



TOUCHSTONE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Greetings from Touchstone

Touchstone Community School
Newsletter
Volume 2, Issue 1

Hello and welcome to another year at Touchstone Community School!

The 2008-2009 school year has begun to take shape and is proving to be another year of exciting themes, tremendous learning and the parent-school partnership that makes our school a true community.

Our theme based curriculum is a wonderful way for the teachers to bring together the various aspects of the curriculum in a consistent, hands-on, exciting and meaningful way.

Exciting themes together with dedicated teachers, guest speakers and even a fun-filled week of yoga/art/theatre/French camp have made a perfect recipe for fun and learning this Fall.

Enjoy the newsletter and please pass it along to friends and family to spread the word about our fabulous little school!

Important Dates

November 2008

- ☉ November 6: Open House 4:30 -6:30pm
- ☉ November 11: Remembrance Day No School
- ☉ November 18: Parent Meeting at 7:30pm

Monthly Themes for September/October

Red: Animals, Habitats and Dinosaurs

Blue: Earth and Whales

Green: Insects and Cycles in Nature

Orange: Classification of Animals and American Revolution

Purple: Renaissance & Reformation and England (Golden Age)

Enhancing the Learning Experience

Learning at Touchstone always goes above and beyond the basics. In the first two months of school, this has been exemplified through special guests that have included parents and local professionals.

The students love having guests come to the school and these visits truly enhance what the students are learning.

It cannot be stressed enough that the dedication of teachers and parents working together to bring our children a well-rounded education is invaluable to the overall learning experience of Touchstone students.



Thank you to all those special guests who have been

out to help these past two months. Your time, talents and enthusiasm are appreciated!



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Message from Ms. Tasha

An interesting fact I was contemplating the other day was that if we live to be 90 years old, we will live *72 years without our kids!!*

This got me thinking about the effort we put in to our children's learning—helping them with homework, keeping in contact with their teachers, attending conferences, attending parent meetings, and on and on. It sometimes feels like we do nothing else! I want to assure you that this time is well spent.

All Touchstone students who have been with us for at least a year are at grade level in reading, and 88% of our students are 1, 2, or 3 years ahead of grade level. This accomplishment is due to the significant commitment of our teachers *and our parents*. The amount of effort it takes to ensure all students are challenged at their individual levels and get the support they each need *in every area* sometimes seems overwhelming to all of us.

We only have a few years to give our children what they need to be successful in life—the effort is worth every moment!



Tasha vanderLinde

Graduate Update



Last Minute Review of Graduation Speeches

If you ever needed proof that our little community school was living up to its mission and key objectives, you would need simply to attend an end of the year graduation ceremony at Touchstone!

The individual speeches that were given by each of the graduates were not only touching and inspiring, they were yet another example of how the basics are taught, but "the learning always goes far beyond".

As those of you in attendance could attest, each graduate of the class of 2008 spoke with confidence, articulation, individuality,

and intelligence that seemed mature beyond their years.

This class has now moved on to Middle School and from all reports, they are thriving! Parents of these students have reported that their children are shining both academically and socially.

As one graduate recently stated, "the teachers at Touchstone made learning something we looked forward to at the start of each day".

Graduates, we are all so proud of you, and we are so happy that you left the school ready for your next exciting phase of learning and life!

Éducation Physique en Français

It is now October and the students are well on their way to active living in French with the Éducation Physique en Français program.

It has been amazing to witness moments of spontaneous communication in French between students during a game of soccer, dodge ball, yoga and even running. "Lance! Cours! Marche! C'est ta balle! Un tour!" are just a few expressive

and spontaneous reactions heard during class up to now.

To see the students putting their new language into practice is an encouraging reminder of how beneficial the additional access to French each day is to their understanding and incorporation of this second language. How fortunate our children are to have this exposure to French!

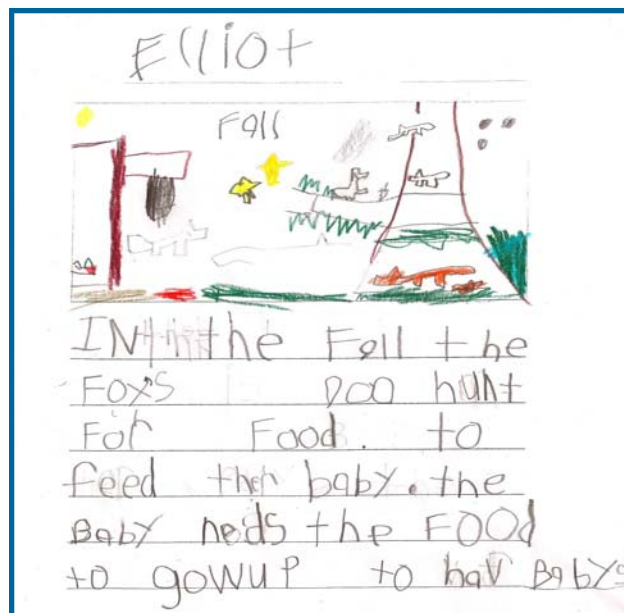


Look at What We Have Been Doing!

A writing sample

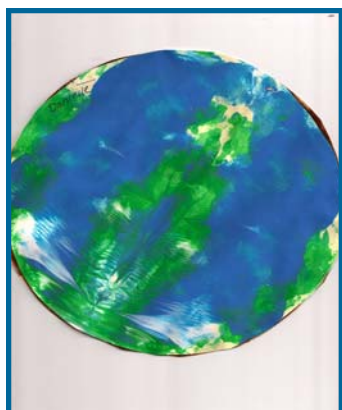
Elliot (age 7)

This page showcases some of the wonderful work the students have been completing this year. The work highlights writing projects, theme-based art work, Mondrian-inspired art, self-portraits created after studying the Mona Lisa, and even a recreation of the Last Supper in the fresco style.



The earth and it's layers

Danielle (age 6)



A self-portrait

Nathan (age 6)



Mondrian-inspired art

William (age 5)

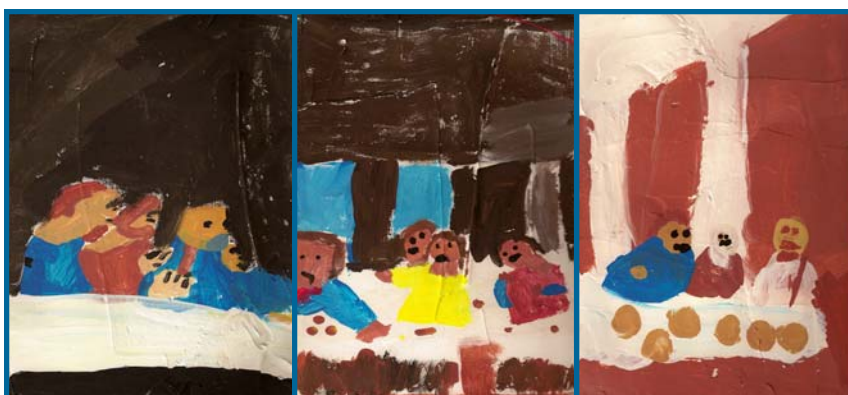


The Last Supper (fresco-style)

Alexandra (age 9)

Caleb (age 10)

Laura (age 10)





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Please email any comments or ideas to
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"Giving children freedom of expression and
the freedom to pursue their own interests is
the greatest gift we can give our children
and our future."
-FD

Celebrating Camp Week!

Imagine this. An entire school week- five full days- dedicated to offering our students enrichment activities in yoga, theatre, music, art and French each day!

For one week in October, this was a reality for the students at Touchstone. This well-organized, tremendously fun, and invaluable experience was enjoyed by participating students, facilitators and teachers.

Just take a look at some of the fun and excitement that took place!

Pre-K to Grade
5 are in the
following order
Red
Blue
Green
Orange
Purple

