

1-DG Update

September 15, 2023

Reminders:

September 20: Walk to School day

September 25: No School, Yom Kippur

October 2-6: Book Fair

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

I have created an online sign-up sheet for fall conferences. Please note that conferences are in person. Please let me know if you have a challenge that requires alternatives. It is important to me that I meet with everyone, but please keep in mind that I am also juggling teaching and parenting. Thank you! The link is on my website and here is the address:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C4EACAE2EA5F94-1dg5>

Highlights of our week:

- The short "a" sound was introduced this week. I will be using the visuals and key words from *Foundations* to help the first graders master the sounds of letters in addition to visuals of mouth placement while forming these sounds. The short "a" has a visual of an apple. After practicing the short "a" sound we built and read words with the -at chunk. In addition to adding a beginning sound to the chunk (such as: cat, mat and bat) we discovered that -at can be found at the beginning, middle or end of bigger words (such as: atlas, Saturday and splat). We recorded these words in our chunk books. Ask your child to write some words with this chunk. You will be surprised how many words your first grader can come up with!
- We learned the poem "Caterpillar, Caterpillar" by Susan Seitner. After illustrating this poem in their Poetry Journals, the students reread the poem and underlined all of the words containing the -at chunk.
- In *Foundations* we continued reviewing all of the lowercase letters; the sound each letter makes; and correct handwriting letter formation.
- During reading workshop we learned how readers use phonics to solve tough words. We drew the best places to read in our homes (this was on your child's desk at Back to School night). We also learned how to use the EPIC online reading program. Your child has access to EPIC during school hours. Sprague's literacy specialist, Sara Bartelloni, came in to introduce herself and read a book to the class.
- During read aloud, we began the chapter book Dory Fantasmagory, by Abby Hanlon.
- In social studies we learned about different types of communities. We also finalized our classroom community's rules. We focused on our family communities. We read the books My

family community, by Bobbie Kalman. We discussed how we can be helpful members of our family community. We focused on the vocabulary words: *member*, *roles* and *responsibilities*.

-We completed a "Work Habits Checklist" to help us think about how we can be good learners. Your child's checklist was on his or her desk at Back to School night. Please continue the conversation at home with your child about how he or she can work hard and meet goals this year.

-We did many SEL lessons during Morning Meeting this week. One lesson helped the students think about how to work together as a team. We did an activity where we learned about the importance of cooperative learning in our classroom community. While seated in a circle, in turns each child introduced him or herself and then tossed a ball of white yarn to another child while holding onto the end of the yarn. We continued until each child had been greeted and in the process we made a giant class "spider" web (see google folder for photos). We talked about how we are connected and how each student in 1-DG has to do his or her part to help make the class a success. If we don't all work together, listen carefully, and follow directions, then our classroom community would fall apart, just like how we needed to work together, listen carefully, and follow directions to build and maintain our spider web. To serve as a reminder of the importance of working together as a team, I will hang a small toy spider and a picture of our class web on the wall of our classroom. We can look at the spider and remember our great web and what we need to do to work well together. In another SEL lesson we focused on what we have in common, we read the book Chester's Way, by Kevin Henkes. The students learned that commonalities help them create friendships. While playing the "Stand Up/Sit Down" game we learned a lot about each other. Also, we read the book Listen, Buddy, by Helen Lester and reviewed Whole Body Listening (a Listening Larry sheet went home in your child's folder last week).

-In math we did *Quick Images Dots* and played the games *One or Two More* and *Compare Dots*. We worked in our number practice book and took an assessment where students had to draw 20 circles and find a way to prove that it was exactly 20. We reached the tenth day of school this week and it was very exciting to move a full Ten Frame over to the Tens place on our place value chart. We will be doing a lot of place value work this year. We also focused on subitizing. I teach subitizing by exposing students to number patterns that they can immediately recognize. I help train their brains to see organized groups of numbers. When students can successfully subitize, they are able to mentally compose (bring together) and decompose (break apart) numbers. They are able to quickly add numbers together without counting one by one. Please check out this video for examples of the kind of work we did this week with dots: Experiencing Subitizing: <http://www.stevewyborney.com/?p=430>

It was nice to see many parents at Back to School Night!
Thank you for your support!

-Dara Gaul