

SIXTH GRADE NEWS
March 3, 2006
DATES TO REMEMBER

Julius Caesar Book Report due	March 10 (or before Spring Break)
Science Fair Projects due for class presentation	March 21
CSAP Testing (No absences please!)	March 22, 23, 24, 28, 29, 30
TCKS Science Fair in Gym (Displays and Judges)	April 3-5
Science Fair Awards Ceremony in Gym	April 4 (7:00 p.m.)
Human Growth and Development Parent Meeting	May 11 (6:15-6:45 p.m.)
Choir Concert	May 11 (7:00-9:00 p.m.)
Human Growth and Development Unit	May 15-23
Julius Caesar Play	May 24 (7:00 p.m.)
Graduation	May 30 (7:00 p.m.)
Last Day of School (Half Day)	May 31

Dear Parents,

This week's topic addresses two of our five pillars: **Core Knowledge and Mature Literacy**

Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives is a hierarchy of cognitive processes starting from simple recall of facts to more sophisticated tasks. The pyramid has a foundational base of knowledge. A student must have a certain amount of background knowledge in a subject in order to progress to the more sophisticated levels of processing. This highly supported assumption provides the rationale for the Core Knowledge Sequence. The pyramid starts with a base of knowledge (knowing/memorizing), leading to comprehension (understanding/summarizing), leading to application (constructing/experimenting), leading to analysis (examining/taking apart), leading to synthesis (creating/pulling together), finally leading to evaluation (justifying/criticizing).

In general, moving progressively *up* this hierarchy is preferable to skipping the knowledge step and going to the application phase. For this reason we work through the basic vocabulary of a subject, summarize the information, demonstrate how it works verbally or physically, examine the components, put the components together in a facsimile, and make conclusions on the basis of our own experiences with the subject.

An enriched learning environment can *maximize* a child's potential for higher order thinking; however, much of this is dependent upon a child's physical, emotional, and intellectual maturation (see prior newsletter on Piaget's cognitive stages). As you observe the clouds part and your sixth grader come into the light of formal operational thought please have patience.

Knowledge - Facts/Vocabulary (Math facts, All CK content facts from sequence)

Comprehension - Summarizing sections of text (Reading class, History, etc.)

Application - Test hypotheses/constructing (Sci. Fair, Stock Mkt., Design a House, etc.)

Analysis - Compare and contrasting (Sci. class, Debates, Persuasive Essay, Art, Music)

Synthesis - Drawing analogies (Literature, Sayings, Poetry, Sc. Fair,)

Evaluation - Justifying/criticizing (Persuasive Essays, Philosophical paragraphs, Debates, Sci. Fair, Stocks, etc.)

Have a lovely weekend,
The 6th Grade Team