

September-October Newsletter 2019

Class 1-210

This month the first grade newsletter will share information about reading: how it is taught at PS 166 and what you can do at home to support your child’s growth. Reading is one of the most important aspects of an elementary education, as the skills and expertise acquired now will enable the children to do well in all the content areas as they progress through school.

 At PS 166, we follow the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP) program for reading. This incorporates the workshop model and balanced literacy. The workshop model includes a mini-lesson and modeling by the teacher, an opportunity for the children to practice the skill on the rug, and then independent practice at their seats. Finally, we end by sharing what we learned that day. Balanced literacy enables the children to experience different ways to read; for example, shared reading, partner reading, independent reading, and guided reading. The first grade units for reading are: Unit One-Readers Build Good Habits, Unit Two-Word Detectives Use All They Know to Solve Words, Unit Three-Learning About the World by Reading Nonfiction, Unit Four-Readers Get to Know the Characters in Books, Unit Five-Readers Have Big Jobs to Do: Fluency, Phonics, and Comprehension, Unit Six- Meeting Characters and Learning Lessons: A Study of Story Elements. Unit Seven- Reading Non-Fiction Cover to Cover: Non-fiction Book Clubs.

 While on-going assessment occurs daily through observation and conferencing with children, we use the Teachers College Benchmark Assessment System three to four times a year to track a child’s year long growth in reading. Teachers listen to the children read aloud and assess their fluency. For example, does the child read in chunks or phrases or does she read word for word? Does the child stop or pause for punctuation? Teachers also keep track of the accuracy. This means noting any changes in the text made by the child, and if the change affects the meaning or understanding of the text. Finally, the child is asked comprehension questions, both explicit and implicit. All three areas are evaluated to determine if the reading level is independent, instructional, or frustration. Children should never read at their frustration level; they can read at their instructional level with an adult who supervises.

 Our focus in reading for September and October is on the joy of reading. We would like the children to read a variety of genres to identify what they like about each type of writing. As described above, balanced literacy includes different ways to experience reading. Feel free to incorporate them into the 15-20 minutes the children read every night at home. You can read aloud to your child, since listening comprehension is higher than reading comprehension. You can have your child read aloud to you or a younger sibling to practice accuracy and fluency. Often choosing a familiar book gives a child confidence when reading aloud. Parents can also sit down with a good book and make that 20 minutes family reading time, rather than “homework.”

 Parents can also ask their child to discuss what he/she has read. Examples of questions include: What is…? Where is…? Who were the main characters? Why did …? How would you describe…? How did \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_happen? Hope this helps.

**Thank you** very much for your generous donations to our classroom! It is so helpful to be able to start the year with everything we need. We had a great first month! Much of our time was spent getting to know the learning environment and building relationships with members of our classroom community.

**In Math**, our Morning Meeting Routines were introduced. We discussed the daily schedule, taking attendance, and the calendar. We discussed, “What is Math?”. Children graphed their birthdays onto a chart and we tallied how we get to school in the morning. We also explored our math tools that we will be using throughout the year. We practiced daily routines on wipe boards. We also started our Math Notebook. We are working on the number model, number bond, strategy used, explanation, and a check using a 2nd strategy. Organization is extremely important in showing our work. We have continued the assessment program for early childhood mathematics skills and knowledge. (Also known as ECAM) Each child will be assessed individually. These are being done. This allows me to create centers, where students work with partners and are involved in a specific activity to help them progress to the next level. We use Rotations for class instruction. Rotations include meeting with the teacher, independent work, and center work.

Unit 1: Addition and Subtraction with 10 with fluency.

1.OA.C.5 Relate counting to addition and subtraction (e.g. by counting on 2 to add 2)

1.OA.C.6 Add and subtract with 20, demonstrating fluency for addition and subtraction with 10.

1.OA.A.1 Use addition and subtraction within 20 to solve a one and two step word problem.

**In Reading,** We charted and practiced our Reading Workshop routines…. Taking care of books, selecting books, choosing a reading spot, using a “1 inch voice” and sitting in a “quiet bubble. We also discussed what a “Just Right Book” is: Can you retell the story, same print, same size print, same amount of words on a page, could be same series of a book. We also charted our own reading box sheet. We told who we read with, where we read, our favorite book and how it makes us feel (Our Life as a Reader) Reading assessments are now finished. Reading groups and Reading Partners have been established. Books have started to go home with their reading goals. The students are off to a great start. Please make sure to return the book baggies every day so your child can book borrow. Unit 1: Building Good Reading Habits

This first unit reminds readers of their good habits that students have already established. It also holds them accountable for transferring all they have already learned. Students will preview, check, retell, read with fluency, set goals, and work on strategies to help solve hard words.

In Writing, Unit 1: Small Moments: Writing with Focus, Detail and Dialogue.

During Writing Workshop, we have been writing stories about small moments in our lives. This is known as Narrative Writing. These stories have been about vacations, weekend and afterschool activities, school friends and more. When the children need help choosing a topic, they refer to their Writer’s Heart. These are taped to the front of their writing folder. It contains words and pictures that depict what each child enjoys. The children will be using different types of writing paper to create their stories. Some of our strategies are telling stories in sequence and writing across three pages. Students will build on their previous knowledge of the writing process as they work to plan, draft, revise and edit their small moment stories from their own lives. We also created a bulletin board of goals so the children can tell about what they want to learn in 1st grade. We have also created leaves for our tree with descriptive words representing fall. Our class also created Guess Who portraits.

**In Word Study/Handwriting**, The children are held responsible for learning the spelling of 3 word wall words each week. These words are selected based on the children’s needs as writers (but may increase your child’s repertoire as a reader as well). They are introduced in school and are practiced at home throughout the week**.** A cumulative list of these words can be found at the front of our classroom and is a reference tool for all of our writers. Word Wall can be found on our website. Please keep the list in your child’s reading spot. We have started to review how to form the letters of the alphabet correctly. We will be using the program from Teacher’s College Phonics Word Study.

**In Social Studies**, our class created our class rules together and all signed an agreement to follow those rules. We are also looking at the Charter that our classroom put together to handle our feelings and emotions. We talked about our classroom as being a community and how we can work together to keep it a safe and friendly place where everyone can learn. The children have begun their jobs in the classroom. Each week their jobs will change. The first few months of school we will be studying family. We created All About Puppets. We will be defining what a family is and learning about different kinds of families that exist in all communities. We charted how many people in our family and roles that we have in our households. We will be learning about different roles in our family, and how respect, customs, cultures, rules, and our community are important and how they shape who we are.

**In Science**, our first science unit is Plants and Animals. We will be starting our first unit in October. We will also be involved in gardening at “The Garden”

**Trips**, Trip form are due in by Sept. 30th. Doe is requiring trip sheets for every trip to be signed. In October we will expand our learning beyond the classroom. We are waiting to hear back from the Library.

**Monday, October 7 Library**

**Friday, October 25 Fire Museum**

**Student of the Week**, each week on Monday a child’s name will be picked. They will send to school information and photos about themselves and share them with the class on Fridays. The first month was Samuel S. and Max. It’s so much fun hearing about their interests.

We have been working on fire drills and bus safety. It is very important that all rules are followed. Please help remind your children.

Thank you for your patience during dismissal!!! Dismissal can be a stressful and chaotic time, in the beginning. As your children become more comfortable with the dismissal routines and I get to know you and your child’s care providers, it will become easier. Please be advised that your child’s safety is my main concern during this time. Also if you are changing bus or afterschool schedules the assistants try to stay on top of it. Please send a note on **regular** paper.

It is important for your child to stay properly hydrated throughout the day. Please send a re-sealable water bottle to school with your child daily. Please make sure that the bottle can close without leaking. Please no metal bottles.

**Scholastic Books: GXT7B** Please **try to use the on line website to order books**. If you need me to order books it would be my pleasure. But please make sure the check is **payable to Scholastic Books. I will then put in the order. Orders go in at the end of the month.**

**Reminders**

A newsletter will be put out every month at the end of the month. It will tell you all the wonderful things going on in our classroom.

 Thank you,

 Dana Moses