

Christmas time in the Tech. Lab:

During the time remaining until the Christmas break K-4 students will be spending their computer class time “in search of Santa”. This is a time when we will be using the internet to search out things related to Christmas and Santa’s domain in the far North Country. It is hoped that the students will experience some current technical capabilities of the internet, learn some important research skills and learn about some of the many secular and sacred symbols and customs practiced around the world.

First stop: North Pole...

While the weather cameras at the North Pole are not operating during the winter months, pictures from the summer can be found at: www.arctic.noaa.gov/gallery.html this is the NOAA arctic weather center.

We will travel a bit south to “Santa’s reindeer ranch” and visit the Lapland region of northern Finland. Two sites that will be explored are: www.santaclaus.fi/?deptid=8044 a Finnish site called SantaClaus (English) and www.santatelevision.com SantaTelevision, the official television station at his Lapland ranch.

The obligatory Christmas fun sites: Used as a reward for other efforts, the students will get a chance to play checkers against Santa, check out the Naughty and Nice list and watch a Disco Dancing Santa at the following sites. www.northpole.com and www.claus.com. Come Christmas Eve, NORAD will have its Santa Tracker active as well: www.noradsanta.org

Of course, your rules about Internet use will be respected. Fully half of our lab time will be spent exploring things together (I will drive). If you prefer that your children are not using the Internet, let me know and I will quietly find other activities for them. I encourage you to share at home experiences at these web sites with your children through the Holiday season. They have been told to check with you all before sending email to Santa or going on these sites at home.

Finally, all of our children are becoming “Net-smart Kids.” We have explored together a site called NetSmartzKids (www.netsmartzkids.org) which is produced in conjunction with the Boys & Girls Clubs and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. The entire site is dedicated to Internet Safety and is very “kid friendly”. There are lots of games, songs and videos which provide a positive message (fun too) about Internet Safety. This would be another great site to visit with your children as well.

Late Breaking information: From one of our parents comes a fabulous resource. Thanks Mrs. Cryan for this GREAT site: <http://www.stnicholascenter.org/Brix?pageID=166>

Happy Holidays and Good Hunting!