphs.

**Reader’s Workshop**

This past week we began studying non-fiction or informational texts! The first goal has been to review text features (glossary, table of contents, headings, captions, etc.). Students have learned about text features since kindergarten. In third grade they are expected to use the appropriate text feature vocabulary and to apply these features. Informational texts are complex; the text features help us to make sense of the article, text or information. Students need to know how to use and apply these features.

As we continue with our study of informational texts, students will be learning how to:

* identify the who/what, where, when, why and how of an article
* locate the main idea and supporting details or key events
* figure out content vocabulary based on the clues in the text

Please help your child to spend some time reading informational texts! We incorporate a lot of science and social studies content into reading instruction. Check out this week's homework passage about the moon! Don't forget that there are excellent informational texts on Big Universe as well.

**Writer’s Workshop**

Remember that writer's workshop permeates throughout all subjects. Your child is writing in math, science, social studies, reading AND writing. During the second half of this quarter, the children will be researching and composing informational writing pieces. Again, we integrate our science unit, Objects in the Sky, into our literacy instruction. The students will be researching the moon, the constellations and the planets. They will be learning how to:

* Write informative texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. Introduce a topic and group related information together; include illustrations when useful to aid comprehension.
* Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details.
* Use linking words and phrases (e.g., also, another, and, more, but) to connect ideas within categories of information.
* Provide a concluding statement or section.

**Word Study**

Don't forget about our short and long i word study quiz this week! When we return from winter break, we will finish our short and long vowel spelling patterns and then work on some of the r-controlled vowel patterns (ar, er, ir, or, ur). We will also focus on prefixes, suffixes and contractions in 2014.

**Science & Social Studies**

Our learning has been "out of this world!" We are really enjoying our Objects in the Sky unit. If you haven't heard, last week we had Wake County's portable planetarium, Star Lab. The students learned about stars and constellations. We had a great learning opportunity on Friday, Dec 13th. The students visited three stations:

1) Star Lab: learn more about the constellations and the Native American mythology

2) North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences presented The Animals of the Constellations

A huge Thank You to Linda Saah, Layla's Mom, for sharing this program with us!

3) Webquest: researching the sun, moon, earth and stars on the laptops, desktops and iPads

Students will:

* **Recognize the major components and patterns observed in the earth/moon/sun system.**
* **Explain the causes of day and night and phases of the moon.**
* **Recognize that the earth is part of a system called the solar system that includes a sun (a star), planets and many moons and that the Earth is the third planet from the sun in our solar system.**

This week we will begin learning more about the phases of the moon. Your child will be bringing home a nightly moon tracking calendar. Please help them to shade in what the moon looks like each night. It may be helpful to keep your child's tracker on the refrigerator. Sometimes the moon will not be visible. On these nights, feel free to use an app that you have or: <http://www.wral.com/weather/almanac/>

**Important Upcoming Dates:**

* December 23rd – January 1st Winter Break
* January 16: Moorehead Planetarium field trip
  + permission slips and chaperone forms will go home after break
* January 17: Early Release
* January 20: Martin Luther King Day - No School
* January 21: Teacher Work Day - No School