

Parent Post



Volume 3, Issue 5

January 2011

Principal's Corner

Happy New Year!
Welcome back to school and
welcome to 2011!

AVLA is off to a busy start in 2011 with the upcoming addition of our new "After School Program" of classes. AVLA has received a grant which will help us bring more classes and activities to our students on Mondays and Fridays. Students can come in for three-hour blocks of time and receive academic tutoring, take an enrichment class, and also take a PE class. Your teacher will have more information for you in the coming weeks and schedules will be posted at the Resource Centers.

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.



AVLA is gearing up for our "busy season". We are offering two Parent Workshops this month to assist you in preparing your students for the upcoming state writing tests for 4th and 7th graders in March and also for the STAR tests in April and May. I urge you to take advantage of these free workshops; our knowledgeable, experienced and helpful teachers are here to help you be the best teacher you can be for

your student so he or she can reach their academic goals. We are also preparing for Physical Fitness Testing in March for our 5th and 7th grade students. Your Supervising Teacher will begin providing you and your student with specific activities to focus on in order to be prepared this test. As you can see, we have a lot going on so please make sure to get plenty of rest, eat well, and stay healthy.

Erin Wade
Principal, AVLA



Inside this issue:

Academy Action	2
Character Counts	2
Online math games	2
My Point of View	3
Community News & Events	4
Testing Preparation	5
Science Tips	5
Upcoming Events	6-9

Fun Fact!

The first Ball Lowering celebration at One Times Squares was held on December 31, 1907 and is now a symbol of the turn of the New Year seen by more than one billion people each year. The original New Year's Eve Ball weighed 700 pounds and was 5 feet around! It was made of iron and wood and was decorated with 100 25-watt light bulbs.

Mark Your Calendars!

Jan 3: Return to School	Jan 27: Parent Workshop– Writing Workshop
Jan 11: Parent Workshop– Test Taking Tips	Feb 11: Schools closed– Lincoln's Birthday
Jan 17: Schools closed– MLK Day	Feb 21: Schools closed– President's Day
Jan 18: Spring Semester begins	Mar 1- 2: 4th & 7th Grades Writing Test
Jan 18- Feb 11: Benchmark Testing Window	Mar 8- 9: Physical Fitness Testing

ACADEMY ACTION



In Pre-Algebra students continue to work with the power standards and develop skills to approach and set up problems correctly using algebraic rules. We constantly review concepts and go over rules with parenthesis, exponents and solving for unknowns. Students are practicing how to detect tricks when taking multiple choice tests so they can accurately find the answer.

In Language Arts we continue to work on vocabulary development, context clues, and reading journals. As the 7th grade writing test nears, students are covering past writing prompts and how to organize thoughts to start a writing piece. We continue to read *My Brother Sam is Dead* by James and Chris Collier, making connections to literature, and stopping to think before moving on.

In our College Career Pathways class we continue to add to our portfolios. Students are learning about the numerous options available after high school and how high school is a great place to start planning ahead. We look forward to a visit from University of Antelope Valley sometime in February.

Happy New Year!

Erin Dudley-Krizek

ST, Learning Center
Teacher



CHARACTER COUNTS!



The pillar of character for January is FAIRNESS. Click on this link to learn more:

<http://charactercounts.org/>

Once there, go to Resources for the Lesson Plan Bank and Free Teaching Tools. We would love to hear stories of your child

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

demonstrating good character. We will be focusing on FAIRNESS for the month of January. Please submit a brief summary of your child demonstrating FAIRNESS and we will highlight them in next month's Parent Post.

Send your summary to Jamie Garcia at jgarcia@avlearning.org by January 24th for publication in the February Parent Post. We look forward to hearing your stories!

Fairness: Orange

Play by the rules • Take turns and share • Be open-minded; listen to others • Don't take advantage of others • Don't blame others carelessly • Treat all people fairly

FREE MATH GAMES ONLINE

Are you looking for an exciting way to review and reinforce math concepts with your students? If so, check out these websites for FREE math games!

- GAMEQUARIUM, k-6th grade math review games!

<http://gamequarium.com/math.htm>

- COOL MATH, This site says it has games for kids ages 13-100. They

also have tutorials and math review lessons!

<http://www.coolmath.com>

- GOOGOL LEARNING, a collection of fun online math games that kids and adults can enjoy playing together.

<http://www.googlepower.com/content/free-learning-resources/games>

- FUNBRAIN, this site is full of math games where you set the level!

www.funbrain.com





My Point of View

By Dawn Fox, Resource Specialist

Making Home Schooling Fun in 2011

What happened to the good old days when kids came home from school with excitement about what they learned that day? How can a home school family still keep the "fun" in a typical school day as well as create a hunger and excitement in their child for learning? These tried and true home school ideas can spice up a mundane routine and make learning fun for parents and kids who want just a little more fun in the daily learning process. These ideas require little expense and materials, and minimal clean up. The best part is that they don't make your child think about school.

Poetry Night - Teach your children about poems and poets by hosting a poetry night. Have each member of the family recite a favorite poem, and provide background information about the style of poetry and the poet. As an alternative, take turns reading poems from a favorite book or place poems written by family members into a book of your own. The children, and parents too, can dress up like the characters.

Family Business - Starting a family business is a great way to build math skills and encourage entrepreneurship. Let your children sell homemade items, wash cars, walk pets, or perform odd jobs for neighbors. Teach them to develop a business plan that includes choosing a valuable product or service, setting a fair price, estimating their expenses, and setting realistic goals. Help your children think of creative ways to market their business. My oldest daughter had a popcorn machine that she would rent out at friends' parties and charge for little bags of popcorn. We also created historical timelines for children that we sold all over the world. My children would put the kits together and help pack them up to mail.

Special Days - Set aside special days in your home to let your children spend the day in their pajamas, wear a specific color or dress up as a favorite character. For fun, let family members experience each other's lives by switching roles or impersonating each other. Have an appreciation day where family members state what they appreciate about each other, or a day of service where siblings try to brighten one another's day. One of my favorite home school ideas is to have a "mental health day" once per month where everyone sets their duties aside to relax and have fun.

Go Outside - Taking school outdoors is a simple home school idea that adds sunshine to a dreary day and builds habits that lead to a healthy lifestyle. Read or complete lessons outside in your back yard. Take lunch to the park, or head to a local pond to feed ducks. Ride bikes around the neighborhood or take a few laps around the block to allow wiggly students to burn off energy between assignments. I would take my children on nature walks in the morning. They each had a little bag with a pad and pencils to draw bugs or flowers. Then we would look them up in our nature books to learn about them.

Book Club - If you no longer read aloud as a family, set aside one night per month for a family book club. Have every member of your family read the same book, or choose a topic and let each child select a book on their level. Have your children present background information about the subject and the book's author, and prepare a list of open-ended questions to discuss. These meetings will help your children develop conversation skills, and look forward to reading.

Word of the Week - Place a vocabulary word on your dry erase board or refrigerator at the beginning of the week. Discuss the word and its meaning, and encourage your children to use it in a sentence. Throughout the week, keep track of the number of times it is used in context, and reward the family member who uses it most frequently.

Family Newsletter - Publishing a monthly, quarterly or semi-annual family newsletter will help boost your children's writing and computer skills. Prompt your children to write about family news, community events, hobbies, books, movies or subjects they have studied. You can also include artwork and family photographs. Assign each child an area of responsibility or let children choose their own topics. These newsletters will help you remember your family's adventures for years to come.

Celebrate Holidays - Decorate your home, dress up and make special meals for holidays. Research the day's origin and traditions, and how it is celebrated in other parts of the world. Celebrating holidays is a great way to study history and culture, and create memories. Each child can take turns creating a scrap book page on the traditions.

Debate Night - Separate your family into teams and choose a subject to debate. Encourage your children to learn as much as they can about the topic. Help them organize the information, and develop and evaluate their arguments. Debates help children develop critical thinking skills and confidence speaking before groups. This is also a fun way to teach your children research skills, and help them develop an interest in history and current events. This is a great idea for working on social skills and peer pressure for older kids as well.

Home school Games - Set aside one night per week for a family game night. Order pizza or prepare a favorite meal. Turn down the ringer on your telephone, turn off the television, and focus on your family. Chess, Scrabble, Monopoly, and other games are great for math and language development.

Community News & Events

TAP DANCE CLASSES @ The Palmdale Playhouse

FOR AGES 6 to 11 From classical style to the new craze of rhythm tap, this class teaches the fundamentals of sound, rhythm and coordination. Tap dancing is an energetic type of dance, requiring coordination and muscle control.

Class is held every Monday at the Palmdale Playhouse from 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm



SPRING SESSION FEES:
\$70 Palmdale Resident
\$90 Non resident

Spring Session runs from January 10 to May 14, 2011

RECITAL:
Friday, May 13, 2011 7:30 pm For more information: 661/267-5684
Saturday, May 14, 2011 2 pm

Martin Luther King Jr. Service Day!

When : January 15th, 2011

The City of Lancaster is working with community service organizations to develop dozens of projects that will be completed on January 15, 2011 in Dr. King's honor.

Volunteers: To sign-up to volunteer, please visit www.cityoflancaster.org or call (661) 723-6173 or email nnutt@cityoflancasterca.org.

KIDS CLUB

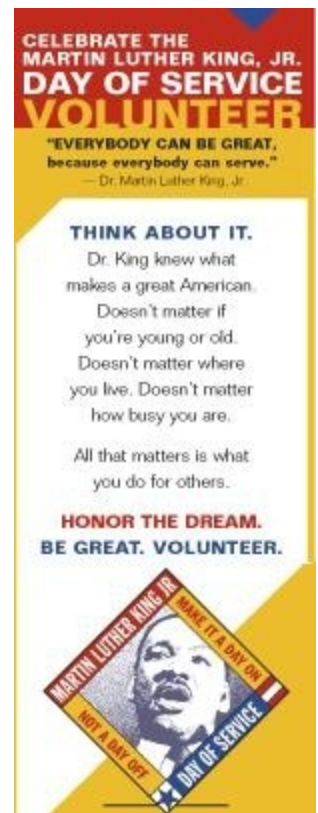
AT the Antelope Valley Mall

Kid's Club meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month in Dillard's Court!

Next Club Date: Wednesday, Jan 12th from 4-7pm

This month Pick Your Own Craft! Piggy banks, aprons, hats and more to choose from!

While supplies last. Craft is designed to appeal to children ages 3-11 years old.



Build & Grow Clinics

WHEN: Saturdays at 10am

WHERE: your local Lowe's locations



From project basics to giving your child the opportunity to say, "I built it!", our Build and Grow kid's clinics are a great way to help build confidence!

Bring the kids into any Lowe's store and build a FREE wooden project.

Each participant also receives a free apron, goggles, a project themed patch, and a certification of merit upon completion of their project.

Upcoming clinics include: Saturday, 1/8/11 Game Box



Saturday, 1/22/11 Ball Toss Game



To Register for clinics please visit:
www.lowesbuildandgrow.com



Testing Preparation



Parents, we have some great workshops coming up to get you ready for testing your child in the Spring.

All workshops are held at the PTC (1601 E. Palm-dale Blvd, Suite C)

January 11 from 2:00pm to 3:30pm—help your child do their very best on the upcoming state tests. We will have an overview of testing preparation, setting up a mock environment in your home, and internet resources for extra practice. Plus tips for helping students overcome test-taking anxiety.

January 27 from 2:30pm to 4:00pm— help your 4th and 7th graders do their very best on the upcoming State Writing Test. Scoring rubrics, writing strategies, and sample prompts available. Students are encouraged to attend and participate. Take home a packet of previously released test prompts for additional practice.

Here are some Web resources for great test materials: Previously released test questions for the STAR exam can be found at

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/css05rtq.asp> this test is for 2nd-11th grades and will begin in April. Click on your students' grade level under English-Language Arts or Math to print out a packet of test materials.

For more information on the STAR Writing Test for 4th and 7th graders go to

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp> and click on 4th and 7th Grade Writing Test for samples of questions and the grading rubric the state uses to grade your students' essays.

For more information on PFT Testing (Physical Fitness Test) for 5th, 7th, and 9th grade students, go to <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/pf/>

Many of these resources are available through your Supervising Teachers. If you have any questions on how to access this information, please ask your Supervising Teacher for more information.



Supercharged Science

Teaching homeschool science the easy way
SuperchargedScience.com

Hot Tips for Cool Parents

There are seven BIG mistakes that most folks make when teaching science. Have you made any of these?

Failure to make an impact. You can't teach them if you don't have their attention. Do an experiment that hooks them *before* delivering the academic content. They'll be asking the how and why *after* their curiosity is sparked.

Give away the ending. Who in their right mind would do an experiment when they already know the ending? Skip the conclusion in your textbook and come up with your own. You'll be honing your observation skills and ability to ask better questions.

No tools for the job. You wouldn't build a house without wood, so why try to learn science without experiments? Science is much more than a text-book – it's the process of asking questions and interpreting your results. It doesn't have to be a fancy setup or cost a fortune, either. In fact, great scientists simply see what others don't.

Want more? Get your copy of the *Seven Biggest Mistakes Made in Teaching Science* by clicking on:

www.SuperchargedScience.com/scienceguide.htm

Access code: HSD

UPCOMING EVENTS

FREE PARENT WORKSHOPS!

Tremendous Test-Taking Tips

WHEN : Tuesday January 11th

TIME : 2:00-3:30 pm

WHERE: Parent Teacher Center

Help your child do their very best on the upcoming state tests!

Join us at the Parent-Teacher Center for tips on preparing your student.

- Overview of testing preparation, setting up a mock testing environment in your home, and internet resources for extra practice
- Tips for helping students overcome test-taking anxiety

RESERVE YOUR SPOT BY CALLING 661.952.6028!

Child care will be provided. Please let us know your child care needs when calling to sign up

THE RIGHT WAY TO WRITE

Help your 4th and 7th graders do their very best on the upcoming State Writing Test! Join us at the Parent Teacher Center for strategies to make your student a proficient writer...

WHEN : Thursday, January 27th

TIME: 2:30pm– 4:00pm

WHERE: Parent Teacher Center

* Scoring Rubrics * Writing Strategies * Sample prompts * Students encouraged to attend and participate * Take home a packet of previously released test prompts for additional practice



UPCOMING EVENTS



Palmdale Water District

2011 Water Awareness Program

GRADES K,1,2,3 Rainstick Activity

Students can make their own "Rainstick" The Rainstick has been used by many diverse cultures in various ways. In some parts of the world it serves a ceremonial purpose or a traditional instrument with the onset of rain.

Supplements Fine Arts, Geography, and History curriculum

GRADES 4,5,6 The Delta Activity Map

What is the Delta?
Where is the Delta?
Why is it important?

Pick up an activity page and learn about the importance of the Delta.

Supplements English and Geography curriculum

GRADES 7,8 Water Conservation Slogan Contest

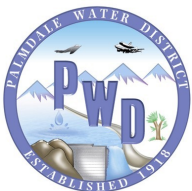
Students can submit a water saving slogan. Winning slogan will be used through out the year along with the Districts other conservation programs.

Supplements English Curriculum
** Prize for winning entry*

Participant Prize/Drawing for Class Party for K-3 and 4-6 categories. Prize for winning entry for Grades 9-12.

2011 Contests, tours and presentations are open to schools within the Palmdale School District boundaries. Contest entries must meet guidelines of Contest Rules and Regulations. Pick up your copy and entry form at the District Office or ask your Supervising Teacher for the information packet.

Contest begins January 10th– March 4, 2011.



Palmdale Water District
2029 East Avenue Q
Palmdale, Ca 93550

BE WATER SMART!



STAR Writing Test

For ALL 4th and 7th grade AVLA students

Tuesday, March 1st, 2011

*4th grade test will begin promptly at 10:00 AM**

*7th grade test** will begin promptly at 1:00 PM**

**Please arrive 15 minutes prior to start of exam for sign-in*

**The test is untimed however most students complete the test in about an hour. Please plan your time accordingly.*

***7th grade testing will take place during the regular 7th grade class time. Students enrolled in the 7th grade LC classes may remain until 3:00 as instruction will be provided upon completion of the exam.*

LOCATION:

Parent-Teacher Center

1601 E. Palmdale Blvd., Suite C

Palmdale, CA 93550

661-952-6028



P.E. IN THE PARK

Physical Fitness Testing

For all 5th and 7th grade AVLA students (9th graders welcome, too)



Tuesday,
March 8th
OR
Wednesday,
March 9th
10:00 AM—12:00 PM

If you are a 5th or 7th grade student, you must take the PFT!

Join us at the Antelope Valley YMCA on one of the above dates (not both)

Remember to wear comfortable clothing and tennis shoes as we will do the following activities:

- Mile run or walk
- Abdominal curl-ups
- Push-ups
- And more...
- *Parents/Guardians must attend this event with their student and remain present until finished

ANTELOPE
VALLEY YMCA
43001 10th Street,
W.
Lancaster, CA 93534
661-723-9622

**Physical Fitness Testing is a CA mandated test for all 5th, 7th and 9th grade students.*