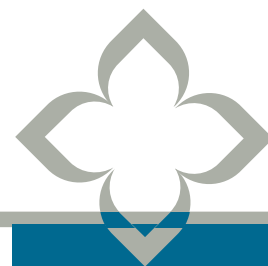


C.L.L.E.

council for life long engagement



“No More Cavities, Mom!”

Jack Fix spent many years testing products that we use every day. Recently, the 5th graders at Nativity learned how product testing can involve chemistry. Mrs. Kathman invited Jack into the classroom to show the students a real word application for chemistry, their science topic this quarter.

At Procter & Gamble, Fix worked with Crest toothpaste. He shared with the students that in the 50s, fluoride in toothpaste was a new addition. Scientists had discovered that people in areas with higher levels of fluoride in the water had a lower rate of tooth decay. This led to the idea of putting fluoride in toothpaste. As part of Jack's work, he helped P&G determine how much fluoride was consumed with brushing your teeth. He worked with school children to determine levels. The students were asked to brush their teeth while in school. Researchers carefully measured the toothpaste given to the students and the amount of fluoride it contained. When the students spit into the sink after brushing, the waste water was collected and analyzed to calculate how much fluoride was missing and therefore ingested!

Jack also shared a commercial from the 50s from YouTube that showed the excitement of having fluoride in toothpaste and the reduction of cavities. Since children today are aware of fluoride and take for granted that it is used in their toothpaste and annual treatments at the dentist, this information made the students appreciate the

research that Jack and his team conducted. One student commented “I never thought of my grandfather not having fluoride for his teeth. I will think about Mr. Fix's work each time I brush!”

Jack also told the children stories about his work on Joy dishwashing detergent. Again, in the day of dishwashers and streak-free washing, the students were surprised that dishwashing liquid has not always been like the products their parents buy today.



The students learned much more than how chemistry is used in every day life while interacting with Jack Fix. Jack was able to show the students how engineers and scientists study issues that can change our lives for the better. The students left the session with a greater appreciation for how products are tested to make sure that they are safe and really do what the commercials advertise. Next time the students go to the grocery store with their parents they will surely look at the thousands of products sold differently!

Are You Interested?

If you would like to be apart of the CLLE programs in the classroom, please contact Laura Lamb at llamb@erhinc.com or at 272.5555 ext. 6606. Visit www.clle.org