

NEWSLETTER



All About Reading

"According to research at Cambridge University, it doesn't matter in what order the letters in a word are, the only important thing is that the first and last letter be at the right place. The rest can be a total mess and you can still read it without much problem. This is because the human mind does not read every letter by itself, but the word as a whole."



We often put the emphasis on the process rather than the result. Many of us only remember learning to sound words out when we were young. This research proves that is **not** how we truly learn to read. Sounding words out is ONE strategy of many. It actually can make reading more difficult for children because it isn't how our brain processes information! Our brain reads in chunks and that is the way we want our children to learn.

This Week:

READING

"Perfect Pet"
Spelling Unit 1.5

MATH

Odd and Even.
Rounding numbers.

SCIENCE

Plant parts and their functions.
Classifying plants.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Maps and Globes.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Predicate of a sentence.
Cursive lower case letters m, n, o

Why emphasize reading?

Reading is the foundation of all that your child will learn in school, not just this year, but in all the grades to come. Students need strong reading skills in order to learn in all other school subjects, such as science, history, writing, and even math. The third grade Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test (FCAT) requires students to read stories that are about 350 words long and correctly answer questions about what they have read. It also requires them to be able to use charts, graphs, maps, and other materials to gather information to correctly answer questions.

Guided Reading

We are using the MacMillan/McGraw Hill Reading textbook. During Guided Reading, comprehension strategies are explicitly taught in teacher-directed lessons, and are applied as students read the selections in the reading textbook. During the reading of every selection, strategic reading is modeled by the teacher and applied by the students.

Self-Selected Reading

Students should spend at least 20 minutes every day in Self-Selected Reading. During this time, students read by themselves and to themselves. They choose books appropriate to their

reading level that they want to read from a wide variety of book available in the classroom, a book from home, or a book from the library. The purpose of Self-Selected Reading is to build fluency in reading, to allow students to read and enjoy text that is appropriate to their own reading level, and to build confidence in students as readers. Time spent reading materials at the "just right" level is important for reading growth.

Accelerated Reader

Every student participates in the Accelerated Reader program. Through this program, children read a variety of books on their reading level, which is established by taking the STAR Reading test. This year, prizes will be awarded based on individual student goals. Individual goals will be set each student based on their reading level. Of course, the greatest prize for your child is improved comprehension!

Reading Homework

Research has shown the importance of reading at home daily. Each student is **expected to read at home for at least 20 minutes a night** during the week. Your child can read independently, with you, or you may choose to read parts of the book to your child. The important part is to just READ!

Fluency

Fluency is the ability to read quickly, smoothly, and accurately. Fluent reading has been shown to increase comprehension. Fluent reading frees students to focus their mental energy on comprehension. The less mental energy used in trying to sound out the words, the more mental energy available to understand what is being read. Fluency is important to comprehension because the meaning of a written passage comes from understanding phrases, not individual words. Fluent reading is also expressive reading. Because reading with expression requires comprehension, children who try to read expressively must also try to comprehend. Emphasis is placed on reading with correct phrasing and expression—not flying through the passage like an auctioneer! In third grade, students should read about 80 to 100 correct words per minute on a third grade passage.

Grades

At the end of each weekly story, there will be a graded Selection Assessment with 10 multiple choice and written response questions. Reading tests are usually given every Friday. An average of all the Selection Assessments for the nine weeks will count 40% of the grade.

About every 5 weeks, we will have a Reading Unit Test consisting of about 20 multiple choice questions. Twice during the nine weeks, we administer a district-wide "Cold Read Assessment." An average of the unit test and the cold read assessments will count 50% of the grade.

Calendar

September 24, 2009

Globe making project. 1:00pm
Parents: please join us!!

October 1, 2009

Papa John's Night. Mention
Plew when you order, and the
school gets 20% of your
order!

October 7, 2009

Early Release Day.

October 24, 2009

Teacher Work Day. No
School.

