



## Mrs. Shea's 1<sup>st</sup> Grade December News



Dear Families,

Welcome to another month in our 1<sup>st</sup> grade classroom. Thank you for taking the time to attend your child's conference. I sure do appreciate all your support.

We will be having a holiday luncheon in our classroom on Friday, December 22nd. Please return the form at the end of this letter if you are willing to have our room coordinator call you for donations of food or paper products for the celebration.

We have a busy month ahead of us and I would like to share with you some of our classroom highlights.

### Reading Workshop



#### Word Detectives: LOOK CLOSELY

This new unit is all about teaching your child word-solving skills in a way that feels fun. They will learn to monitor their reading; developing efficient word-solving skills that consistently use meaning, language structure, and visual information. We call this a **TRIPLE CHECK!** (My reading looks right, sounds right, and makes sense) So if your child needs help: ASK THEM?

#### Be a Word Detective!

• Does the picture help? • What would make sense? • What would sound right? • What are the parts? • Is it a snap word? • Is it like a word you know? I have found the important thing here is to demonstrate how readers **use more than one strategy at once to tackle the hard words and tricky parts of books.** It is essential that your child have the mindset and the tools to tackle tricky words with vigor and independence.

As your child encounters tricky parts and works through them, it is important to teach them to **go back and reread** until their reading goes smoothly.

To help rally your child around the goal of reading more challenging books, you could borrow a metaphor that educator Kathy Collins once shared with her first graders: “Bike riding is different if you’re riding straight up hill (the bike gets wobbly and you need to get off), if you are riding downhill (when you ride without even pedaling) and if you are riding on level ground (pedal, pedal, pedal).” You might ask your child, “Do you ever feel like some books are uphill books? Exhausting, no-fun books that make your reading all wobbly?” Share with them that they should aim to read “Flat-road” books—ones that require just the right amount of work. This unit will help them deal with “bumps in the road” they encounter while reading by turning them into word detectives for whom no word is too hard to figure out.

The unit culminates with the opportunity to orchestrate all that they have learned to put their word-solving skills to the test and solve a mystery as a class.

Thanks again for taking part in our **Reading at Home (R.A.H.)**. We had our November Reading At Home Celebration on Monday, December 4th. During our luncheon celebration we shared our favorite books and authors.

### Writing Workshop



Our next unit of study is called: **Information Writing**. This is an important unit. If you think about it, most of the reading and writing that you and I do is nonfiction writing. In almost every subject area of the school curriculum, your child will be asked to write nonfiction. Our current unit is important for all these reasons, but most of all, it is important because the children will be given the chance to teach each other what they know. We will complete this unit, after the holiday break, by writing an **All-About Book**, complete with chapters. Each book will have a table of contents, and they will be learning how to organize their information into the appropriate chapters. Our **All-About Books** will be based on topics in which the child has personal expertise.

## Math

I am attaching our Home to School Connections for Chapter Seven of *Math in Focus*. We will soon be working on **Addition and Subtraction Facts to 20**. Please continue to have your child practice their math facts to 10 in order to help them meet with success throughout this chapter.

### December Events

Bucket Celebration: December 5th

Early release: December 6<sup>th</sup>

Classroom Holiday Luncheon Celebration: December 22nd

Thanks again for all your help and support,

Brenda Shea

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If you are willing to be contacted to send refreshments or paper goods for our December 22nd celebration please sign your name and telephone/email and return this letter to school with your child by December 15th.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone/email \_\_\_\_\_

