

October 18, 2015

Dear Families,

It's been a busy and fun few weeks in our classroom! We began our DARE program last week with Officer Rooney and learned about listening to our "gut" and using our voices to keep safe. We look forward to three more DARE sessions this month. We also had a wonderful visit from the Cromwell Center last week and learned that "friends come with different abilities!" Read on to see what else we've been up to...

Reading

We have been increasing our reading stamina by reading daily in our reading workshop. Thank you for supporting the development of your child's reading habits at home by encouraging nightly reading of at least 15 minutes or more. A reminder that students should be logging each night. Many students are completing three or four chapter books a week! Way to go! When it comes to reading, research has found that quantity really does matter.

Important Dates:

Tues. 10/27: Maine Mapping Test

Fri. 10/30: Pumpkin Math 9:15-10:00
Halloween Party/Parade 1:45-2:45

Mon. 11/9: Town Hall Visit

Tues./Wed. 11/24 and 25: No School,
Student Led Conferences

Many of our reading lessons over the past two weeks have focused on strategies to help children read for meaning. Lessons have included:

- Good readers have reactions to text
- Good readers mark places in text that cause reactions
- We can talk and write more about our reactions
- Good readers visualize text, making mental movies as we read
- We can give ourselves a "comprehension check" by asking
 - Who was in this part?
 - Where are they?
 - What are they doing?
 - How does this fit with the rest of the book?



We are working on building reading partnerships. This is a buddy for your child to discuss their reading with each day. We will be learning how to have a conversation with our buddy about a book we've read. We're also enjoying recommending books to one another by writing a "Book Buzz" or doing a book talk.

Writing

As we continue with our personal narrative unit, we are building strategies to help us write better and longer stories. We have learned ways to generate ideas, how to tell our stories bit by bit, and how to use dialogue and description to spice up our writing. Some kids have been working on using paragraphs and transition words to organize their writing. We've also been using a writing checklist to help us set goals as writers and to help us make our writing the best it can be.

Math

We finished up our first math unit last week and will be moving on to Unit 2 on Monday. In our second unit children will make sense of one and two step number stories involving addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. There is an emphasis on using diagrams, arrays, pictures, words and number models to show thinking. Many of our class discussions will focus on the idea that problems can be solved more than one way. I will send home a Family Letter this week with more information about our second unit in math. I will also send home your child's corrected Unit 1 test sometime this week or early next week. I will ask you to review this test with your child, sign the cover sheet, and return the test to school. These will be included in your child's portfolio for third grade.

Social Studies

We have been working through our first Social Studies unit on mapping and geography. We've reviewed concepts of town, state, country, continent, and we made a "Me On the Map" book as well as a world map. On Friday we began making a map of our state and will be learning to locate many important places in Maine. Students will be quizzed on this information during the last week of October. I will send home information and study materials this week! In November we will plan to visit the York Town Hall to learn about the maps that our town makes and also to take a peek into the records that are kept in the town vault. Be looking for more information on this coming home soon.

Don't forget to sign up for your Fall Conference!



PUMPKIN MATH: We need 5 pumpkins to use for a fun Pumpkin Math Activity on October 30. We will scoop out your pumpkin and send it back home ready to carve. Please let me know if you're willing to donate a pumpkin of any size and also if you'd like to help out during the morning (9:15 to 10:00) of the 30th.

Thanks!