

Tuesday, November 11, 2010

Dear Sixth Grade Parent(s),

I am writing this letter to make you aware of an Omaha Archdiocesan Assessment that the Sixth Grade at St. Margaret Mary School are participating in this year. As a school in the Archdiocese of Omaha, we are required to complete certain assessments for the State of Nebraska.

The assessment for Sixth Grade Science is called "Tool Time" and it requires that each student research, gather data, work cooperatively as a team or independently on their own, design and present a tool or a model of a tool that will enhance or improve a skill or solve a problem in real life.

The following is check list designed to help in the organization process of this project:

- Chose a team or work individually
- Research existing tools that have similar problems (include a picture if possible)
- Copy a U.S. patent form to include in the report
- Design an original tool or a model of the tool for the presentation of this project
- Gather, analyze and interpret data and communicate the results by writing a typed two paragraph minimum summary. Information should include the following and be assembled in a clear cover:
 - a) the name of the tool;
 - b) what problem the tool addresses and how it will improve life;
 - c) a description of the tool;
 - d) the strengths or benefits and weaknesses of the tool;
 - e) and an explanation of how the tool was developed, tested and modified

The project will be presented to the class in a form that promotes the tool and its potential to improve life. Ultimately, the students create an advertisement for their tool.

During the presentation, the student(s) relate appropriate visuals and also share equal presentation and responsibilities if it is a team design. The student(s) communicates clearly in an organized manner. The student(s) will receive a grade for this project. It will have the same weight as a test.

I have begun this project in class by brainstorming with the students and developing a list of problems in real life that can be improved with the use of a tool or technological idea. Please know that like the endangered species project, this too is not part of the textbook curriculum and will be discussed with the students in conjunction with the concepts and chapters currently being taught. Currently, students are learning concepts related to tools and developing ideas. We are studying motion, work and machines for our physical science unit.

I will have past projects available to use as a guide for assembly. Once I have given the students a guideline (attached to this handout), the assembly and preparation for this assessment piece is to be done outside of school as an enrichment project. I encourage students to use materials from home, however, based on my own parental experience with this particular project, it is sometimes necessary to purchase materials from a store.

I have included information from the Archdiocese for this project; 1) a rubric and 2) additional information provided to me that each student must keep and turn in the day the project is due.

This project for your child is due: _____

Group members include: _____

Thank you for helping your student understand the importance of this Archdiocesan Assessment.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Kanger