

1-DG Update

October 6, 2023

Reminders:

October 9: No School - Indigenous Peoples Day

October 19: School Picture Day

October 25, 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 focused on the -ack chunk. We built words such as Jack, snack and crackers.

-We learned the poem "Mack the Lumberjack." We also read the book Paul Bunyan: My Story, by David L. Harrison because the first graders were very interested in learning about the famous fictional lumberjack!

-We also learned the poem "Fall."

-During *Foundations* lessons, the students learned how to mark words to identify the short vowel sound with a breve (ă) and circle buddy letters such as qu. The first graders mark words like this: păck. The ability to mark words reinforces each child's understanding of phonics and spelling patterns. We also practiced spelling and marking nonsense words. If a child can correctly spell a nonsense word, such as "quet" or "bix" he or she has internalized these spelling rules. We took an end of unit 2 assessment on Friday.

-In reading workshop, we were introduced to a stuffed animal lion named Rasheed. Many of our lessons will feature Rasheed and strategies to become better readers. This week we focused on digraphs (two consonants that make one sound, e.g., sh, ch, th). We read Rasheed's poem: "Crunch, Crunch." We also learned that readers sometimes pick up bad habits by mistake and one way to get stronger as a reader is to notice your bad habits and drop them. While reading the book The Big Hair Cut, by Sarah Mann, I modeled six bad habits that first grade readers demonstrate, "The Freeze;" "The Tell Me;" "The Mumble;" "The Blooper;" "The Giver Upper;" and "The Faker." We are working on replacing these bad habits with good habits! One good habit is to "Stop and Think." When we make an error, we need to ask ourselves: *Does it look right? Does it sound right? Does it make sense?* We practiced good habits with our reading partners.

-During read aloud we finished the second Dory book and started the third (Dory Fantasmagory: Dory Dory Black Sheep, by Abby Hanlon).

-In writing workshop we worked on our own personal narratives after planning out our stories with a story map. Thank you for helping your child brainstorm ideas as part of homework. I modeled how to tell and write a story. I reminded the students that my story is a true story from my life and that in this first writing unit, they are expected to also write true stories. My story focused on spending time with my grandparents when I was young. If your first grader starts looking for heart-shaped rocks and/or counting American flags whenever you drive somewhere, that will be because that is what I did with my grandparents!

-In math we focused on subtraction. We have been practicing counting backwards to help us with our subtraction work. If your child is struggling with counting backwards, please practice (in the car, while going for a walk, etc.) starting with 10, then 20 and finally 30. It is a first grade goal to be able to count backwards from 30. We learned the games *One or Two Less*, *Roll and Record Subtraction* and *Five-in-a-Row Subtraction*. We solved subtraction Story Problems. We are working on reading the problem carefully, visualizing what is happening in the story, determining if we need to add or subtract to solve the problem, writing an equation, solving the problem and showing our thinking with math tools, such as number lines, Tens Frames, a related problem, etc. When solving problems such as $7+2=$ or $8-1=$, many first graders immediately added the numbers together without looking at the symbols. We are working on slowing down and looking closely at the words that will help us correctly solve problems. Please reinforce this work at home and continue having your child use *Dreambox* on a regular basis.

-In social studies we read the book What is a Neighborhood?, by Felix James. We explored the Sprague neighborhood using GoogleEarth. For homework next week, the first graders are drawing the neighborhood around their home.

-In science we went outside! We selected a tree to observe all year. We drew pictures of our tree in our science journals. We wrote about what we noticed and what we wonder will happen to our tree this year. See photos in google folder. We also read the book MoonBear's Shadow, by Frank Asch to get excited about our new science unit on light and shadows!

-Our second *Second Step* (social emotional learning) lesson was about how everyone gets distracted and how to pay attention when you encounter distractions.

-The first graders enjoyed the Book Fair on Thursday!

-On Thursday afternoon we had a special birthday guest reader. Z Liu read The Stinky Giant, by Ellen Weiss and Mel Friedman. Thank you!

Have a great three-day weekend!

-Dara Gaul