

1-DG Update

November 17, 2023

Reminders:

November 22: Fun Run/Walk - Grade 1 at 8:40 a.m. - 9:10 a.m.

Donations: 1st Grade: *Tomato Paste or Canned Tuna*

November 23-27: Thanksgiving Break

November 27: Professional Day No School

Note: A Thanksgiving Break BINGO challenge and a Ziploc bag of books will be sent home next week. The BINGO sheet can be returned by Wednesday, November 29 for your child to receive a prize! Please let me know if your child will be missing any days of school before or after Thanksgiving break so I can plan accordingly. Thank you!

Highlights of our week

- This week we focused on short "o" and built words with the -ock chunk (sock, locket, padlock)
- We learned the poem "When the Leaves are on the Ground."
- In *Foundations* we focused on words with the glued sounds an and am. We took an end-of-unit assessment on Friday morning. We will begin unit 6 on Monday.
- The first graders were thrilled to finish their last mission from the Super Secret Detective Agency! Each first grader earned a special Word Detective badge that he or she wears when reading in the classroom (see photo in google folder). But our work is not over! We learned that Word Detectives Use Snap Words to read. Snap words are words that we see all the time in books and use all the time in our writing. When we see these words, we want to be able to read them quickly or in a snap! We worked on gathering and releasing small snap words (e.g. "in" inside of "winter") while reading. Once the students received their official word detective badges, they received a letter from the SSDA letting them know that they need to do some serious long vowel work in the coming weeks. They started by noticing the silent e at the end of some words. That silent e tells readers to try the long vowel sound in the word. We practiced identifying words with silent e while reading the book The Case of the Missing Cake. Each first grader brought a copy of this book home in their folders. Then the first graders received a letter from a little girl named Emmy asking for some help to read some tough words in a postcard from a friend in Australia. The first graders learned that they can solve new words by asking, "Does this look like a word I know?" They find the parts that look the same and use them to figure out the new word. The first graders found look-alike words (e.g. like/bike) in their reading.
- We worked on a new reading comprehension strategy focusing on making text-to-self connections. I reminded the students that "Reading is Thinking" and we are going to learn many strategies this year that will help us become better readers. Connections help us better understand how a character is feeling or an event that is happening in the story. When we have

a better understanding of a story, we are more likely to remember the story and be able to form opinions and discuss the story with others.

-We made text-to-self connections to the book The Relatives Came, by Cynthia Rylant. The first graders are now writing text-to-self connections in their Expert Books in their Book Notes. Please encourage your child to share connections he or she makes while reading with you at home.

-To help prepare us for an upcoming unit on informational (nonfiction) texts, we explored three different books about the same topic: Guinea Pigs. The three books are: Fluffy Meets the Dinosaurs, by Kate McMullan; Just One Guinea Pig, by Jenny Giles; and Guinea Pigs, by Clive Harper and Beverly Randell. After reading we chart evidence from each book that helps us determine whether the books are fiction, realistic fiction or informational. The first graders are getting very good at distinguishing the differences between each genre and finding evidence to back up their opinions.

-In math we solved *How Many of Each?* problems, challenging ourselves to find all of the combinations. We solved problems involving combinations of seven and nine "peas and carrots" and played games with missing parts such as *How Many Am I Hiding?* and *Counters in a Cup*.

-In science we explored how to make a surface bright using flashlights. Then we explored how to block light to make shadows. We read the book What Made This Shadow?, by Chloe Delafield and completed an activity matching light sources, blocking objects and shadows. Then we experimented with how different materials (e.g. cardboard, foam, foil, clear plastic, wax paper, etc.) block light.

-Our SEL lessons focused on cooperation and kindness. We read the book It's Mine!, by Leo Lionni and discussed why learning how to calmly work and play with others is so important. We watched a video of the book I Walk with Vanessa: A Book About a Simple Act of Kindness, by Kerascoet. The first graders were able to identify several acts of kindness in this story. We completed a *Second Step* lesson focusing on practicing kind acts. The whole class is working on filling a chart with 40 hearts, each representing a kind act I witnessed the first graders do for our community. So far, we have 10 hearts. When we reach our goal of 40, we will pick a class reward.

-Our school counselor (Karalyn Kickham) came in for the second *Second Step Bullying* lesson. This lesson focused on reporting bullying to a caring adult. I put a handout explaining the lessons, and activities to practice at home, in each child's Home/School folder.

-We attended an all-school assembly on Wednesday morning. The students were reminded that on Wednesday they can bring in tomato paste or canned tuna to donate!

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!

-Dara Gaul