



Kindergarten News

Date: January 29, 2008

Classroom Happenings

Dear Parents,

I hope this letter finds everyone healthy and warm! I know that we have had our share of illnesses in the classroom, but I feel as though most of the children are moving past the sniffles, runny noses, and earaches!

We have had a very productive few weeks of school as the children continue to acquire literacy and math skills and knowledge and develop quality work habits. They are hard workers and are proud of their learning. It is very exciting to see their faces as they make connections and discoveries about reading, writing, and number sense.

In literacy the children continue penmanship of new letters and I am encouraging them to use lowercase letters in their names and everyday writing. In writing workshop the children continue to work on writing skills that meet their individual needs, such as listening for and writing initial sounds in words, stretching out the sounds in words to write more, using tools to assist them in writing (words around the room, word wall, alphabet chart), using lowercase letters, spaces and simple punctuation. Some are focusing on adding more details to their pictures or written message. My main goal is to excite and encourage the children to write; to get their ideas for stories down on the paper, try their best and move on. Sharing their writing with one another is a powerful motivator, as the children see, hear and piggyback their ideas from one another. We are also reading texts that focus on our priority kindergarten words and beginning reading skills such as pointing to the text, using pictures to help figure out unknown words and thinking about what makes sense when reading. Such great fun and learning in Kindergarten!

Special Events:

We will be having our **Valentine's Day** party on Thursday, February 14th. Parents are welcome to join us as we open our cards and enjoy a holiday snack. The party begins at 1:45 pm. Enclosed is a list of student and teacher names. Please include each child in the class if you choose to make or buy valentines. Thanks.

Reminders:

- *Thursday is gym day. Please have your child wear sneakers to school.
- *Friday is library day. Please return library books on or before Friday.
- *Today, when the bell rang for the beginning of our school day only eight children were present in the classroom. Please, please, please try to get to school on a timely basis. We are losing precious learning time! Thank you for your help.
- *I love teaching your children. I learn something new from them each day!

Books/Charts/Songs/Poems:

Books: Sadie and the Snowman; Stranger in the Woods; Chrysanthemum; Houses; The Snowy Day; Snow!; The Mitten Tree; My Favorite Time of Year; Hop on Pop; Bug in a Rug; Geraldine's Big Snow; The Winter Hedgehog

Songs: The Snowman; Good Morning Children; Silly Sound Songs

Charts: Winter; The Chubby Little Snowman; Red, White, and Green

Chants: Jump in With Your Partner

Math Projects/Activities:

Our mathematics unit is called **Collecting, Counting, and Measuring**. We have been exploring numbers with a variety of hands-on activities and lessons. The children made counting books with numeral and picture representations of the quantities on each page. They counted and compared handfuls of cubes and other small objects and made pictures and tallies to represent the number of objects counted. Last week and this week the children measured and compared the length of various objects to a tower of ten cubes. They are learning to use "the language of math" as they describe their ideas and share their learning. This week the children will also play a Compare game (similar to War), practice numeral writing, and practice putting numeral cards in sequential order. Through these experiences, the children are developing a meaningful sense of numbers, building their knowledge of the sequence and patterns of numbers, and are learning to recognize the amount each number represents.

Home/School Connections:

*New word wall words: look, like, see, to, an, we, and the color words (other words introduced – I, me, my, mom, dad, the, a, on, no, it, can)

For a fun way to practice the words, make two cards of each word. Play memory with the cards. If your child turns over two words that match, he or she must first read them before adding the words to his or her pile.

*Thank you for doing the inventory counting activity at home. The children did a terrific job. I hope you had some fun, too!

*Try measuring using a single object as a guide (a ruler works fine too!). For instance, use a wooden spoon and help your child find objects in the house that are shorter than, longer than, or about equal in length to the spoon. Try this with various objects as measurement tools. Measure your hands and feet against one another and use math terms to describe what you discover. Be creative and have fun!

Enjoy the rest of your week!
Karen Williamson