



October 19, 2009

Dear Parents,

Halloween is almost here! I would like to do some pumpkin math activities that incorporate measurement, estimation, and a little science too. I would greatly appreciate it if your child could bring in a small (5-6 inch circumference) pumpkin on October 29<sup>th</sup>. Because of our schedule I'm not sure whether we'll do the activity on Thursday or Friday yet. All pumpkins will be returned.

Also, in the October newsletter, I mentioned a small celebration of fall on October 30<sup>th</sup>. If anyone would like to send in a treat (cookies, popcorn, etc.), juice boxes (23 students), or some napkins or paper plates, please let me know.

Finally, on a slightly different topic, I wanted to let you know that many students are making great strides in Mad Minute addition facts. We had one student who scored a one hundred last week! We have started subtraction Mad Minutes which are proving to be quite challenging for most students. Please practice counting up and down with your child. While this is not the same as mastery, it does give them a strategy to help them solve problems more quickly.

We completed the reading portion of the Benchmark last week and we'll work on the writing this week. Your child is also completing the writing piece to accompany his desert diorama.

I have noticed that homework is being turned in late by many students. Once again, spelling and reading homework are due on Friday. All other homework is due the following day. *Many children are not reading the directions.* Please check to see that your child has actually completed the homework before he brings it to school.

The reading homework provides you with an opportunity to listen to your child read and to check his understanding. If your child is stuck on a word, have him use picture clues and go back to the beginning of the sentence and reread. What word with that beginning sound would make sense in the sentence? Hopefully the word will “pop out “ when he thinks about the meaning. Your child may need to be shown how to segment longer words into syllables in order to read them more fluently. Make sure that your child stops at the periods, question marks, etc. Encourage him to read with expression by thinking about how he’d feel if he were that character. Many children read words quite well, but a good reader must be able to remember and use what he has read. Have him retell the story in his own words. When possible ask him to relate it to his own life or other stories he has read.

Hopefully, the experience of reading with your child will be a positive experience for all of you.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Whitehead