

# The Third Grade Bergstrom Buzz

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 8

DECEMBER 23RD, 2009

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## Weekly Reading Letters

### Upcoming events:

- *Our class presents at the Thursday morning school wide assembly at 8:15AM, January 7, 2009.*
- *Song Dudes Residency Concert on Friday, Jan. 29th in Fleming's Gym from 6:30-7:30*



Math Fact Websites:

[http://  
www.factmonster.com/](http://www.factmonster.com/)

[http://  
www.mathfactcafe.com/](http://www.mathfactcafe.com/)

[http://  
www.funbrain.com/](http://www.funbrain.com/)

As you may have seen or learned from your child, each week I ask the students to write a reading letter to me in their reader's notebook. The students are expected to write at least one whole page in a friendly letter format, including the date, a greeting, and a closing. We created a checklist together of the items that should be included in the letter. These include a summary of the book's characters, setting, and problem. They also need to tell me the kinds of things they are thinking as they read such as questions, connections, opinions of

the author and character, and predictions.

The purpose of these letters are for me to be able to identify the reading strategies that each child is or is not using, as well as for the students to be held accountable for reading an independent book at all times. It is also good practice for their writing skills.

Sometimes a child may not complete his or her letter on the assigned day so you will see it come home. If you could encourage them to do their best possible work on these reading letters when you see them,



that would help reinforce what they are learning at school.

The content and conventions in the letters have already improved tremendously since we started them. I am sure with our support they will continue to improve their reading and writing. Let me know if you'd like more information about this assignment.

## History of the Champlain Valley

We recently finished our study of matter, which we had a great time doing. (I am sure you heard about the ooblek we made, along with several other intriguing experiments.)

We have now started a social studies unit studying the history of the Champlain Valley. We've talked about how the land we call home has changed over millions of years

and how Lake Champlain has changed from the Iapetus Ocean, to Lake Vermont, to the Champlain Sea, to our current Lake Champlain.

We have been very interested to learn about the kinds of fossils, such as the Charlotte Whale, that have been found in the Champlain Valley.

We will be studying the first

groups of people to live in this area. If you have any expertise or knowledge to share about any of these topics, we'd love to hear from you.

