

## Pat's Learning Annex

October 27, 2005

*This was an exhilarating week. The best part of the week was writing horror stories. In Writing we have been learning about how to describe our characters. To make a good character you have to include a lot of detail, like how they dress, what they look like, what they like to do, what they hate to do, what they do, and what they think about and how they feel at different parts of the story. We learned that a plot is like a roller coaster. There are lots of ways to begin a story. We experimented with writing a typical beginning. This is a normal beginning where we tell about who the character is, where they are, and what they're doing. Another type is an action beginning. In an action beginning we show something exciting happening that makes the reader want to keep reading. Another types is a dialogue beginning, where you start with the characters talking. The last type of beginning we learned about is where the character thinks about what's going on. They might jump to conclusions.*

We have been rehearsing a poem called "The Raven," written by Edgar Allen Poe. This poem is about a guy who has a wife that died. He is trying to get her off his mind and a raven comes and rubs his loss in and tells him he'll never see his wife. We like the poem because there's a lot of description, comparisons, and emotion. Today we watched a video on Poe's life. His life really sucked. All three of his wives died. His mom died when he was a kid, and so did his brother. His foster dad abused him. And his stepmother also died. He wrote "The Raven" for his only wife - who was his first cousin, and who was also 13 years old when he married her. She was dying of tuberculosis when he wrote it. He earned a whopping 14 dollars for writing this poem! Poe then started drinking a lot, disappeared for three days, and was then found on the streets delirious, and wearing different clothes. They took him to a pub and the bartender said he recognized him, and took him to a hospital where he died. We understand more why his poetry is so depressing.

**In Science Gerrit created a forest, which everyone ate! Sam's cotyledons (which are the first two leaves that come out of the plants) were not nearly as big as Gerrit's. We learned about all the things soybeans can make (butter, ice cream, cheese, oils, diesels, and milk). Soybeans are good for people who are lactose intolerant, because it tastes kind of like dairy, even though it isn't. Sabin doesn't think it really tastes like dairy, though. And Sam prefers goat milk, which is way better than soymilk. We got to drink soymilk and eat roasted soybeans, provided by our great, tasty, science teacher, Steve. In Math, we have been working on measurement.**

*This week we bid farewell to Dylan, Ethan's old dog. As a class we wrote notes, poems, and drew pictures about Dylan. We put them on his favorite pine tree. We ate chocolate, courtesy of Diego, after the ceremony.*

Today we will be going to the pumpkin patch. This is a reminder that we will be having our annual HALOWEEN BASH this Saturday, and that parents (rather than children) are really encouraged and needed in the construction process of the Haunted House. Call Pat for more details.

**We also sent over 1,000 bucks to our charity of choice - Mercy Corps - to support victims of the earthquake in Pakistan**

**This message was brought to you by the letters S and the number 2.**