

Second Quarter Newsletter
First Grade
November 2, 2009

Dear Parents,

This is an overview of what we have planned for the second quarter.

Religion: In Unit 3, we will be giving thanks for all God's creations especially for his son, Jesus. We will learn about the birth of Jesus and we will find out about how Jesus is still with us. We'll discover how Jesus prayed and what he teaches us about forgiveness. During Advent, as we prepare for Christmas, our classes will be doing many special activities.

DWP: We will concentrate on developing our social skills which include greeting others, saying excuse me, please and thank you.

Reading: In our McGraw-Hill reading series, we will be working in Book 3, Stories to Tell. This level includes stories of both fact and fiction. They are tied together with the common theme that each one of us has a different story to tell. The vocabulary for each story will come home weekly with our *First Grade Fun* newsletter. Please have your child put these words on index cards and study them nightly. The skills we will be developing this quarter are: comprehension; story elements of characters and plot; using -ed for the past tense of verbs; using a diagram to gain information; and decoding word families such as -ack, -ing, -ink, -amp, -unch. We will introduce the story element of setting, blends such as *cr, tr, pr* and *cl*, diagrams of *ch* and *wh*, and contractions.

Phonics: In Unit 3, we will identify short vowel words; use short vowel concepts to decode words; and read and write short vowel words in context. Unit 4 focuses on how to discriminate between long and short vowel sounds; identify long vowel words; use long vowel words; use long vowel concepts to decode words; and read and write long vowel words in context.

Spelling: This quarter, we add spelling to the curriculum. Pretests will be on Mondays. Students will be given a list of 8 words. An additional 5 challenge words will also be part of the weekly test on Fridays. The weekly lists will be posted in *First Grade Fun*. Students are to learn the first eight words and as many of the challenge words as possible. Bonus points will be given for correctly spelled challenge words.

English: In order to reinforce simple sentence structure rules, we will begin using *Daily Oral Language* exercises. Each day, the teacher will write a sentence on the board which will contain numerous errors. Together, the children will find the errors in grammar, punctuation and capitalization. The teacher will make corrections found by the students using proofreading marks. The students will then rewrite the sentences correctly on their own.

Handwriting: We will continue practicing basic letter formation and concentrate on correct letter size and appropriate spacing. Please encourage neatness, and practice at home when you see reversals of numbers and letters.

Physical Education: Students will participate in gym using scooters for multiple exercises and teamwork, fitness stations, and relays. Students will end the quarter by learning volleyball skills, including bumping, setting and end with playing beach volleyball.

Health: This second quarter we will discuss personal hygiene issues with cleanliness such as washing our hands frequently, brushing our teeth regularly, and keeping our hair cleaned and combed. Also, we will learn about the importance of daily exercise, getting a good night's sleep, and eating nutritious meals and snacks. Near the end of the quarter, we will begin a unit on the study of *The Human Body*.

Social Studies: Students will learn that all people have the same basic needs for food, clothing, shelter, love, and care. They will also learn the difference between needs and wants and recognize that needs come first. We will discuss that we can pay for needs and wants by working and earning money. This unit will conclude with the story of The Little Red Hen showing that hard work produces rewards.

Math: We'll explore order of numbers to 100, number patterns, and continue with problem solving. Making graphs to show information and interpreting graphs to gain information will be studied. Addition and subtraction facts to 12 will be practiced. The quarter will end with our first graders learning more about geometric shapes.

Science: Our *Animal Unit* comes to an end with the study of animal body coverings and a discussion on how animals help people. Then it's on to physical science. We will learn how things move and identify force as a push or a pull. Students will be introduced to the six simple machines.

Art: For the second quarter the first graders are learning about artist Romare Bearden and collage. They will understand how his artwork is a reflection of his own life. They will be able to create their own collage influenced by the music they will hear in class. The first graders will learn to use movement in lines, shapes and colors in their artwork.

Music: During the second quarter, students will be able to:

- distinguish between fast and slow, high and low, quiet and loud sounds.
- demonstrate appropriate choice of dynamics when accompanying singers with classroom instruments.
- explore his/her voice in numerous ways (hum, sing, whisper, sound effects).
- sing alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music, including traditional holiday songs.
- sight sing using sol, mi, and la sol-fege syllables and hand signs.

-read, write and perform rhythm patterns using quarter notes, quarter rests, two-eighth note groupings and half notes.

Spanish: First graders will continue practicing numbers 11-20. We will review and learn new colors; use Spanish greetings; and be introduced to the days of the week. We will explore how Christmas is celebrated in Mexico. Finally, the children will be learning the Sign of the Cross in Spanish.

Computer Skills: Our focus will be on word processing and using the Internet. Students will learn how to type the HOME ROW Keys and then type a Header and a sentence. We'll discuss computer history, How to be Safe on line, the Internet, search engines and URLs (Uniform Resource Locators - the address or location of a web page). There will be a classroom integrated project which will include a virtual field trip to be coordinated with the classroom teacher, the information center and the computer lab. Technical tips that will be introduced include use of the ESCape key, and Minimize, Maximize & X to close a software program.

Library: The students will continue to develop listening and discussion skills; listen to stories by author/illustrator Jan Brett; and identify the title page, cover, spine and spine label of the book.

That's it! As you can see, it's going to be a busy quarter.

Sincerely,
Miss Brinkman, Mrs. Wiegand, and Mrs. Snyder