

We Are Thankful

By Gina Cronin

Third graders at McAlister Intermediate School have so much to be thankful for as the holiday season began! This November, they had the opportunity to share their thoughts on thankfulness with their teachers, fellow students, and a few parent volunteers. The eight classes broke into two groups and met together in the cafeteria to share food that they had prepared. Some of the classes made homemade corn bread, pumpkin bread, and applesauce cake. Others brought cheese and crackers and popcorn. After sharing some treats and good conversation, each class took the stage to share what they were thankful for. Mrs. Cronin's class shared such thoughts as, "I am thankful for my friends." "I am thankful for a mom and dad who take care of me and love me." Mr. Oliver's class shared a funny Thanksgiving poem that they read in unison. Mr. Fontaine's class spelled out the word Thanksgiving and created thankful thoughts for each letter. For example, "T" is for the turkey we share on this day. Mrs. Halzack's class shared some meaningful holiday poems.

The Thanksgiving Share is closely tied into their curriculum as they are currently sharing what life was like in Colonial Times. Students learn about life in the New England Colonies. They study Colonial America beginning with the arrival of the Pilgrims in 1620 and discuss how colonists lived and worked all the way into the mid 1700's. Children research the kinds of food colonists grew and ate, chores the children and adults would have to complete every day, games and activities children played, occupations of the colonists from silversmiths to farmers, schooling, and severe punishments given to those who broke the law. Students enjoy this unit as they compare and contrast life in Colonial Times to life today. One student in Mrs. Cronin's class said, "I know that life back then was very different, but some things were the same. Colonial children worked really hard, but then they had time to play games just like we do." Students make wonderful connections throughout the unit.

Finally, students carried over their thoughts of thankfulness and being grateful for what they have, by donating new unwrapped toys for the holidays. This month they also donated pet supplies and food to a local pet shelter. The staff and students at McAlister Intermediate School showed the true spirit of giving, caring, and being thankful for all that they have.