

February-March 2015
Grade 1 Gifted and Talented Class 1-103



Learning To Read and Reading To Learn

During the month of March, we will continue to focus on nonfiction texts. Students will be reading a variety of nonfiction texts such as newspaper articles and biographies and magazines. Students continue to receive small group instruction during Guided Reading and are increasing their stamina during independent reading. Each week students shop for books from our classroom library. Students have been instructed to bring their books home every night, along with their reading folders. After reading the books they have selected, students should record the date, title and author on their reading logs and a reading response.

MATH

In math we have began Chapter 6. This chapter focuses on place value and counting up to 120. Students are also learning how to recognize patterns and relationships between numbers up to 120.

You can help your child by:

- Using everyday objects to allow your child to count and group a collection of objects.
- Have your child practice addition and subtraction problems using a number grid.
- Encouraging your child to construct numbers in multiple ways. For example, what are some ways that you can make 10? Answers might include $5+5$, $6+4$, $8+2$, etc. Have your child explain his or her thinking.
- Having your child create story problems to represent addition and subtraction of larger numbers. For example, "Ann had a box of 20 crayons. Then she gave five away, so she only had five Left."
- Encouraging your child to stick with it whenever a problem seems difficult. This will help your child see that it is important to persevere.



Fundations

In Fundations we will continue to blend sounds to spell words using word families. In addition to making words, we will also learn the 6 different syllable types. Students love learning how to distinguish the 6 different syllable patterns. Students are able to transfer what they are learning about spelling in Fundations to their writing. We also discuss and practice sentence structure and conventions like capitalization and punctuation. The learning that we do in Fundations helps students in their writing and in reading.

You can help your child by having them tap out the sounds they hear in words when doing homework. Do not spell the words for them! Let them practice dividing words into syllables using the rules we are learning in school. This is an important strategy that fosters independence. Students must learn to persevere through a task without giving up. Provide feedback that will encourage your child to take more risks while learning.



Children need a range of experiences to help them develop the social skills necessary for citizenship in the community and the world.

This interdisciplinary Social Studies unit integrates all content areas. This Common Core aligned curriculum encourages children to become critical thinkers, as they read across various genres. Students get to explore what it means to be a model citizen in the classroom and in the world. Last month our reading focus was global citizenship. Students learned how we are all connected to people beyond our own communities and we have a shared responsibility to protect and respect our world. Students read stories about children all over the world. As a culminating activity, students were treated to a wonderful multicultural celebration. On February 13, 2015, we celebrated the Chinese New Year. Special Thanks to Feng, one of our parents, for presenting a beautiful power point presentation. We learned so much that day. Everyone was so surprised to learn that the fortune cookies, we usually get at American Chinese Restaurants, are not so common in China. Also, students also took home amazing grab bags with authentic Asian goodies. You can help your child by engaging in conversations about current world events and why these issues affect everyone. Another great point of entry is to share stories from different cultures. During March, our class will be reading fairy tales from around the world.

These stories demonstrate how closely connected we are as a human race. Children enjoy comparing and contrasting characters from different versions of familiar stories like Little Red Riding Hood, Rapunzel and Cinderella. The public library has great collections of stories from around the world with common

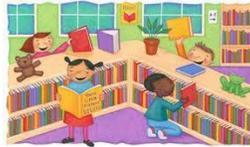
themes.

Writing

During this month we will be working on writing informative text. Using real mentor text, students are gaining a better understanding of the writing process. So far students have learned how to brainstorm ideas, how to plan their writing using graphic organizers and are presently working on their 1st drafts. During the next couple of weeks, we will continue cycling through the writing process. Students are encouraged to write about familiar topics like pets, or hobbies.

Students will produce a book based on their topic of choice. When students have completed their books, Parents and friends will be invited to our publishing party, at the end of March.

Library



First Grade Library News- For the month of March we are celebrating the author Dr. Seuss! He is a beloved author of so many books we know and enjoy. The students are learning to appreciate his rhymes and his fantastic imagination as they listen to read alouds each week.

The 1st graders are also learning to be responsible in selecting, borrowing, caring for and returning library books each week. At home, spend time reading and listening to your child read their library books! SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR WILL BE HELD THE WEEK OF MARCH 16-23 (classroom visits) and ON MARCH 19 during PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES!

MUSIC

First Grade: In first grade music, we learned about gospel music and folk songs of the Underground Railroad. Coming up in March, children will be learning about the xylophone and the musical alphabet (ABCDEFG). They are spelling 3-and-4-letter words using the musical alphabet and playing the words on the xylophone. At home, ask your child to compose a simple “melody” using only the letters of the musical alphabet and bring it into class to play. For example: Ms. Brigida’s Melody: A, C, F, G, E, F, G.

Science

1st Grade

In Science, we have been discussing and learning about the many different habitats of plants and animals in the world. Students recently completed a report on a habitat they had selected. Coming up in March students will be learning about properties of objects. Students will have the opportunity to observe how materials determine specific properties of the object (sinking/floatation, solubility, etc.) Students will also observe and examine different substances to determine their ability to mix with water.

You can help your child by talking about properties of objects and discussing what makes an object a solid, liquid or gas. PBS Kids (<http://www.PBSkids.org>) is a wonderful children’s website where you can explore more about the properties of matter.

GYM

1st Grade

First Grade will be playing keep up. Students will be using beach balls and working on catching, throwing and hitting. They will join a team and work together to try and keep the ball up in the air. Students will be counting out loud to see how many times they can keep up the ball before it hits the ground.

