



MS Social Studies

February 29, 2008

Dear RMDS Families,

The beginning of the second semester is always the most challenging and exciting time of the year for me. On the one hand, students are well rested after Winter and Mid-Winter Breaks, and they are particularly eager to “dig in” and learn the topics presented in class. Additionally, the students have enough knowledge and skill in their area of study that they are able to approach their subjects with greater sophistication. On the other hand, the arrival of March always triggers a mental alarm of sorts for me, signaling the need to reassess how much more material can be covered in the academic year. There is simply so much knowledge to be shared and explored!

The 5th grade has just begun an Ancient Egypt Magazine, covering topics that range across Medicine, Architecture, Funeral Services/Afterlife, Fashion, Cuisine, Sports and more. We continue to read from ‘The Ancient Egyptian World’ put out by the Oxford Press, and augment our study with documentaries and dramatizations produced by the History Channel, PBS, and the BBC.

The 6th grade will be taking their Christianity quiz this coming Monday, March the 3rd. We will study Islam over the course of the first week and a half of March, and will then move quickly into our own exploration of ancient Egypt.

The 7th/8th grade classes are beginning their study of the Renaissance, and each student has chosen an historical figure from that time period to study in depth. All students have been assigned a date to present to the class, and they will be expected to introduce a discussion topic, debate, or video clip related to the life or achievements of the figure they chose to research. Additionally, students are to submit a 1 ½- 2 page (double spaced, Times New Roman, 12 point font) biography of their historical figure the day of their presentation.

I hope everyone had a fabulous Mid-Winter Break!

Sincerely,
Dave Beitchman