



# Connecting Waters Charter School

Accredited by the Schools Commission of Western Association of Schools and Colleges

12420 Bentley Street  
Waterford, CA 95386

[www.connectingwaters.org](http://www.connectingwaters.org)

(209) 874-1119  
(800) 808-9895

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## Dates to Remember

March 15:

Open House  
6:30pm

# Open House

You're invited!

Please join us for our annual Open House on Tuesday, March 15, 2011 at 6:30 pm, in the Waterford High School Multi-Purpose room located at 121 S. Reinway in Waterford. This year's event will be bigger and better than ever! ESes, instructors, school staff and vendors will be on hand for you to meet, to view what they have to offer, and to answer any questions you may have. Refreshments will be available for your enjoyment!

We would also like for our students to display their talent at Open House. In the past, students have played musical instruments, done poetry readings, sang songs, and given a ballet performance. Please let us know what talent you would like to display. Deadline to sign up is Friday, March 4, 2011. Parents please call Mary Vinnedge by Friday, March 4 to sign up your students.

We would also like to invite students to display projects such as: art, writing, photography, history, science, social studies, and others. If you are interested in displaying your work or performing, you will need to contact Mary Vinnedge to reserve a spot.

**Deadline to sign up is Friday, March 4, 2011 for both performers and displays. Parents please contact Mary Vinnedge at the number listed below.**

Mark this date on your calendar! For further information, please contact Mary Vinnedge at 1-800-808-9895 Ext. 5, then 2.

Project boards are available and can be picked up at the learning centers or school office.

We hope to see you there!

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# Happy St. Patrick's Day!

# English Department News

Teresa Matranga • English Dept. Chair • [tmatranga@connectingwaters.org](mailto:tmatranga@connectingwaters.org) • 1-800-808-9895 Ext 4, then 4

Parents and ESes, do you know we have many “suggested reading” novels in the Modesto and Ceres Learning Center libraries for grades seven through twelve? Here are a few that are on hand for check out: Where the Red Fern Grows, Treasure Island, Call of the Wild, The Heart of a Chief, Island of the Blue Dolphins, and Tuck Everlasting. We have many more, some of which may be required for Elluminate courses in which your student might be enrolled this semester. Accompanying study guides to enrich their reading experiences are also available for parents and ESes to preview. They are inexpensive and easily ordered. Even if your students are not enrolled in an Elluminate course, you can take advantage of this untapped budget friendly resource. Ask your ES, or visit one of the learning centers and browse the reading library shelves soon!

STAR testing will begin later this month. If you have not already started to review English standards, now would be a great time to begin. Good luck to everyone!



# Math Department News

Debbie Kutz, Math Specialist • [dkutz@connectingwaters.org](mailto:dkutz@connectingwaters.org) • 1-800-808-9895 Ext 4, then 3

## STAR Test Prep

STAR testing is just around the corner. All students will benefit from test preparation. Test prep books, Study Island, and the released questions from the California Department of Education (<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/css05rtg.asp>) are all great resources. These will help refresh your memory on the concepts learned earlier in the year, as well as familiarize you with the testing format and language.

## High School Math Team

Students are still needed for the annual Stanislaus Math Council's (SMC) High School Math Competition. The competition will take place on Saturday, April 9, 2011 at California State University Stanislaus, from 8:30 a.m. until 1:15 p.m. The Math Team is open to students taking courses in Geometry through Calculus. If you are interested or want to know more details, contact Debbie Kutz, [dkutz@connectingwaters.org](mailto:dkutz@connectingwaters.org). You can also find more information and practice questions on the SMC website <http://stanislausmathcouncil.org/>

## Drop-In Math Coaching

Free math coaching for all ages will continue all semester at both learning centers. The times are listed below. This is a study hall format where students bring math assignments to work on and ask specific questions as time allows. Parents may also attend and bring content-related questions.

Modesto Learning Center  
Wednesdays 2:15-3:45

Ceres Learning Center  
Tuesdays 12:30-2:30

# LIBRARY NEWS

## Important Dates to Remember

- o **March 11:** Last day to check out books for the 2011 school year
- o **May 26:** Bay Area book pickup
- o **May 27:** ALL books checked out from the learning centers are due back
- o **May 30:** Fall 2012 early checkout for all parents that returned all of their checked out materials by May 27th.



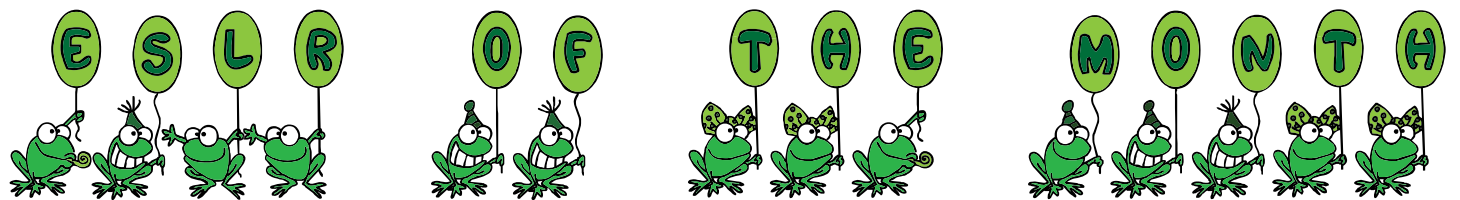
## Raleys/Nob Hill Quality of Life Card Fundraiser

Connecting Waters is enrolled in the Raleys/Nob Hill Quality of Life Program. Raleys will give our school 1%-4% back on your total when you show the Quality of Life Card at time of purchase. Cards are available for pick-up at the school office or the learning centers. Cards must be activated over the Internet. Money raised will be used for incentives for school activities.



## Boxtops for Education Fundraiser

Connecting Waters is enrolled in the Boxtops for Education Program. For every Boxtop coupon sent in, General Mills pays us 10¢. Boxtops coupons are located on products from General Mills, Chex, Betty Crocker, Pillsbury, Yoplait, Ziplock, Scott, Kleenex, Cottonelle, Hefty, and many more. Collection boxes are located at the school office and the learning centers. You may bring in your coupons or mail them to the school office or learning centers. Money raised will be used for school activities.



## Lifelong Learners (Special Interests)

### ESLR #7

"Student realizes his/her own unique educational interests, talents, and abilities." Student has experience or knowledge in a variety of the arts, trades, professions, languages and other disciplines.



Terry Leppien, Literacy Director • [tleppien@connectingwaters.org](mailto:tleppien@connectingwaters.org) • 1-800-808-9895 Ext 5, then 1

### **What is Direct Instruction?**

Direct instruction is an approach or instructional model of teaching where there are usually five phases that allow teachers to gradually shift responsibility for completing a task from the teacher to the student (Joyce & Weil, 2000; Rosenshine & Meister, 1992). A large body of research has converged on an important point in the area of reading: Reading instruction is most effective when the teacher provides the student with direct and explicit teaching of the skills and strategies necessary to read proficiently (Biancarosa & snow, 2006; National Reading Panel Report, 2000; Torgesen et al., 2007).

### **A Direct Instruction Teaching Model**

This is a summary of what one model of instruction could look like.

#### **Phase 1: Introduction**

In this phase of direct instruction, the teacher activates a student's prior knowledge and experiences that will help the student connect to the new information being taught. This could simply be reviewing the concept or strategy taught the day before this lesson. During this phase the teacher also explains the purpose of the lesson and what the student will be able to do after the lesson.

#### **Phase 2: Presentation (Modeling)**

This is the explicit phase of the model, where the teacher identifies a strategy for the student, then models how, where, and why to apply the strategy or skill. As this phase progresses the teacher checks for understanding frequently and provides immediate corrective feedback when necessary. Most effective presentations will include both visual and auditory explanations (Joyce & Weil, 2000). During this phase, the student is very dependent on the teacher to receive information.

#### **Phase 3: Structured Practice**

In this phase of the instruction, the teacher begins to hand over the strategy or concept of what has been modeled to the student. Using new, but related, material the teacher allows the student to be involved at a level where he/she is successful.

#### **Phase 4: Guided Practice**

The student moves toward increased independence at this phase. The teacher has the student apply the knowledge learned to new material. The student is expected to respond when asked a question and the teacher gives appropriate feedback. The teacher gradually removes support when the student is showing he/she can work on his/her own.

#### **Phase 5: Independent Practice**

During the final phase the student practices independently to show the teacher that he/she can apply what he/she has learned and can apply that to unfamiliar situations. The student has the primary responsibility to complete tasks on his/her own. The teacher monitors.

If you have questions, please contact, Terry Leppien, Literacy Director at [tleppien@connectingwaters.org](mailto:tleppien@connectingwaters.org)

Continued on page 5...

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### Bibliography

Biancarosa, C., & Snow, C. (2006). *Reading next—A vision for action and research in middle and high school literacy: A report to the Carnegie Corporation of New York* (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education.

Joyce, B. & Weil, M. (2000). *Models of teaching* (6th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

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Rosenshine, B. & Meister, C. (1992). The use of scaffolds for teaching higher-level cognitive strategies. *Educational Leadership*, 50, 26–33.

Torgesen, J. K., Houston, D. D., Rissman, L. M., Decker, S. M., Roberts, G., Vaughn, S., Wexler, J., Francis, D. J., Rivera, M. O., & Lesaux, N. (2007). *Academic literacy instruction for adolescents: A guidance document from the Center on Instruction* (p. 3). Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation, Center on Instruction. Retrieved May 3, 2007 from [online: [www.centeroninstruction.org](http://www.centeroninstruction.org)].



Judy Orr, Student Council • [jorr@connectingwaters.org](mailto:jorr@connectingwaters.org)

Welcome Spring!

The upcoming events for the Student Council are: **March 12th**- Mother/Son, Father/Daughter Dance at the Modesto Centre Plaza (contact Lindsey at [ldkhan@charter.net](mailto:ldkhan@charter.net) to sign up), **March 15th**- Fundraiser Raffle at CWCS' Open House, **April 2nd**- Prom at Hutchins Street Square (contact Judy at [jorr@connectingwaters.org](mailto:jorr@connectingwaters.org) for information), and a Senior Potluck on **May 15th** at Woodward Park West in Manteca (contact Judy at [jorr@connectingwaters.org](mailto:jorr@connectingwaters.org) for information).



Congratulations to CWCS for meeting our overall API Growth Target with a score of 727! For full details, please see our School Accountability Report Card: <http://www.connectingwaters.org/>

Reminders:

- o March 1<sup>st</sup> is the STAR Writing test for 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders. (Make-ups must be confirmed by your ES and are only offered at the following sites: Ceres, Lodi, Manteca, and Stockton on March 2<sup>nd</sup>)
- o STAR testing begins at some of our test sites on March 23- Mark your calendar for your student's test site dates so they are prepared. Consult your ES with questions or concerns.
- o CAHSEE- California High School Exit Exam: March 8 and 9  
March CAHSEE scores should be available May 8, 2011.

Consult the School Departments/Assessment page online at [www.connectingwaters.org](http://www.connectingwaters.org) for up-to-date testing information.

# Parent Checklist and Guidelines for Success during STAR Testing

## Before Testing:

- **Post** test site letters with dates, location, and schedule in sight.
- **Post** ES phone number and CWCS phone number in sight.
- **Ask** your ES for preparation materials so your student is familiar with the format of "bubbling" their answers on their tests.
- **Maintain** a regular waking/sleeping schedule so your student is well rested.
- **Pack** snacks/lunch and water, and books or dry art materials, the night before and put in the car so they are not forgotten.
- **Go over** Test Schedule with student the night before so student is familiar with the test/s they will be taking the next day.
- **Communicate positively** about student's participation in testing and the benefits to their school and themselves.
- Be sure to **communicate** with your **ES** if there any special circumstances involving your student that may need addressing, and check with your ES before testing begins, in regards to the outcome of that communication. On the day of testing, **arrive early** and talk with the Test Site **Coordinator** to make sure your **student's needs** have been addressed.
- **Go over** the Student **Behavior** Policy with your student, including the **dress code** and make sure they understand the rules and are in **compliance** with the policy before leaving the house for the test site.
- Remind student (grades 5,7, and 9 only) to dress appropriately on their Physical Fitness Test day and to bring water.

## Each Day of Testing:

- **If student cannot** attend scheduled dates due to Emergency or Illness **call your ES** immediately. **If** you can not reach your ES, please call the CWCS office number and let them know the situation: **209-874-1119 x 6**
- Awake early to eat a good **breakfast** and leave home at an appropriate time, considering weather and traffic, so student **arrives 15 minutes before** testing. No supervision is available before 15 minutes prior to testing, so please do not bring students earlier.
- **Encourage** students to do their best and have a positive experience.

## Check in/out process for grades 2-8 (dropping students off is not allowed)

- As mentioned above, arrive 15 minutes early, **walk in** with your student/s and **sign them in** on the attendance sheet.
- Write your **emergency** contact **number** on the sheet.
- **Walk** your student to their specific room, **if instructed** at site, **otherwise** an **adult leader** will do this.
- **Provide** your student with **water, food, and quiet activities** (electronic devices such as Ipods, Gameboys, and so on are not allowed) to bring with them.
- **Find out where** to pick up your student.
- **Tell** your student where you will pick them up and when.
- **Walk into** test site and **sign** your student **out** on the attendance sheet at the end of testing.

## Alternate check in/out process for grades 9-11:

- **Parent may** drop off student or student drive themselves with a **signed letter** stating student may arrive and sign in as well as sign out and leave when testing is over without parent/guardian being present.
- Sign in on attendance sheet.
- Write an emergency contact number on the sheet.
- Bring water, food, and quiet activities (electronic devices such as Ipods, Gameboys, and so on are not allowed).
- Students will not be allowed to leave the test site during lunch or breaks.
- Sign out on attendance sheet when testing is completed for the day.

## After Testing:

- **Ask** student about their testing experience that day.
- **Ask** student what they would change about the testing environment.
- **Give** pertinent **feedback** to your **ES** immediately so we can resolve any issues in a timely manner.

Thank you

# Outdoor Science School

**ESes: Please note that funding will not be encumbered until the registration period is closed on April 1st. Please remember to account for this when using 2<sup>nd</sup> semester funds.**

It is time to sign up for Outdoor Science School. We are going the week of April 18-22, 2011. We will again be going to Mount Hermon in the mountains above Santa Cruz. The cost will be \$287. We will be at Ponderosa Camp, located in the middle of the forest. It is used for their children's camps in summer. It has a heated swimming pool, tennis courts, volleyball, a rec field, ping pong tables, and a climbing wall. There will be 1 counselor for each cabin (5-7 students). Counselors will be CWCS High School Juniors and Seniors. One adult from our school will also be there to help supervise, give out medication, and make sure everyone has a good week. Parents are responsible for getting their student(s) there and back. All participants need to arrive at 9:30-10:30 on Monday morning and be picked up at 10:30 on Friday. We will be there with another school. You may send your 5th or 6th graders. For more information about the camp, visit <http://mounthermon.org/outdoor-science> (When viewing the site, note that we are NOT attending homeschool camp). To reserve your space for this activity, please have your ES sign you up in webfiles (GEA #18876) and then email ES Cathy Moretto, [cmoretto@connectingwaters.org](mailto:cmoretto@connectingwaters.org), the following information:

**Parent Name**

**Student Name(s) and Grade(s)**

**Home Phone Number**

**Email Address**

**ES Name**

You will be emailed an enrollment packet with information and directions. **The last day to sign up in webfiles is Friday, April 1.**

Cathy Moretto, [cmoretto@connectingwaters.org](mailto:cmoretto@connectingwaters.org)

# Social Studies Department

**Lori Freeman, Social Studies Dept. Chair • [lofreeman@connectingwaters.org](mailto:lofreeman@connectingwaters.org) • 1-800-808-9895 Ext 4, then 5**

The Social Studies Department courses are going well. Our students continue to make online learning a wonderful experience! The online class schedule will soon be posted for next year, so be sure to check with your ES if your student plans to enroll in a class for the fall semester.

It is difficult to believe that May is just around the corner. Students enrolled in a-g level courses will need to take the proctored spring final exam. The Social Studies Department finals are scheduled for Friday, May 13<sup>th</sup>. Please check for updates regarding spring final exams and be sure your ES signs your student up if they are in an a-g level course. In addition, many students will be graduating this May; if you have a graduate, please be sure to keep in contact with the class instructor and monitor your student's grade. As a reminder, student grades can be accessed online at anytime in Moodle via student log-in.

# Curriculum News

Lori Freeman, Curriculum Director • [lofreeman@connectingwaters.org](mailto:lofreeman@connectingwaters.org) • 1-800-808-9895 Ext 4, then 5

Thank you to all of our families that attended our Parent/Student Training! Seeing our parents and students take part in the workshops and activities was great. I hope our families found the event to be beneficial as well as fun. Many months of preparation and planning take place to make it happen; I would love to hear your feedback regarding your experience. Please feel free to call or e-mail me and let me know what you thought.

STAR Testing has arrived and all students in grades 2-11 will once again be assessed on their grade level standards. Testing can be stressful for some students, especially if they feel unprepared. The California Department of Education releases previous test questions for both math and ELA on their website. Reviewing these questions can be a great way for students to prepare for their test and help them know what to expect. I recommend printing your child's grade-level released questions <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tq/sr/css05rtq.asp> and reviewing them prior to their test date. CWCS has shown progress each year and we are proud of our students' and parents' hard work in this area!

As a reminder, I hold curriculum office hours on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month at the Modesto Learning Center. If you would like to set up an appointment to meet, please contact me at [lofreeman@connectingwaters.org](mailto:lofreeman@connectingwaters.org)

## \*\* Curriculum Spotlight \*\*



The image shows a promotional graphic for the 'Interactives' website. On the left is a photograph of a smiling young girl with dark hair. To her right, the word 'Interactives' is written in large red letters. Below that, it says 'Check Out: Elements of a Story' in red, with a red button that says 'Find Out More' and a plus sign. In the background, there is a stylized illustration of a castle and a stack of books with a pen resting on them.

<http://www.learner.org/interactives/>

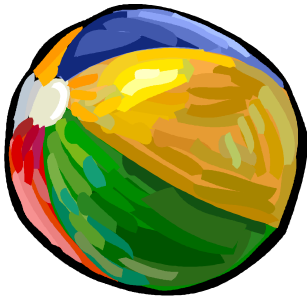
*"Interactives" provides educators and students with strategies, content, and activities that can enhance and improve students' skills in a variety of curricular areas...."*

Interactive lessons are a super way to engage students in the learning process and are a great tool for students of all ages, abilities, and learning styles. The above website includes online interactive lessons on a variety of topics, including math, language arts, history and science.

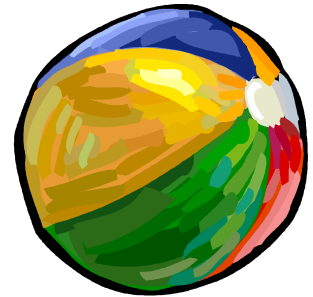
Each interactive can be accessed free online and include suggested grade levels. Each interactive involves reading and are student-friendly (parent assistance may be needed depending on reading level and activity). A few of the interactive activities have a "test your skills" section to be completed by the student when the lesson is completed. Many of the interactive activities also include a list of resources to explore.

Brought to you by your

# Special Ed Department



## BEACH BALL MATH TOSS



Here's a fun and inexpensive way to not only have your student up and moving, but to help them reinforce math skills and motor skills at the same time!

### THE SKILLS IT BUILDS:

- Addition
- Multiplication
- Hand-Eye Coordination

### THE MATERIALS YOU'LL NEED:

- Beach Ball
- Markers
- Small Adhesive Labels

### INSTRUCTIONS:

First, decide on a function to practice — addition or multiplication — and a set of numerals to work with — numbers 1 through 9 for young children, larger numerals for older students. Write the numbers on small adhesive labels and stick them onto a beach ball, one per colored section.

Two players stand facing each other. The first player catches the ball and calls out the number where his or her right thumb lands. He or she then tosses the ball to another player, who does the same, except they must add or multiply the two numbers, calling out the solution (which the first player confirms). The ball gets tossed again, and the game starts over.

### VARIATIONS:

Can be played with more than two players. Can be used to add or multiply fractions; match states with their capitols or visa-versa; opposites; rhyming families, and other topics. Use your imagination, and have some fun.

# GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT

Greetings from the Guidance Department! We are here to help you determine your future academic and career goals.

Contact information:  
Mary Halter, School Counselor  
1-800-808-9895 ext. 4 then 2  
[mhalter@connectingwaters.org](mailto:mhalter@connectingwaters.org)

**Check out the Guidance page online!**

**For Scholarship Information:**  
go to [www.connectingwaters.org](http://www.connectingwaters.org), choose departments and then guidance then "Scholarships/Grants" and then "Current Scholarships"

## Calling all High School Students!

**College Tour to University of the Pacific**  
Thursday, March 31<sup>st</sup> at 12:45pm!  
3601 Pacific Avenue, Stockton, California 95211  
We will meet at UOP at 12:45pm for a 1pm **tour!**

**Time: Meet at 12:45pm** at UOP, tour will run from 1pm to 3pm

**Contact Person:** Mary Halter

**To attend, BY March 30th you MUST:** Have parent fill out and sign a permission slip,

<http://www.connectingwaters.org/CWforms/edactper.pdf>

Permission slip MUST be faxed to the school office at 209-874-9531 OR mailed to: CWCS, 12420 Bentley Street, Waterford, CA 95386

**Upcoming College Fairs!!! If you can make it, it's worth your time!** <http://wacac.org/fairs>

**Sunday, April 3:** University of the Pacific, Stockton  
**Monday, April 4:** CSU Stanislaus, Turlock  
**Tuesday, April 5:** Sonoma State, Rohnert Park  
**Wednesday, April 6:** Dominican University, San Rafael  
**Thursday, April 7:** Mission College, Santa Clara  
**Friday, April 8:** CSU East Bay, Hayward  
**Saturday, April 9:** St. Mary's College, Moraga  
**Sunday, April 10:** St. Mira Loma High School, Sacramento

### FREE Online Tutoring! Every Friday!

Is your student in need of academic tutoring but simply doesn't have the time to drive to one of the learning centers? There is good news!! CWCS has student tutoring coming directly to you! The members from CSF, our high school student honors club, are starting an online tutoring program, designed to meet the specific needs of your student. Our CSF members are happy to assist your student in the following areas: K-8 Math, Writing, English, Science, High School Math through PreCal, Science, and English

Interested in getting started? Please email Lindsey Khan to find out how at [ldkhan@charter.net](mailto:ldkhan@charter.net)