



First Grade News

Finishing Strong

As you can see from the important dates listed at the right, we are quickly approaching the end of the year.

We are in the midst of third trimester literacy assessments and it is more important than ever make sure your child completes their nightly reading homework (20 minutes of reading). We want our first graders to finish the year as strongly as possible.

While we work on various units in math (see back) we ask that you continue to work with your child on ba-

sic math facts using the 10-frame and 20-frame flash cards we distributed at conferences. These help build fluency with addition/subtraction math facts when you practice regularly. Remember to ask your child questions like

- How many do you see?
- How many more to make 5 (or 10 or 20)?
- How many are missing?
- How many are left?
- Can you say a number sentence to match the card?

Your child will be better prepared for 2nd grade if they have a good under-

standing of their basic facts.

If you have lost your flash cards, please contact us and we will be happy to send another packet home.

We encourage your child's participation in our annual PTO-sponsored Summer Reading/Writing/Math Program. It helps provide a structure (with incentives) to keep your child working on their skills throughout the summer.

April/May News

Important Dates

- ☺ May 1—Volunteer Appreciation Tea
- ☺ May 7—Retirement Tea for Mrs. Remme and Mrs. Pulliam
- ☺ May 23—Field Trip to the Zoo
- ☺ May 26—Memorial Day NO SCHOOL
- ☺ May 29—LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

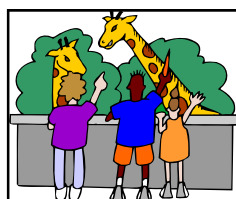
Save the Date

Our final field trip for the year will be on May 23rd.

This trip is the perfect wrap up for our animal classification unit in science.

We will be sending home a permission

slip and asking for parent volunteers. Our class will



be traveling by bus and a paper-bag lunch will be needed (you will be able to order a pre-made

lunch when you sign the permission slip).

Please note on the field trip form if you are willing to volunteer on the 23rd.

Literacy

Thanks for supporting our library and technology fundraiser during the Spell-A-Thon. Our kids did well, and while the fundraising was fun, we want to continue to work on reading and spelling those 1st grade no-excuse words throughout rest of the school year. We will be testing students on reading the 100 words we distributed at conferences during third trimester literacy assessments.

The spring writing assessment is also coming up. Your child has been working so hard all year in writing, and we are impressed with the "small mo-

ments" our first graders are able to plan, write, and revise. We are focusing on consistency in their writing, planning out their stories, adding juicy words to their details, and remembering conventions (capitalization, punctuation, etc.). At this point, they should also be spelling most of their no-excuse words correctly.

We will soon begin non-fiction writing



and continue to develop non-fiction reading strategies.

We want to thank you for helping your child memorize their monthly poetry. They had a lot of fun with it and developed oral language skills at the same time.

We will be studying poetry in May, so we will not send home a monthly poem.

Math

We have just completed a unit on geometry and fractions. This included a study of the connection between solid shapes (3-D) and plane shapes (flat). They also worked on dividing groups and shapes into halves, thirds, and fourths.

We also finished a short unit on data collection and graphing. Students had

a chance to survey each other and then document their results. It was an engaging way to learn the basics of data analysis.

We are currently studying measurement, which for first graders includes the use of non-standard unit measurement (using paperclips, popsicle sticks, cubes, etc.) to measure length,

volume/capacity, and weight. This helps students to build a more concrete understanding of measurement before we introduce standard measurement concepts (i.e. inches, feet, pounds, etc).

We will finish the year with a unit on economics that is integrated with social studies.

Science and Social Studies

In science we are finishing a fun and active unit on balance and motion, where students have been able to practice balancing shapes and items while learning about balancing points, counterweights, axis, rotation, rollers, and axles. They did a great job creating a mobile, and were mesmerized with the process of building and spinning tops. We will finish the unit

with rollers and wheels.

Students have already begun research in the library on animal classification and will continue their research in class through the end of the year.

We have begun our study of Asia and specifically Japan. We will be study-

ing the clothing, shelter, foods, and land forms of Japan.

Our final social studies unit will be Small Sense, which is a beginning unit on economics. For first graders, this means learning about basic wants and needs, opportunity costs, and the difference between goods and services.