



## ***Grade 2 News*** ***October 2009***

Dear Parents,

Just a few updates and reminders...

**Reading-** Your children are completing unit 1 in the Scott Foresman reading program. They will be taking their Benchmark test next week. Skills to review include:

***Phonics:***

Short vowels, long vowels with the silent e as in cake; initial and final consonant blends such as /pl/, /tr/, /sm/ and /ld/; initial and final consonant digraphs such as /ch/, /wh/, /tch/, and /nk/. Your child should also be able to use the appropriate rules to add -ed or-ing to words with a silent e such as bake as well as to short vowel words such as hop where the consonant must be doubled before adding an ending.

Students should be able to read and write words with these sounds.

***Comprehension:***

Skills practiced in unit 1 include developing listening comprehension, understanding and identifying character traits, practicing retelling using the sequence of the story, and identifying the *setting* as both *when* and *where* the story events occur. The students are also asked to find ways that the characters in one story are similar to those in another.

In addition, they should be able to connect the theme of exploration with the stories we have read. Finally, your child should be able to identify the main idea and details in a text.

Next week in addition to working on the test the students will be reading and responding to supplementary texts.

You may have noticed that the children have been bringing home two reading quizzes each week. One is connected to the story that they have been reading that week. At the end of the quiz, you may have noticed that your child has highlighted words to begin their answering sentence. They also may have highlighted the text where they located an answer. Both of these strategies should be used to complete their reading homework when appropriate.

The other quiz is called a “fresh read” meaning that your child is reading it for the first time. The same strategies outlined above should be used by your child to complete this task.

In addition, your child will complete a writing response to a question related to the story.

**Language-**

The students have been completing exercises called Daily Oral Language.

They use editing symbols to correct sentences for capital letters, punctuation, verb tense, pronoun choice, spelling, possessives, etc. The students take turns modeling the sentences and using the vocabulary appropriate to their sentence.

The students have been working on recognizing and identifying different types of sentences. They should be able to identify sentences as declarative (statement), interrogative (question), imperative (command) and exclamatory.

We have also been working on identifying the subject and predicate of the sentence. The students need to practice using these words at home as well as at school to help them to make it part of their vocabulary.

Subjects contain the who or what of a sentence (usually a noun or pronoun).

Predicates explain what something is, has or does (often begins with a verb).

The children are practicing developing their sentences and making them more interesting by tell when, where, and why. We are practicing this orally as well as when they write.

At home try to have them tell you what they want to write before they write it. They can often expand their sentences if they hear it first. This is also a good strategy to use when your child has to write a story or paragraph. Have them tell you the story first. This gives them a chance to try out different words, revise their sequence, and get feedback right away. Your response will often give them the confidence to try something they might perceive as “too hard”.

In class, your child has "discovered" a new constellation and is writing a paragraph to tell us all about it. We are also gathering information about our desert animal and its adaptations to go with the diorama they are creating at home.

If time permits this month, we will be working on a Halloween version of the children's story, *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you see?*

### **Math-**

Although the students have completed the chapter on graphing and number patterns, we will continue to practice these skills throughout the year. Some students continue to have difficulty identifying bar graphs, pictographs and Venn diagrams.

Currently, we are practicing addition and subtraction facts and patterns. Once again, vocabulary is important. When working with your child at home please reinforce the following words:

#### **Addition-**

Addends- the numbers being joined or grouped together

Sum - the answer in addition

The words join, together, combine, altogether, in all and total are words that cue students to add.

Turn around facts- In addition the order of the addends does not matter.

$$5+2=2+5$$

#### **Subtraction-**

Minuend- the largest number, the whole

Subtrahend- the number being subtracted

Difference- the answer in subtraction

Many children think of subtraction as Take Away. But they need to also recognize that subtraction can also be:

Comparing- How many more apples are on the graph than oranges ?

It is also used to determine the number needed in a group. For example, if I have 3 apples, how many more do I need to have 5 apples? (part to whole)

**More** is not a word that always means addition.

Using this vocabulary at home will help your child become stronger at problem solving.

The children have begun taking Mad Minute quizzes. I am already seeing some improvement in addition, so please keep practicing! Soon the students will take an orally given quiz on facts which will be assigned on the homework sheet. They are asked to write only the sum or difference for a problem. Problems are not repeated and they are given rapidly. In second grade the goal is mastery of addition and subtraction facts. While counting on, doubles plus one etc. are good strategies; ultimately we want the students to *know* these facts.

**Character Education- RESPONSIBILITY** is the trait being emphasized this month. In class, this means continuing to demonstrate respect for others; completing classwork neatly, on time, and to the best of their ability; completing homework in the same manner and following the classroom procedures and expectations.

In class I often hear, “My mom forgot...”, “I couldn’t bring my homework because...” My response to the first is always, “Whose responsibility is *your* homework?” I understand that each family has different routines, schedules and even households. Perhaps you could work with your children to develop a plan for the days that homework, lunch money, notes, etc. could become an issue.

Being a Peacebuilder is also being emphasized on a daily basis. Students need to understand that peace building needs to become a habit. It is not something that they can do for one day and forget about the next. For example, if a student is helpful in class one day, but gets in an argument the next day, he or she is not being a peace builder.

**Reminder: Desert dioramas are due next Tuesday, October 13th. If you need a shoe box, I have some extras. Thanks to those parents who sent some in to share.**



**Reminders- PTO meeting-** Tues. Oct. 6th

Columbus Day- Monday, Oct, 12th

**Book orders-** Due Tuesday, Oct. 13th

**Release Day-** Thurs., Oct.15th

**Magical Masquerade-** Fri, Oct. 23rd

**Fall Celebration-** We will have a small celebration of fall on October 30th. If you would like to donate cookies or juice boxes please let me know.

**Congratulations** to the students who completed their reading strips during summer vacation. Our class had the longest chain! Dorothee and Dylan deserve extra congratulations. They read *many* books.

**Happy Birthday to:**

**Abby- September 30th**

**Daniel- October 3**



**Jenna- October 4**

**Jasmine- October 21**

**Final Notes:**

**Thank you** to those who have sent in items for our classroom wish list. Kleenex tends to go rapidly and is always needed. As the year progresses we will need white board markers (the thin ones), antibacterial wipes for desks, and hand sanitizer. Band aids are also helpful for paper cuts and scrapes.

Please have your child keep lunch money in a container of some kind. Loose money is a distraction in class and may be easily lost. Toys are not to be brought to class for the same reason.

**Thank you** for your cooperation and support. Please do not hesitate to call or write a note if you have any concerns. It really helps when I know what could be affecting your child.

Enjoy the beautiful fall weather!

*Mrs. Whitehead*