

NEWSLETTER



All About Math

This year, our class is using the Harcourt Mathematics textbook. The emphasis is on problem solving. Just like in reading, now that students have developed some proficiency in basic skills, we now start to apply those skills. Students become better problem solvers as they learn to apply their reading skills and the process of reasoning to solve problems.

We will go through text book **Chapters 1 through 7**. Then, usually around October, we will **skip to Chapter 15**. As we are working on **Chapters 15-28**, we will also begin **memorizing**

multiplication facts. The last month or two of school, we will concentrate on multiplication and division skills, and complete **Chapters 29 and 30**.

Pre-tests

For each math chapter, I will give a **pre-test to any student who is interested in trying**. Students who score a 90% or above on the pre-test will get an A for all of the assignments in the math chapter.

Instead of doing the regular class work, these students will be given an **alternate assignment of more difficult, problem-solving activities**. Most of the time, these assignments will be based on math concepts, but they may occasionally include enrichment projects in other subjects. These assignments will not be graded as part of the report card grade for math. However, students will still be held responsible for doing quality work. Also, any student who does not work quietly and independently will lose the privilege of doing independent work and will have to join the rest of the class in doing the regular chapter assignments.

Grades

Math grades are based on:

Continuum of Practice: 10% of the grade. Class work, workbook pages, and basic fact assessments.

Progress Monitoring: 40% of the grade. Quizzes, teacher made assessments.

Formative Assessment: 50% of the grade. Chapter tests. Because there are 30 chapters in our math textbook, chapter tests will occur frequently.

Calendar

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.

This Week:

READING

Unit Review.

Unit Test on Friday!

Spelling Unit 1.6

MATH

Compare and order numbers.

SCIENCE

Quiz on Wednesday!

Plant parts and their functions.

Classifying plants.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Landforms.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Unit Review.

Cursive lower case letters m, n, o



★ Basic Fact Practice

Your child will be expected to **memorize the basic addition and subtraction facts** as well as multiplication and division facts. **Three minute timed tests of 50 problems are given each week.** Students earn a C for 20 to 29 problems correct, a B for 30 to 49 problems correct, and an A for 40 or more problems correct.

Often, mastering the basic facts takes a few minutes of practice at home daily in addition to the practice we do in class.

This Friday, we will have a timed test on basic addition facts from 0+0 to 9+9.

Developing Automaticity With Basic Facts

Knowing math facts with automaticity is an important goal for all our students. Not knowing math facts slows down estimating, calculating, and problem solving. By the end of third grade, we expect students to know all their addition and subtraction facts to 20 and their multiplication facts to 10 as easily and fluently as they know their names.

How do students learn the facts?

While our goal is for students to provide answers to math facts with automaticity, we aim for more than just a quick recall of answers. Students must also develop a strong understanding of what that fact means and how it's related to other facts. Understanding relationships between facts contributes to automaticity.

Some children seem to learn their math facts with ease while others seem to struggle to recall answers. Children who seem to have an easier time are not simply those who can memorize better. They tend to be those who have a well-developed understanding of number relationships or a strong number sense. These children understand the operation and they see how individual facts are related to others. For example, consider the math fact 3×6 . Beyond being able to produce a correct result with automaticity, we want students to have mental models for the fact and to know how it is related to others. Students should recognize that 3×6 is $3+3+3+3+3$ and $6+6+6$, but they should also recognize that 3×6 can be represented as 3 rows of 6, or 6 groups of 3.

Having a network of number relationships like those shown helps students to learn the large number of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division facts more efficiently and, if necessary, works as a basis of strategies for reconstructing forgotten facts. For example, if a student forgets 3×6 , she or he might use a known fact like 3×3 . Knowing 3×3 is half of 3×6 the student would double 9 to get 18.

★ What Can We Do at Home?

Practicing facts at home is important and will definitely help your child in math class. Focusing on a few "need to learn facts" for short amounts of time can be helpful. Using flash cards or playing math games can help students learn their facts. There are also a variety of websites that have electronic versions of flash cards or have fact practice games which are appealing to some students.

Thanks!!

A great big **thank you** to all those parents and grandparents who were able to come help with our globe making project. Your helping hands were greatly appreciated!

Another great big **thank you** to Mrs. Mistretta and Mrs. O'Malley for spray painting all the globes--in the rain, and in the heat!!