

1-DG Update

October 27, 2023

Reminders:

October 30: Please bring in one small pumpkin (about 4 pounds)

October 31: Halloween parade 8:45 a.m.

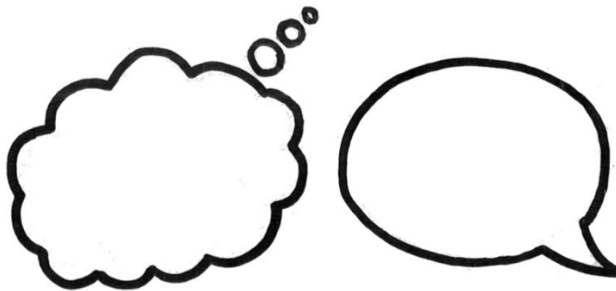
November 1 and 2 (half day Thursday): Parent/Teacher Conferences

November 10: No School - Veteran's Day

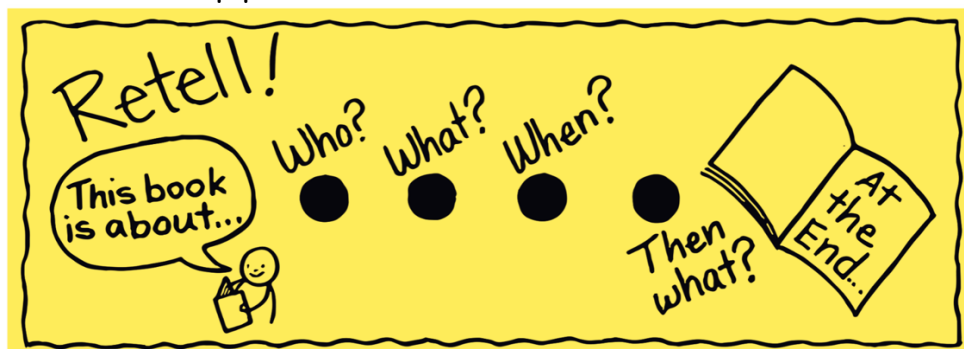
November 23-27: Thanksgiving Break

Highlights of our week

- This week we learned the -ip chunk. We recorded words such as *lip*, *triplets* and *friendship*.
- We learned the poem "Jack-o-Lantern."
- During our *Foundations* lessons, we learned that when a word with one short vowel ends with the letters *f*, *l*, *s*, (and sometimes *z*), we need to double that final consonant. Some examples are: *puff*, *fill*, *hiss*, and *buzz*. We call this double consonant a bonus letter and mark it with a star. We realize that this rule works most of the time, but the English language is tricky and there are always exceptions, such as the words *bus* and *yes*. We also built words with the -all glued sound. This week's trick words were: *you*, *your*, *I*, *they*, *said*.
- In reading workshop we finished our first unit focusing on building good reading habits. We practiced understanding a character's point of view to help us make inferences. Each first grader has a special "reading wand" which is a popsicle stick with a dialogue bubble on one side and a thinking cloud on the other. We used these wands to help us slow down and think about what characters might be thinking or saying in the books we are reading.



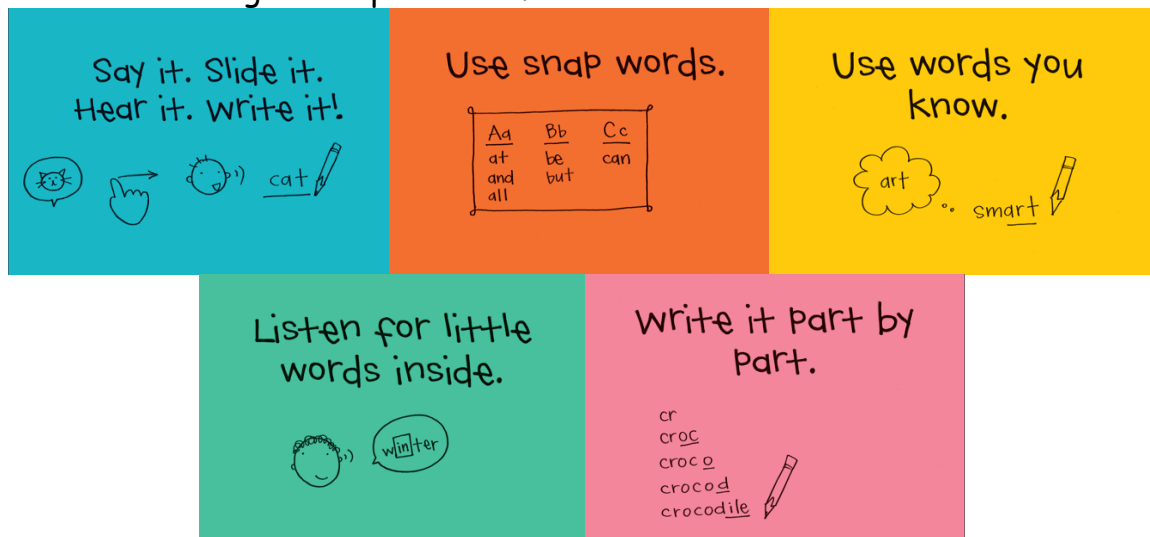
Then we worked on the very important (and difficult for first graders) skill of retelling the important details from the book, in sequence after reading. Each first grader received a copy of a retelling bookmark to help practice this skill.



Finally, we started a new unit called Word Detectives. The first graders received a top-secret letter from the SSDA (Super Secret Detective Agency). In order to become word detectives and receive their special badges, the first graders have to complete missions assigned by the SSDA. This week we accomplished *Mission #1: Word Detectives are always on the lookout. They notice when there's a problem and stop to solve it right away.*

-In writing workshop we learned how to really focus in on a small moment and tell exactly what happened bit by bit. We read the book Night of the Veggie Monster, by George McClements and realized the book was a great example of how to do this. This is an entire book outlining page by page how a young boy tries to avoid eating a single pea at dinnertime! We are working hard to zoom in and tell a small moment story. We also learned that adding the word "because" can help us add more details to our writing. Instead of "I was happy when my grandpa came over to my house." we worked on "I was happy when my grandpa came over to my house *because* I hadn't seen him in a very long time." I taught the first graders a song to help them remember how to spell this tricky word. It is sung to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb." Please ask your child to sing the song and spell the word "because" for you. We used the word "because" to write detailed sentences in our personal narrative stories.

We also worked on strategies to spell words.



-In math we focused on identify and sorting shapes by their attributes. We played the game *Guess My Rule*. We created shape posters where we sorted and labeled groups of shapes. We explored and sorted Power Polygons. Please ask your child what makes a triangle a triangle (three straight sides and three points or vertices) and what do we call shapes with four straight sides (quadrilaterals). We made triangles and quadrilaterals on dot paper and Geoboards (with elastics).

-In social studies we read the book Country Kid, City Kid, by Julie Cummins. This reinforced our learning about different types of communities. We started a class mural project featuring drawing of things you would find in rural, suburban and urban communities.

-This week's SEL *Second Step* lesson focused on applying all of the concepts we learned the past couple of weeks. In this lesson, with adult support, the students demonstrated practicing and paying attention- despite mistakes and distractions- to learn something new. The students practiced following step by step directions to draw the character Pepito (a character who made an appearance in a previous lesson). We practiced using helpful thoughts and kept trying. Each

student was asked to put their drawing of Pepito in the "Keep at Home" pocket of their Home/School folder to share with you.

-During our Morning Meeting time we are working on social emotional skills to improve our classroom learning environment and relationships between the children. This week we read the book A Bug and a Wish, by Karen Scheuer. The story taught the first graders how to stand up for themselves and clearly explain what is bothering them and what needs to be stopped or changed. We practiced with the use of sentence frames "It bugs me when _____, I wish _____." For example, *It bugs me when you loudly tap your pencil on the desk, I wish you would stop and work quietly.* I overheard, and in some cases prompted students to use the bug and wish strategy and I modeled it quite a few times myself in an effort to redirect behavior. In the coming weeks we will have many lessons on kindness, including others and bullying. Thank you for reinforcing and continuing these conversations at home.

-On Friday afternoon, Lisa Moore, science educator from Wellesley's Natural Resource Commission led the first graders on a Nature Walk around the Sprague grounds. They looked for signs of seasonal patterns of change and determined whether or not the area around Sprague is a good habitat for animals. See google folder for photos.

-This past week parent teacher conferences began. I look forward to meeting with more parents next week. Remember that Thursday is a half day for students!

-We had two birthday guest readers this week! On Wednesday, Nicole Katz read Search for a Giant Squid, by Amy Seto Forrester and Andy Chou Musser and on Friday, Deepak Bhandary read and donated The Dot, by Peter Reynolds. Thank you!

Note: As the winter holiday season quickly approaches, I would like to extend an invitation for parents to come in at 8:45 a.m. as special guest readers to read a picture book relating to their family's holiday traditions or celebrations. Please write me an e-mail or send a note in your child's Home/School folder letting me know dates that are good for you and what story you would like to share. Please also contact me if you would like to read a book in honor of your child's birthday or half-birthday. Thanks!

Halloween Information

-Sprague's Annual Halloween Parade will take place on Tuesday, October 31 around 8:45 a.m. I will attach (to an email) a parade route map with labels indicating where each class will meet after the parade for a group photo. Families are welcome to attend the parade and take a group photo at the end. First graders should come to the classroom at 8:30 a.m. (for attendance) dressed in whatever they plan to wear in the parade (costumes are optional). If your child does not want to march in the parade, an alternative activity will be offered here at school. Please let me know in advance if your child will not be participating in the parade and/or if your family does not celebrate Halloween. On the day of the parade, please send in a large bag clearly marked with your child's name. The bag must be big enough to hold your child's costume. We will be changing out of the costumes right after the parade, but please have your child wear clothes under the costume as we have limited bathroom/changing spaces. Thank you!

-Dara Gaul