



Fourth Grade October Newsletter

Wow! It's hard to believe that we've completed our first full month of school! Our routines are now well established and the students have really gotten into learning!!

Writing Workshop:

Have you heard the words "small moment story" or "seed vs watermelon"? We have become a true community of writers over the past month! Our focus has been on personal narratives based on people and places that matter to us and objects that spark a memory of something that happened to us! Some of the strategies we use as we write are doing a quick sketch to notice details, making a movie in our minds, zooming in on details to recall the most important part of the story, and rehearsing for our writing by storytelling! Our focus right now is NOT on spelling and mechanics although the expectation is that writers will be doing their best in these areas as well!

Reading:

Students are reading and responding to non-fiction and realistic fiction in Guided Reading groups. Read Aloud time continues to be a time to model and share reading strategies such as predicting, summarizing, and inferring. Some classes will be instituting the Independent Reading Program, Book It!, beginning October 1st! Students who reach the Independent Reading Goal by October 31st will be awarded a Pizza Hut certificate for a free one-topping Personal Pan Pizza. This program will continue until March 31st.

Word Study:

Students are becoming familiar with activities to reinforce the sorts they are working on each rotation. Students engage in sorting and resorting words, gluing and writing their sorts, speed sorts, word hunts, and blind sorts. Again, the goal is not memorization of words but applying the rules and patterns to student reading and writing.

Math

Many of the Math classes have completed Cluster One which had a focus on place value, addition, subtraction and estimation. Cluster Two focuses on data collection and display. Students will be reading and interpreting graphs, line plots, and frequency tables. Students will also identify the range, median, and mode for a set of data. They will be using grid coordinates to locate places on a map.

Social Studies

In Social Studies, students are finishing our Geography Unit. Students have studied physical and human made characteristics of Maryland's 3 Regions: Atlantic Coastal Region, Piedmont Region, and Appalachian Region. They have thought about which region would be the best place to locate a camp for children. Many students have written persuasive letters to Governor O' Malley to convince him to locate Camp Maryland in a particular region based on the physical features, human made features and plant and animal life located in that area. We have explored why Maryland is often referred to as "America in Miniature". We will soon begin our study on Maryland's Past beginning with the study of Native Americans who lived in the area before it became developed by Europeans.

Science

In Science, students recently completed the Water Quality unit. This unit is designed to be an environmental action investigation in which the students investigate different environmental issues around our school specifically focusing on water which affects our Chesapeake Bay. We analyzed water samples to test for turbidity, pH, and nutrient level. We also analyzed our school yard by assessing run-off as well as habitats. Based on the information that was gathered, the students then worked to determine an action project. We are now beginning our study of organisms, cells, and habitats.

Upcoming Events

October 1: Book It! Begins.

October 1: Information and permission slips go home for our November 18th Field Trip to The National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C.

October 1: Liberty Balloon Co. presents Up and Away!
9:30 a.m. - Outside inflation for entire student body
11:00-12:00 - Fourth grade in the Gym for Phase 2

October 12: First date for evening conferences from 4:05-8:05 p.m.
This first conference night is invitation only.
Please call the office to schedule a conference.
Upcoming conference dates are Oct. 27, Nov.11,
And Nov.19

October 22: A Friendship Adventure With Ronald McDonald—Red Ribbon Week Assembly 10:30-11:15 a.m. Gym

October 29: Book It! Slips due