



Dear Parents,

I want to wish you and your family a Merry Christmas. This can be such a hectic time of year but I hope you get to relax a bit and spend precious time with family and friends.

We have been very busy at school. The kids have been studying about goods and services and how they have changed over many centuries. We started our study with the Pilgrims and Native Americans. From there we moved to the early 1800's, to the late 1800's, to the early 1900's, and on to the mid 1900's. We compared all of those times to the way we live today. We have been studying what life was like through literature and movies. We have read countless picture books and the chapter book, *Little House in the Big Woods* by Laura Ingalls Wilder. Along the way the kids learned a lot about how people's lives in America have changed over almost 400 years. We used a tool called a Venn Diagram to show differences and sameness. We have been singing songs, playing games, and watching videos to support our study.

Many things the kids heard about, they wanted to experience so...we handmade our family gift for you, created our own wrapping paper, made a clove apple, learned to sew a Christmas stocking, and today we made snowman pancakes from scratch. It has been a very busy few weeks.

When the children return to school in January, we will be studying about the earth, moon, and sun.

I am sending home some paper books we have read as a class. Some of your children can read these books and some can read some of the words in the books. Please take the time to read with your child daily while on vacation. This will help with the transition back to school on Tuesday, January 3rd.

We have been studying measurement in math. If you have a spare ruler, yardstick, and/or measuring tape...please let your child use them. Encourage him/her to measure everything in the house. We are measuring to the nearest inch and making sure we line the measuring tool up correctly on the first hash mark.

Writing is a very important part of first grade. Encourage your child to write thank-you notes while on vacation. This is a fun way to keep their mind sharp and be creative at the same time. Let your child sound out many of the spellings of words and then show them how close they were to "dictionary" spelling.

January to May is the most productive time in first grade. Students are used to the routine, their peers, and their teacher. They know what is expected and are better able to regulate themselves. I hope all students come back rested, energized, and ready to learn. We know, through research, rest, exercise, and good nutrition play a tremendous role in a child's ability to learn.

Again, Happy Holidays to all and I'll be writing to you again in the New Year.

Wanda Brown