Class Newsletter November 21, 2014

Dear Friends and Families,

Today in your child’s backpack you will find their report card for the first trimester. I am so proud of all the growth they have made so far in first grade, thank you for your continued support. If you have any questions about report cards please contact me. Thank you all for coming today to celebrate your student’s hard work at school. They were so excited to show you their classroom and all the learning they have been doing since August.

Here’s a summary of what we have learned:

**Readers’ Workshop** – **Our learning target for reading is *I can find the “big idea” or “so what” of a***

***text to help me better understand.*** This week we learned about **synthesis**.  When we synthesize

information, we think about the “**big idea**” in the text, which we often call the “**so what**?”  We ask students

to think about, “What was **the point** of this text?  What lesson or message did the author want us to

learn?”  We also use the image of a funnel to think about putting all the information from the book into the

top, letting it mix around in our brain, and then generating our own new idea that comes out the bottom.

This helps students understand that synthesis is not a retelling of whathappened in the story; it requires

active, inferential, beyond the text thinking to *synthesize*.  Here are some of the texts we read/reviewed

this week, and the big ideas we came up with in first-grader language:

*Zero* by Karen Otoshi **Big Idea: D**on’t try to be someone that you are not. Believing in yourself and who you

are.

*The Only One Club* by Jane Naliboff;  **Big Idea:** We’re all unique and different.  We’re all the “only one” of something!

*One* by Karen Otoshi;  **Big Idea:** Stand up for friends and say “no” to bullies.  If we do it together it’s not

as scary.  Even bullies can be included and be nice.

*The Boy Who Cried Wolf* by B.G. Hennessy;  **Big Idea**: It’s important to tell the truth or people won’t ever

believe you.

*Ish* by Peter Reynolds;  **Big Idea:** Things don’t have to be perfect.  Being creative and having fun is

sometimes more important than getting things right.

**You can support this work at home by asking your child to synthesize the big idea, or the “so what?”**

**in books you read together at home.  Try the language, “What do you think the author wanted us to learn?”**

**Homework -** Thank you so much for all your support with reading at home!  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/Social Studies is *I can express my own family culture and learn to respect others’*** Students are learning that everyone has a family culture, and that everyone’s culture is different, valuable, and equally important.  We're working on expressing our unique family culture through poetry!  This week we learned how to use another planner, add descriptive details, and then turn our thoughts into poems.  Our Heritage Poems include some of the more visible aspects of

culture, such as our family structure, food we cook, and holiday traditions, as well as the less visible such as our rules and values at home, familiar smells and sayings, how we spend our leisure time, and things specific to just our family like special nicknames. We’re also learning about “cultural norms,” and the idea that if something is different than what we’re used to, it doesn’t mean it’s strange or funny, it’s just different, and normal for someone else.  We’re learning to recognize and respect the diverse cultures in our school community and beyond.

**Math** – **Our current Learning Target is *I can model my mathematics.*** This week first graders created and solved math story problems that focused on skip counting by 2s, 5s, and 10s. The theme of these problems was crabs and sea stars. The class was challenged to create a problem that lead their reader to use skip counting to solve. Here is what some of the students came up with; *“50 legs. How many crabs?” “2 crabs and 5 sea stars. How many legs and arms in all?” “10 crabs. How many eyes?”* Students used drawings, number trees, equations, and hundred charts to solve the problems. Students solved each other’s problems and recorded their thinking in ways that others could follow; through drawings, words and numbers. You can support your child at home by having them create math story problems that include skip counting by twos, fives, and tens.

**Word Work** – Our current *Fun*dations unit is: **Ending Sounds –ang, -ing, -ong, -ung** These words include; **ring, song, lung, hang, thing**

Here are the sight words we practiced this week: **other, about, out, many, them**

Next week’s sight words are: **Short week, Thanksgiving Break, No new words**

Words for the week of December 1st: **then, so, some, her, make**

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

**Some other logistics:**

* **Reports cards came home in backpacks today!**
* **School will be closed Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday November 26th, 27th, 28th for the holiday recess.**
* **There will be not Newsletter next week due to the short week for the holiday recess.**

**Have a great few days off!**

Please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Jeannine E. Galusha

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