

## Newsletter

As always, first grade is hard at work. The students are thrilled to be reading. We have just finished our unit on short vowels and will be beginning long vowels next week. They continue to use story maps and graphic organizers in summarizing and identifying story elements. First graders are excited to be learning about onomatopoeias and are using it their writing. We continue to write in our writing journals and have mastered writing sentences. We will begin our unit on writing short stories using four squares. In Math, the students are working hard at memorizing math addition facts and have begun taking minute test. We continue to work on our subtraction. If you would like to learn more about what we are learning in First Grade, please go to the Milford website.

As always, I encourage all parents to read to your child at least 20 minutes at night. Remember to ask your child questions and his/her opinion about the book. *Reading every night does make a world of a difference!*

## December

In the month of December the children were busy learning the many traditions of Christmas. Our journey began with the children learning about the seven continents. We looked at maps and globes. Then, the children took a closer look at Europe. We talked about how the continent is broken into many countries. I explained how each country has its own traditions and customs; especially when it comes to Christmas. The children experienced the traditions of Holland by celebrating Sinter Klaus Day on December 6<sup>th</sup>. We celebrated by putting our shoes outside the classroom and waited for Sinter Klaus to come and take the hay and carrots. In its place, he left us special treats. The students learned about St. Lucia's on December 11<sup>th</sup>. We had started the celebrations with the students learning about the holiday and about the country of Sweden. We learned about the location, the tradition clothing worn, foods eaten and events taking place. Then, the students ate traditional St. Lucia buns and hot chocolate. The students also learned Germany was another country. We made Gingerbread houses and completed coloring activities. The students had a wonderful time completing all the activities and became very excited for the holiday season.

### Author of the Month

The author of the month was Jan Brett. The students enjoyed many of the Jan Brett stories and books. They took notice of Jan Brett's detailed illustrations. They notice how each picture either gave a clue of upcoming events or told another story within itself. The students also learned about folktales and the tradition of passing them down. The students compared Jan Brett to Tomie DePaola. We talked about the differences in illustrations and the similarities in story plots.

The students are continuing to practice the skill of retelling stories and events in sequence order. This is a very difficult task for the children because they are decoding words and developing comprehension skills at the same time. The students are very enthusiastic to be reading and are developing a love for it.

## *Math*

Congratulations to the students made the *Ten Plus Club*. In order for a student to join this club, they need to answer thirty addition math facts up to ten in two minutes. After getting in the club, they are then challenged to get into the Super Ten Plus Club which is 30 problems in one minute. Congratulations again and keep studying!

In Math, the students are learning and developing the concept of subtraction. We are completing numerous activities in which we are using manipulatives.

# January

## Author of the Month

The author of the month is Jonathan London. In reading we are learning about onomatopoeias. We will be reading the many adventures of Froggy and his friends. We will learn how this author uses onomatopoeias in his writing to make a story more interesting.

## Reading

The students will continue to use recalling strategies, such as story elements, in retelling stories. They will also continue to practice independent reading and reading for enjoyment.

Students will begin to learn the difference between fiction and nonfiction by comparing different literature. They will learn how to read with a purpose and identify important information. They will continue to use story maps and organizational charts.

The students have finished the unit short vowels. We will soon begin the long vowel unit. Students will be working on long vowel a and i this month. They will complete various activities including picture sort, writing, and word making activities. I encourage all parents to work with their children on this new skill.

I strongly encourage for all parents to read to their children every for twenty minutes.

## Math

Students will be finishing up the unit on subtraction. They will begin the unit of counting and number comparison up to hundred. We will also be preparing for the hundred day of school activities.

## *Writing*

The students are excited about writing. The students have master writing sentences. Now, we will begin our journey on how to write short stories. The first step we will take is developing an idea and writing supporting sentences. The students will be using the four square graphic organizer. Literature was already sent home explaining the purpose and how to use it. Hopefully by next month, students will be able to write their first independent piece.

## *Science*

In science, the students' unit of study will be Earth Science. We are currently comparing and contrasting living and nonliving things. Students will complete various activities which they will learn about nonliving matter on Earth.

Also, in science, the students will be learning about Antarctica and penguins. We will learn about the physical attributes of a penguin, the physical environment in which they live and the many different types of penguins. This is quite an exciting unit and I hope the children are excited to learn about it.

## **Up-Coming Events for February**

*100<sup>th</sup> Day of School*

*Valentine's Day*

*President's Day*

*Dental Hygiene Month*