

SMITH TIMES

Friday, January 23, 2015

Volume 23, Number 18

The Principal's Corner

Greetings!

The month of January is moving right along. Have you noticed the little bit of extra daylight in the afternoon hours? It feels great! It also feels good not to have all the ice we did at this same time last year.



Even though the daylight is slowly increasing, there are still many winter nights ahead of us. A wonderful time to engage in some evening reading--to

curl up with a good book. Please find included with this newsletter a "Reading Connection" section which offers some good ideas about how families can make this happen.

We have been so fortunate to have had distinguished consultants such as Bill Ferriter and Sandi Stanhope work with teacher teams recently. In the next few weeks, our grade-level teams of teachers will meet with colleagues across the district to review literacy units. The Wednesday afternoon Professional Learning Community (P.L.C.) teams are engaged in great work. I learn a lot as I "make the rounds" of such meetings. Your children's teachers are engaged in rich discussions based on the student data they review and use to form instruction. They work hard to make sure instruction is diversified for the divergent academic, physical, emotional, and social needs of all their students. One Wednesday afternoon meeting each month is devoted to professional development related to cultural competence, as we explore ways to identify and remove bias and prejudice from our lives and those of our children. These professional development

sessions are prepared by the district's Diversity and Equity Office and facilitated by the teachers who represent our school on the district Equity Council. Each month, Ms. Kate Guilmette, our School Counselor, and I attend meetings as our school's Designated Employees to make sure our school responds as it should to reports of harassment and bullying.



On a related topic, a total of 193 discipline referrals were filed at the office for the months of August through December of 2014, as compared to 264 filed

for these same months in 2013, a 27% decrease. We are working steadily and surely to make sure our expectations of safety, respect, and responsibility are clear to and consistent for all students in all settings. Thank you for your support of our high behavioral expectations, because adherence to them creates the learning environment we want and need for all our students.

Please plan to join us for breakfast next Friday morning (that's January 30th at 8:00 a.m. in the cafeteria.) We will hold a short meeting (called our Annual Title I Meeting) to review our school's Home/School Compact and Parent Involvement Policy. Your input is valued and appreciated on these and all topics pertaining to our school community.

Thanks for all you are doing—and will do—to make our school community one of safety, respect, and responsibility for all who come through our doors.

Calendar of Events

- 1/24:** Open Gym (10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.) -- Gym
- 1/30:** Community Connection Gathering/Annual Title I Meeting (8:00-9:00 a.m.) -- Cafeteria
- 1/31:** Open Gym (10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.) -- Gym
- 2/6:** Family Fun Night (6:00-8:00 p.m.) -- Gym
- 2/7:** Open Gym (10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.) -- Gym
- 2/9:** P.T.O. Meeting/Dinner (5:30-7:00 p.m.)
- 2/12:** School Performance of “The Hobbit”
-- Hunt School
- 2/13:** Evening Performance of “The Hobbit”
(7:00 p.m.) -- Hunt School
- 2/14:** Open Gym (10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.) -- Gym
- 2/14:** Evening Performance of “The Hobbit”
(7:00 p.m.) -- Hunt School
- 2/20:** 2nd Trimester Report Cards Distributed
- 2/23 – 3/3:** Winter Vacation
- 3/4:** School Resumes After Winter Vacation
- 3/9:** P.T.O. Meeting/Dinner (5:30-7:00 p.m.)
- 3/11:** Math Night (6:30-7:30 p.m.)
- 3/19:** Science Fair (6:30-7:30 p.m.)
- 3/26-3/27:** Parent/Teacher Conferences
- 4/13:** P.T.O. Meeting/Dinner (5:30-7:00 p.m.)
- 4/20 – 4/24:** Spring Vacation
- 5/11:** P.T.O. Meeting/Dinner (5:30-7:00 p.m.)
- 5/25:** Memorial Day Holiday
- 6/4:** Appreciation Assembly (8:30 a.m.)
- 6/5:** Field Day
- 6/5:** End of School Picnic (5:00-7:00 p.m.)
- 6/12:** Farewell Assembly (8:30 a.m.)
- 6/12:** Last Day of School for Students
(11:30 a.m. dismissal)

News from Around the School



Have you seen the wonderful work displayed on the walls of our school recently? If not, come check it out. You'll see personal narratives, our dreams (based on those of Dr. Martin Luther King's famous speech), writing based on the theme, "Everybody Belongs," and artistic displays demonstrating symmetry and actual and implied texture.

Students in Mrs. Nicole Bahrenburg's and Mrs. Kelly Mancuso's Grade 3 classes recently studied and wrote about animals. They read their reports to several parents and guardians who recently visited these classes for their presentations.

Family Fun Night-Valentine's Day Dance

Friday: February 6th

Time: 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Entry fee: \$3 adults, \$2 child, \$8 max family

- food and drinks for sale ranging from \$.50-\$1 (lemonade, pizza, popcorn, and popsicles)

-Bake sale - donations only

-face painting, arts and crafts and temporary tattoos

-dancing (of course)



Art Work by C.P. Smith Students

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

C.P. Smith School
Thomas L. Fleury, Principal

Book Picks



Read-aloud favorites

■ *Bibbidi-Bobbidi-Boo!*

When a little boy



came to your neighborhood on the back of a donkey? This is Jeanette Wittner's true story of a Colombian schoolteacher's reading library, which brought books to children in remote villages. (Also available in Spanish.)

■ *Dragons Love Tacos*



When a little boy discovers that dragons like to eat tacos, he decides to host a taco party for them. But if a fire-breathing dragon accidentally gets a bite of spicy salsa, look out! A silly story by Adam Ruess about a dragon party that turns into a disaster.

■ *Just a Second*

In just a second, a bumblebee flaps its wings 100 times and the earth travels 184 miles. Steve Jenkins's non-fiction book will help your child think about time in fascinating ways. She'll also discover different methods of measuring time.

■ *Bedtime Is Canceled*

Maggie and her brother write their parents an official-looking note: "Bedtime is canceled." Somehow, the note flies out the window, lands in a newspaper office, and ends up in a headline. Sure, bedtime really is canceled, and exhausted children quickly discover the importance

of sleep. A nice read-aloud by Cecé Bang.



Story time

Want to spend time with your youngster, build her reading skills, and help her learn to love books? You can do all three when you read aloud to her. Here are some suggestions.

Read regularly

Try to read to your child every day. We might aim for 10–15 minutes of bedtime reading for a peaceful end to the day. Bring along a book and read to her during a sibling's sports practice. Or curl up together with a book when you get home from work.

Take turns choosing books

Your youngster may want to hear old favorites again and again. Use your turn for new titles and variety (fiction, poetry).

Let her participate

Ask your child to turn the pages while you read. Also, she can finish sentences that rhyme or fill in words she knows.



Go slowly so she has time to understand the story and look at the illustrations. She'll enjoy read-aloud time more if she plays an active role.

Be playful

You can use different voices for different characters (a high, squeaky voice for a mouse or a deep, booming voice for a horse). Or substitute your youngster's name for the main character's name, and use family members' names for other characters. Note: You can't have to be an expert reader—your child will love it when you read aloud, because it's you.♥

Writing that makes sense

When a child first learns to write, his stories may not always make sense to others. Help his writing flow logically with these two ideas.

1. Let him read his stories to you. Ask questions to encourage him to add information ("What did you do with your friends at recess?") or to clean up a confusing part ("Who said, 'Let's go home'—you, or your brother?").

2. Even if he isn't writing sentences yet, he can tell you stories. He might describe the new class pet or something funny that happened at lunch. He'll practice putting events in a logical order and that can help when he puts his thoughts and ideas down on paper.♥



Read between the lines

Learning to infer, or “read between the lines,” is one key to good reading comprehension. Consider these tips for helping your youngster make inferences when he reads.

Describe the setting. Pick a book, and read a few sentences to your child (without him looking). Trace out words that name the setting. For example, “Sand stretched in all directions, each out of the sand seeped.” Can he infer where the story is set? If he isn’t sure, give him a hint. (“Where do you see lots of sand and seeps?”)



Look for lessons. Tables are great for reading between the lines. Read one by Acrop, and help your youngster figure out the lesson. For instance, “The tortoise and the Hare” teaches that even if you’re slow, you can win if you just keep going. How? (“I’m point out parts that he used to make his inference. (“The tortoise never stopped, and he took one good step after another.”)

Use prompts. Questions that start with “Why do you think . . .?” or “How do you know . . .?” can encourage your child to infer. You might ask why he thinks a character behaved the way he did or how he knows it’s going to snow. Together look for clues in the book that may help him answer the questions.♥

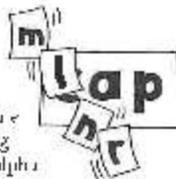
Fun with Words

Wordplay

Fun activities to build your child’s phonological awareness:

The fun activities to build your child’s phonological awareness:

- Choose a three-letter word, such as cap. Have your youngster substitute different beginning sounds from the alphabet to make new words. (Can, map, nap, zap, top, zap). How many can she think of?



- Pick a long word, and tell her to clap once as she says each syllable. For example, she would clap four times ma-ma-ri-ka.

- Ask your child to say a word without the first sound. Example: “Can you say sit without the s?” (Answer: it)

- Think of a word, and give your youngster a “sound” clue or figure it out. For instance, “I’m thinking of a word for something that you chew. The word has an oh sound in the middle.” (Answer: Gum)♥

OUR PURPOSE

To provide long-term, high-quality reading to promote the child's reading, writing, and language skills.
 Encouraged by The National Reading Foundation
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All kinds of words

A large vocabulary can turn your child into a better reader and writer. Try these wordplay ways to help her learn new words.

Keep your ears open. When you and your youngster go places, point out words that people use. Maybe a waiter describes an entry on the menu, talks about a movie. Encourage your child to figure out what they mean by the way they’re used.

Go beyond nouns. Help your youngster add verbs and adjectives to her vocabulary. Sports and games offer opportunities to use action words. Let your child hear you comment on the wildball car races of the runner who sprints. When she sends thank-you notes or greeting cards, suggest descriptive words (a polite, delicious, a fantastic, funny).♥



Parent to Parent

Build, read, and write!

My son James loves to play with blocks. At our parent teacher conference last month, his teacher suggested that we use blocks to help with extra reading and writing practice.

We found boxes a few things he could make, such as castles, skyscrapers, and more. We put a clip-art them with his house for inspiration. At first, I thought he’d only look at the pictures, but he has started painting

our blocks for he reads, like how musts kept enemies away from castles. I also encouraged James to write signs to go with his buildings. When he made an airport, for example, he wrote “Tickets,” “Bags,” and “Toys” on slips of paper and taped them to the blocks.

I’ve noticed that James’s buildings are more creative—and I’m happy that he’s reading and writing while he plays.♥



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