

1-DG Update

December 15, 2023

Reminders:

December 18: Wrapped Secret Buddy Book Swap books due

December 18-22: Pledge of Allegiance on Morning Announcements

December 25-January 1: No School, Year End Vacation

January 15: No School - MLK day

January 26: Report Cards available

Highlights of our week

-We focused on the -ug chunk (bug, ugly, struggle).

-We learned the poem: *A Snug Bug*.

-In *Foundations* we started unit 7, which focuses on four new glued sounds: ang, ing, ong, ung. We also practiced adding a suffix s to base words with these glued sounds. We learned the new trick words why, by, my, try, put and two.

-In reading workshop, we started a new nonfiction unit called *Learning About the World*. In our first lesson we learned that curiosity is an essential reading skill. We learned about marine biologist Eugenie Clark who was curious as a child which led her to become a shark expert as an adult. We used the book Bees, by Laura Marsh to practice taking sneak peeks to spark our learning. Then we learned about archaeologist Bertha Parker who made some amazing discoveries because she looks closely. We learned that while reading it is important for us to slow down, pause of every page, look closely, name what we see, and think about all the interesting details. We practiced slowing down and zooming in on a photo in our Bees book.

Next, we learned that curious readers ask questions like: *Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?* When we keep reading, we look for answers. In addition to learning strategies to help us understand the nonfiction books we read, we realized that we still need to practice strategies to read longer words part by part. Finally, we learned how to identify the different features of nonfiction books (e.g. labels, diagrams, contents, maps, captions, photographs, etc.) while reading an interesting book about sharks. They practiced labeling these features in a Seesaw activity. The first graders read nonfiction texts during our Expert Book time this week and identified features in these texts.

-During writing workshop, the first graders were so excited to work on their nonfiction books! Each day they were disappointed when it was time to stop and clean up! This week we learned how to brainstorm all the ideas we have about a topic and record those ideas on a bubble map. We then used our bubble maps to organize information into categories which then became the headings for our books. Many students are writing about holidays for their first book.

-During read aloud we started a new book called A Toad for Tuesday, Russell E. Erickson.

-In math we traced our footprints and used square tiles and pennies to measure the area. We practiced good counting strategies such as touching and sliding each item you are counting, putting the items into groups of ten, and recounting to double-check our work. We also focused on some tricky concepts for first graders, including equivalent expressions (e.g. $5+2 = 3+4$) and

determining whether or not an equation was true or false. We are getting there, but will need more practice. Many first graders were confused when an equation was written like this: $10 = 9 + 1$. It was also tricky when the problem involved subtraction. This [virtual balance tool](#) was fun and helpful, check it out! The first graders loved playing the game *BUMP with Three Dice*.

- In science read the book Let's Test! and then we tested materials that let some light pass through. Our learning goal is: *I can use what I've learned to design scenery for my shadow puppet play that has bright, dark, and medium bright areas*. We used wax paper and tinted plastic to create medium bright shadows on our puppet show scenes.
- Our *Second Step* SEL lesson focused on noticing feelings. We learned that understanding how other people feel is important because it helps us get along. Our kindness lessons each morning focused on empathy. We discussed the books A Little Spot of Empathy: A Story About Understanding and Kindness, by Diane Alber; Stand in My Shoes: Kids Learning About Empathy, by Bob Soronson, Ph.D.; and Nerdy Birdy, by Aaron Reynolds and Matt Davies.
- On Wednesday we had two assemblies! The first was a zoom presentation by ballerina/scientist Merritt Moore and the second was the winter concert featuring the band, orchestra and fifth grade chorus.

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