

The Learning Academies Parent Post



Antelope Valley Learning Academy



MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

- January 13th—Parent Workshop: “Writing without Tears”
- January 16th—MLK Jr. Day: No School
- January 20th—End Semester 1
- Jan. 20th-Feb. 24th—Benchmark Testing Window
- January 23rd—First day, Spring Semester
- February 17th—Lincoln’s Birthday: No School
- February 20th—President’s Day: No School
- March 6th—4th and 7th Grade STAR Writing Test
- March 13th-14th—PE in the Park Day (Physical Fitness Testing) for 5th and 7th graders

PRINCIPAL’S CORNER

Happy New Year! Welcome back to school and welcome to 2012!

I hope you had a restful and enjoyable Winter Break. AVLA is off to a busy start in 2012! The end of our first semester is coming up on January 20th. That means Benchmark Testing begins. Your teacher will be scheduling a time for your child to come into one of our Resource Centers to take their Benchmark test. In addition, we are beginning to prepare for the annual State Testing season. First up is the STAR Writing Test for all 4th and 7th grade students in March. This month, we are offering a Parent Workshop on writing to assist you with motivating

and preparing your child to write and write well. Please join Dawn Fox on January 13th for her workshop called “Writing without Tears”. In addition, all 5th and 7th graders must participate in Physical Fitness Testing in March. Your teacher will begin providing you and your student with specific activities to focus on in order to be prepared for this test. Just a note – the CSTs (STAR tests) will be administered in April and May.

Our Character Counts trait for January is FAIRNESS. This month, we celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day to honor a man who believed strongly in the fair treatment of all. Take some time this

month with your student to research Dr. King’s cause and find out why he urged us all to treat everyone with fairness.

We sure do have a lot going on so please make sure to get plenty of rest, eat well, and stay healthy. As always, if you have any comments or suggestions, or just want to say hello, my door is always open...

Erin Wade
Principal, AVLA



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WRITER’S BLOCKS



Help write this Writers' Block story with other kids from the Learning Academies. Read the story starter and send in what you think should happen next (send an email to your ST). We will print a few of them in next month's Parent Post and post on the bulletin boards at the

Resource Centers!

Mountains of Snow

When Andrew woke up, he realized that he'd overslept for school – again. It was almost 10 a.m. and his alarm hadn't gone off. “Why didn't Mom wake me up?” Andrew

wondered. He hurried to get dressed, and then ran through the house, and threw open the front door. The world outside was covered in snow – mountains of it. The snow went higher than the house. So Andrew decided to...

Ready, set, write!



MY POINT OF VIEW...BY DAWN FOX

Motivating Children to Write

For almost 30 years the National Writing Project has worked to improve the teaching of writing in the nation's schools. Teachers in this program have committed to asking themselves every day, "How do I motivate my students to want to write? I thought about this question and had to ask myself as an educator, "Have I ever really realized the importance of teaching a child to write?" Would I go so far as asking myself that question *every time* I worked on writing? Have any of us? Based on their strategies and ideas, here are a few ideas on how to begin.

Take writing outside. Look at art or nature. Photograph it, paint it, look at it, and then write about it. Write a song, a poem, a short story all inspired by the piece.

Write about someone in the community. Find a famous person, an elderly person, a war hero.

Interview them and write their story.

Kids can write to kids all around the world. It's simple, interesting, breaks barriers, and is fun.

Have kids write about their deepest concerns. One kid wrote about her experience with anorexia.

When kids' writing is recognized, they are more motivated to write. Have contests; motivate them to write their ideas and dreams.

Children benefit when parents get involved. It's proven and it is a fact!

If a school recognizes a student's writing, they will get more involved and motivated to write.

When we celebrate writing, it motivates children to be creative and to share their ideas and dreams.

Teaching writing is something

to celebrate and take seriously as teachers, parents and administrators. It shows not only our support, but encourages a child to express their inner thoughts and to allow their creative side to shine out. Take time today to encourage a child you are with to write!

You can find these ideas, and many others, at the National Writing Project website: <http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/resource/nwp/ten-ideas.html>

Below are some pen pal websites you can look into. As with all websites, please be responsible and check the site out first before you allow your child to make any connections with people they do not know. http://www.studentsoftheworld.info/menu_penpals.php
<http://www.kidzhelpingkids.org/penpals.html>

Dawn Fox is AVLA's Education Specialist. Please join Dawn Fox for her next fun, motivating, and educational workshop on Writing scheduled for January 13th, 2012 at the Lancaster Resource Center at 10:00 AM.

Call 661-952-6028 to reserve your spot.

There are several opportunities to write in this Parent Post. There is a story-starter on page 1, the above article suggests writing about a famous person and this month we celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., or you can write about the Character Counts trait of fairness. Give it a go!

Statements and opinions expressed in articles, reviews and other materials herein are those of the authors and not necessarily the opinions of the Learning Academies.



CHARACTER COUNTS—FAIRNESS

The pillar of character for January is

FAIRNESS

Play by the rules

Take turns

Be open-minded; listen to others

Don't take advantage of others

Don't blame others carelessly

Treat all people fairly

Activity:

Think of dividing an orange into equal sections to share with friends.

Go to:

<http://charactercounts.org/sixpillars.html>

Once there, click on Resources and Lesson Plan Bank to get age-specific activities for the trait of *Fairness*.

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Martin Luther King, Jr. fought for equal civil rights for African Americans. Each year, on the 3rd Monday of January, we celebrate his life and his dream. The day was made a national holiday in 1986.

Martin Luther King, Jr. was born on January 15, 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia. He was a minister who participated in many peaceful demonstrations in regard to unfair treatment of African Americans. He is famous for his meaningful speech "I Have a Dream." He won the Nobel Peace prize in 1964.

Schools across the country take advantage of this time of year to teach students about Martin Luther King Jr., the civil rights movement, and the importance of racial equality. But you don't have to let your children's teachers do all of the talking--MLK Day offers a perfect opportunity for families to spend time together learning about King's legacy. Here are some recommended books for parents to read with their kids:

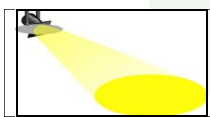
A Picture Book of Martin Luther King, Jr. by David A. Adler: King's life illustrated for kids.

My Brother Martin: A Sister Remembers Growing Up With the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by Christine King Farris: King's sister offers her perspective on what influenced him..

Dear Dr. King: Letters from Today's Children to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. edited by Jan Colbert and Ann McMillan Harms: A look a race relations in America today through the eyes of children.



"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character."



SPOTLIGHT ON...
LEARNING RESOURCES



<http://www.time4learning.com/>

I love it when parents come up to me and tell me about a great resource they have found that really helps them at home with the education of their students. Here is one such resource. It's called Time4Learning.

Time4Learning is a new approach that takes advantage of today's technology. It's a convenient, online home education pro-

gram that combines learning with fun educational teaching games.

The online language arts and math comprise a comprehensive program for preschool, elementary school, and middle school. Science and social studies programs are provided as a free bonus for most grades.

Kids like using the computer to learn and to develop their skills. The Time4Learning educational teaching program gives students

independence to progress at their own pace.

Parents like that Time4Learning tracks progress and helps students advance along individualized learning paths. Students master the skills and concepts needed for academic success.

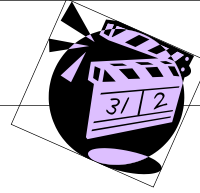
Have a child with math and reading skills at different grade levels? No problem, just tell us in the online registration

process.

Time4Learning is proven effective, has a low monthly price, and provides a money-back guarantee so you can be sure that it works for your family, Satisfaction Guaranteed!

It's not free, but if you're looking for curriculum support in Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies, this site has it. Check it out!

Academy Action



Introducing our 2 newest Learning Center Teachers...



Mrs. Elizabeth Kasper, 7th and 8th Grade ELA

I am a native Californian and I have lived in the A.V. since 1994. I have been married for 27 years and have two grown daughters, age 21 and 25. My areas of interest include family, fitness, food, finances, and faith, and I love to read, read, and read! I am fascinated by the English language and enjoy teaching it to others. My favorite [fictional] author is Jane Austen [*Pride and Prejudice*] but non-fiction is the genre of my choice. My pastimes include exercising, watching movies, and playing my musical instrument -- the bass guitar. As a parent, I have firsthand experience with charter schools as both my daughters received their education through local charter schools; and as an educator, I am supportive of charter schools because I believe students are better able to reach their cognitive potential on individualized educational plans, such as those offered at AVLA.

Mrs. Sharon Carter, 4th-5th ELA/Math

I was employed as a substitute teacher for three years prior to obtaining my preliminary teaching credential. I then taught 4th Grade for one semester and 1st Grade for two school years. I resigned from that position and returned to substitute teaching so I could work part time. My wish was to be able to volunteer in my children's classrooms and be more active in their education. I have a clear multiple subjects credential with extensive experience in the primary grades. I have been teaching for almost 8 years now.

I have been a Girl Scout Leader for ten years and a 4-H Project Leader for seven years. These positions have provided me with additional opportunities to teach and guide the youth in our local community. I am a resident of Palmdale and have been for over 22 years. I am the mother of four daughters ranging in age from 11 years to 18 years.



We use Facebook to provide school information such as upcoming school events and to post updates such as school closures due to inclement weather, etc.



PARENT WORKSHOP—WRITING WITHOUT TEARS

Please join Dawn Fox for this fun, informative and motivating workshop focused on teaching writing.

Ms. Fox is an engaging and enthusiastic presenter. You will leave with some concrete and useable strategies to get your student writing right away!

- In this workshop, parents will:
- Learn to motivate their students to write by utilizing creativity, enthusiasm & opportunity
 - Use literature to inspire writing
 - Understand the basic ABCs of the Writing Process
 - Incorporate the 4-Square Writing Method into your writing lessons

When: Friday, January 13th
10:00 AM -12:00 PM

Where: Lancaster Resource Center
1240 Commerce Center Dr.
Lancaster, CA 93534

Please call 952-6028 to sign up TODAY!



Photo Gallery

*AVLA's Staff Holiday Luncheon
12-19-11*



Tackiest Christmas Sweater Contest



Mrs. Kaplar



Mrs. Krizek



Mrs. Marino

