**First Graders are Fantastic!**



**Important Reminders -**

**Uniform:** As the weather is getting cooler, please make sure you write your child’s name on all red sweaters. If they happen to be misplaced, names inside clothing makes it easier for us to return clothing back to you. Also, there is a **Lost & Found** in the cafeteria by the school store, and one in the staff room by the first graders’ lockers. Please check the lost & found for missing items. Additionally, please make sure your child is wearing sneakers or rubber-based shoes. We go outside twice a day and students have PE daily. The proper shoes are imperative for safety reasons and eliminate distractions in the classroom.

**Library:** We have library on Wednesdays. Please help students remember to return their library books on Wednesday so they may check out new books.

**Family Fridays:** Please feel free to pop in on Friday mornings from 8am to 8:10am. We always welcome families into the classroom, however if you wish to speak one-to-one with us, please schedule a conference or a phone call since our main priority at this time is greeting all of the students to ensure a successful Friday.

**Important Dates –**

**Wednesday, November 6th:** First Grade Field Trip to the National Building Museum. The bus will pull out of the school parking lot at 9am and we should return around 12:30pm. Please save medium-sized cardboard boxes and we will be collecting them on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday (November 4, 5, and 6). **Please let me know if you would like to be a chaperone!**

**Wednesday, November 6th:** Math Meet-up from 7:30am to 8:10am in the Library. Come join Lauren Quinn to learn and practice Singapore Math problem solving strategies or games that we have been doing in first grade. Bring your child and get excited to come to this math adventure.

**Monday and Tuesday, November 11th and 12th:** Parent-Teacher conferences. Please call the front desk to schedule your conference.

**Week of November 11th:** Lower School Book Fair!

**Friday, November 22nd:** Free Dress Day.

**Tuesday, November 26th:** Join us for our second Authors Celebration from 9:30am to 10am.

**Wednesday, December 4th**: Make-up picture day and sibling picture day (an opportunity for a child to take a photo with any siblings at the school).

**Look at all we’ve learned! –**

**Pictures**

Now you can see a variety of pictures from our different lessons! Follow the link to our class’ Google Drive account to see your child in action!

<https://drive.google.com/folderview?id=0B3s_OUk45AJ0bjBxdDVlZXJrU2c&usp=sharing>

**Social Studies**

This week students had the ribbon-cutting ceremony for our neighborhoods! Students from both sections got together to present their neighborhoods to one another. We compared and contrasted the two neighborhoods and discussed how various neighborhoods have different features. For example, you may drive to a new neighborhood to go to Sweet Frog, or one of your favorite restaurants. Come see our neighborhoods in the 1st and 2nd grade hallway!

We are looking forward to next week finishing our community unit by discussing rural areas and going to the National Building Museum for our City by Design activity. Please remember to bring in boxes on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday as we will be using them to build our city. Our next social studies unit will be holidays. We will be asking families to come in for the Diversity Exchange to share an activity with the class about something that may make you and your family special. For example, you may share a game or craft or food from a holiday that your family celebrates. Please be on the lookout for more information to come about the Diversity Exchange.

**Science**

This week students from both sections came together to discuss pumpkins! The pumpkins outside campus have quickly decomposed. There are some fascinating things going on with the pumpkins. Students studied the pumpkins on the courtyard by the first grade classes and then we walked down towards the rope course. A few weeks ago, we brought pumpkins down there. The pumpkins by the ropes course look different than the pumpkins by our classrooms. Students discussed the differences and hypothesized why.

Over the weekend, in honor of changing our clocks, please feel free to talk to your children about why we are gaining an hour over the weekend.

**Reader’s Workshop**

First off, **THANK YOU** so much to all of those who have helped make books for our leveled library! You are greatly contributing to the success of our Readers Workshop! This week, students learned some strategies, such as getting their mouth ready, to help them tackle tricky words. Students go book shopping every week and the students reading stamina has improved greatly! They are moving up the reading levels! At conferences, I will discuss with you what level your child currently is. For second grade, students should be reading around a K/L level. Each level has specific features which provide as teaching points for the readers.

This week, students also continued to work on making connections, an aspect that helps with the comprehension piece of Readers Workshop. Sometimes, students work so hard on sounding out the words that the meaning of the story does not stick. Making text-to-text, text-to-self, text-to-world connections, and finding WOW pages help students understand the story.

At home, you can help support your child’s comprehension by asking open-ending questions such as the ones listed below.

* What would you do if you were that character?
* If you were to write a sequel or another book about this topic, what would you write about?
* What do you think is going to happen next?
* What is the big problem in the book? How would you solve it?
* Why do you think the author chose to end the book in this way?

**Writer’s Workshop**

This week was an exciting week for students in Writers Workshop. Students used their creative minds to write their very own spooky stories for Halloween! We also made haunted houses to go along with our spooky stories!

Our next authors’ celebration will be on Tuesday, November 26th. Until then, we will continue to live like authors. Currently, students are working on adding more details to their small moments in order to entice the reader to read more. We have been reading Ezra Jack Keats books to learn how great writes make their stories come to life by adding numerous details to the beginning, middle, and end. We discuss why we like certain books in the classroom and how those authors teach us quite a bit about what we can do in our own stories to help grab readers’ attention.

**Math**

This week in math we continued our work on addition. Students have been working on their math facts from 0 to 10. Rather than doing old-fashion drills with students, we created a game with dice where students roll the dice and then add that number to numbers 1 – 9. Students enjoyed playing with the dice. Dice games can make fabulous extra help at home as well. If you have 2 dice at home, you can play a game with both dice. Have students add the numbers together.

Students also played a card game this week similar to the traditional game war (however we did not refer to it as that in the classroom). The cards had addition facts on it, and students had to add the numbers to figure out who had the higher number. The addition facts varied so at times one child could have 5+2 and their partner could have 3+4. We want students to be realizing that one number is composed up of many numbers. For example, 7 is the same as 7 & 0, 6 & 1, 5 & 2, 4 & 3, 3 & 4, 2 & 5, 1 & 6, and 0 & 7.

Today, we taught students the counting on strategy for addition. Students take the largest number in an addition fact, place it in their head, and then count on with the smaller number. For example, for 6 plus 3, students would place 6 in their head and put up 3 fingers. They would then touch each finger to their chin as they count on and say “7, 8, 9 – the answer is 9!” Next week we will continue to work with students on the counting on strategy by playing some games.