



Grade 2 News October 2011

Dear Parents,

Just a few updates and reminders...

Reading- This month your child will be completing unit 1 in the Scott Foresman reading program. 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.

You may have noticed that the children have been bringing home different types of reading quizzes. 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 an "answering sentence". He also may have highlighted the text where he 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.

Small Group Reading Skills Instruction- As we discussed at Open House, students from all three second grade classes will be working in specific skills groups for one hour on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday mornings. We began last week. Students have

been placed into groups based on needs *at this time*. We will reevaluate students on a regular basis and make adjustments to groups and skills as needed. It is our hope that this structure will enable us to more effectively meet the needs of all students.

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 sentence 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".

Math-

Although the students have completed the chapter on graphing and number patterns, we will continue to practice these skills throughout the year.

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 a better problem solver.

The children have begun taking Mad Minute quizzes. 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.

Geometry-

Students should be able to identify *scalene, equilateral and isosceles triangles*. They should know the number of congruent sides, congruent angles and lines of symmetry for each. ***Watch for the study guide soon.***

Character Education- _EFFORT was the trait stressed for the month of September. All of the students are really working on this skill in class. They realize that we expect to see respect demonstrated daily.

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.

Reminders-

PTO Meeting- Wed., Oct 5th

No School- Fri., Oct. 7th

Columbus Day- Mon., Oct. 10th

Release Day- Thurs., Oct. 20st

Specialist Schedules- There seems to be some confusion regarding specialists schedules. On the October calendar that was sent home, each date has a capital letter from A to G. Our class schedule is as follows:

A- *Music*-Mrs. Hamric B and D-*Music*, Mrs Campoli C and F- *Art*, Mrs. Chapman

E and G- *Physical Education*, Ms. Silva *Technology*- Thursday, Mr. Perry

Library -Thursday- Thank you, Mrs. Pickup!

Ms. Silva has asked that students wear sneakers and appropriate clothing on gym days.

Homework- It was evident at Open House that there was some confusion regarding homework.

Monday's homework is due on Friday. The reasoning behind that is that students should be doing a little each day, rather than trying to cram it into one night. Time management at the second grade level.

All other homework is due the following day. (Tues. due Wed., etc.)

Students should also be studying math facts nightly. They might practice flashcards, do a few on-line drills or complete a Mad Minute sheet that they did not finish.

Students will also be bringing home a reading log. It is expected that they will read at least 10-15 minutes every night. It is their job to honestly keep a record of their reading activity on the log. *This will be considered part of the homework. Students should bring their logs back and forth to school every day.*

Conferences- Many of you signed up for November conferences at Open House. I will be sending reminders home in November. If you did not sign up, please contact me and I will let you know available times. The conference is a good opportunity to discuss your child's strengths as well as areas that might need some improvement.

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.

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.

Mrs. Whitehead