Class Newsletter November 14, 2014

Dear Friends and Families,

Can you believe we are already at the end of the first trimester? Report cards will go home with your student next week on Friday, November 21st. I am so proud of the progress your children have made since August! To celebrate all this great work we want to invite all the families in for a **Work Celebration on Friday, November 21st**, first thing in the morning.   You can just come in the classroom with your child at the bell, it should last about an hour. I am hoping some families could volunteer to bring in snacks to nibble on, see details below. An official invitation from your child went home yesterday. Hope you can make it!

Here’s a summary of what we have learned:

**Readers’ Workshop** – **Our learning target for reading is *I can make pictures in my mind to help me better***

***understand the text.*** Students are learning how to think “beyond the text.”  This includes making predictions, asking questions, and visualizing, or creating a picture in our heads based on the words we hear.  This week we learned that

authors use descriptive language to help us visualize, or “paint a picture in our heads.”  They *want* us to be able to

deeply understand their text, make connections to what we already know, generate questions that would lead to more information, and even add in our own details when we visualize.  This kind of inferential thinking helps young readers

keep our brains “wide awake” while we read.  Inferential thinking is based on what we know, what we think is “probably

true,” and grounded in evidence from the text.  It also prepares us for more complex “beyond the text” kind of

thinking, such as character analysis, author’s craft, and synthesis.

**Homework -** Thank you so much for all your support with reading at home!  Students come in excited to talk about having done their homework, and are doing a nice job remembering to bring in their bags to exchange their books.   **We ask students to read their books to you as many times as possible throughout the week, and bring them back at the end of the week to trade in for new ones.** This means they are reading you the same 4 books several times throughout the week. Repeated reading is so important in first grade!  Students need to practice reading accurately and fluently, and every time they re-read a book they gain confidence, build their sight-word recognition, and are able to have deeper conversations about their books with you.  *If you’d like additional homework you can go on a “book hunt” with your child, finding sight words in homework books and writing them on paper.  You can also make flash cards of our sight words to date.  All of our sight words to date are on our website* [*www.mrsgalushasfirstgrade.weebly.com*](http://www.mrsgalushasfirstgrade.weebly.com/)

**Integrated Studies –** **Our learning target in writing is *I can plan and write personal narratives where a characters feelings change.*** This week we've been working on wrapping up our unit on Personal Narrative Writing.  We completed an assessment in which students looked at pictures of a child who looked sad, and then another where she was with a dog and looked really happy.  I asked students to use these 2 pictures to create a "feelings change" story "on-demand."  On-demand writing helps prepare students with important test taking skills and apply what they've learned to a new task.  Students used the same graphic organizer they've been using, a story map, and then had to turn their story map into sentences.  I am looking for students to include all the story elements they've learned about: characters, setting, problem, steps to solve the problem, solution, and conclusion, and also to show how the character's feelings changed during the story.

**Math** – **Our current Learning Target is *I can use the equal sign flexibly.*** Our focus this week was to develop our addition fluency within 10. Students are working on more efficient strategies coupled with deep understanding to solve addition problems within 10. We worked with the strategies “*doubles*” and “*doubles +1*”, which encourages them to use facts they know to solve trickier equations. For example, knowing 4+4=8 can help you solve 4+5=\_\_ , using the doubles fact and adding one is a more efficient mental strategy than counting on. Students explored patterns on the addition chart within the context of familiar facts. Students looked for common addends and discussed how the addends affect the total in systematic ways. For example, “I see 3+2=5, 4+2=6, 5+2=7 and 6+2=8. Even though we are adding 2 each time and that stays the same, the totals are increasing by 1, because we’re adding a number that’s 1 more each time.”

**Word Work** – Our current *Fun*dations unit is: **suffixes –s to words with digraphs, glued sounds, and bonus letters** A suffix is an ending that can be added to a baseword. These words are plural nouns and singular verbs. The letter s sometimes sounds like /z/ when it is added to words as a suffix. These words include; **ships, shells, cans, falls, shuts**

Here are the sight words we practiced this week: **when, do, how, their, will**

Next week’s sight words are: **other, about, out, many, them**

Current sight words and *Fun*dation skills are listed on our website [www.mrsgalushasfirstgrade.weebly.com](http://www.mrsgalushasfirstgrade.weebly.com/)

**Some other logistics:**

* **Our first Work Celebration is next Friday, November 21st, first thing in the morning. If you would like to bring in something to share at our celebration please contact me,** **jgalusha@bsdvt.org** **This could be juice, coffee, muffins, fruit, bagels, etc. Thank you for your help with this.**
* **It’s important to arrive to school on time each day!**  The bell rings at 8:08am.
* **Trimester I ended today. Reports will come home in backpacks the following Friday, November 21st.**

Please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Jeannine E. Galusha

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