This year, in all grades, the students will be completing four performance tasks throughout the school year. A performance task is a goal-directed assessment exercise. It consists of an activity or assignment that is completed by the student and then judged by the teacher or other evaluator on the basis of specific performance criteria.

Experts in the field emphasize that any effective performance assessment task should have the following design features:

- Students should be active participants, not passive "selectors of the single right answer."
- Intended outcomes should be clearly identified and should guide the design of a performance task.
- Students should be expected to demonstrate mastery of those intended outcomes when responding to all facets of the task.
- Students must demonstrate their ability to apply their knowledge and skills to reality-based situations and scenarios.
- A clear, logical set of performance-based activities that students are expected to follow should be evident.
- A clearly presented set of criteria should be available to help judge the degree of proficiency in a student response.

Our performance tasks are a series of tasks that the students will perform based on the units they are studying during that marking period. The students will be given an engaging scenario and then perform 4 to 5 tasks based on the scenario. The main purpose of a performance task is to allow the students to take skills that they are being taught and apply them to a real world situation. We believe that all students should understand why they are being taught a skill and how it applies to their lives. Performance Tasks are part of the students’ math grade.

In 6th grade, the students are being asked to plan a school dance. They have to make a list of celebration costs, make a list of items and prices and calculate the exact cost, calculate how much money each sixth grader will need to raise by recycling cans, and end with a letter to the principal persuading him or her to hold the dance.

In 5th grade, the students have to plan a day at Lake Compounce staying within a budget. They have to calculate cost of tickets, parking and gas, choose and calculate meals, and create a goodie bag for those attending. This task culminates with an itemized list detailing all costs and totals.
Why do we need to know this?

As a teacher, the question we hear time and time again is, "Why do we need to know this? How is this useful?" As tempting as, "Because I said so," is, we want the students to understand that Math is the foundation for many other avenues in life. You are constantly using it, every day.

Mathematics was always present in nature, waiting to be discovered. In fact, it is present everywhere in the universe. But math, as a subject, is dreaded and scary for many. Even thinking about calculations, theorems, algebra, geometry, permutations and combinations gives goosebumps to some people.

Mathematics as a science is not a discovery by a single person. It is a joint effort that was started by the Babylonians and Egyptians, way back in 3000 BC. There are important contributions from the Greeks, Indians, and others, which have helped develop mathematical concepts, abstracts, formulae, etc. The discovery of various constants, laws, and theorems is based on the invention of the numerical system. All of these numbers give physics, chemistry, and all the other sciences a much-needed backbone, which supports and gives them a definite

The 5th and 6th grade students at Carrigan are not only busy with classroom academics; they are also being tested on Symphony Math to determine their grade equivalency for the fall. The classroom teachers will be given the outcome for each child in their class and will be able to discuss the information at parent conferences.

All 5th grade students have finished Unit 1 Understanding the Place Value System and are beginning Unit 2 Computing with Whole Numbers and Decimals. 6th grade students have finished Unit 1 Using Expressions and Equations and are beginning Unit 2 Operating with Positive Rational Numbers.

We would like to invite all of you to our first Math Night on November 7, 2013 from 6:00 to 7:30. More information will be sent home.

Strategy of the Month:

Your brain is an organizer. It organizes information as it stores that information. When a problem involves many pieces of information, your brain will have an easier time sorting through it if you make an organized list. A list helps you be sure you have thought of all of the possibilities without repeating any of them. Like drawing a picture or making a diagram, making an organized list helps your brain "see" the problem clearly and find a solution. Try making an organized list to solve this problem:

Tickets for the concert cost $12 for adults or teenagers and $6 for children. If the group has $60, how many adults or teenagers and how many children could go?

Answer_______________________________________________________________________

Parent Signature________________________________________________________________
Student’s name and room number________________________________________________

Sometimes the hardest part of solving a problem is just getting started. Having some steps to follow may help you.

1. Understand the information in the problem and what you are trying to find out.
2. Try a strategy you think might help you solve the problem.
3. Find the solution using that strategy or try another way until you solve the problem.
4. Check back to make certain your answer makes sense.