



Mrs. Shea's 1st Grade
September 2017



We have now completed the first few weeks of school. Besides getting acquainted with each other and beginning to develop a sense of community for learning, we have also begun our routine. The purpose of this newsletter is to inform you of what has been happening in our classroom as well as sharing this month's upcoming news.

BOOK ORDERS



Attached you will find Scholastic book orders. Please return all orders by **October 5th**.

IMPORTANT DATES:

Sept. 28th: Open House

Sept. 28th: Field Trip to Thomas Settlemyre Garden

Oct. 6th: No School-Teacher workshop

Oct. 9th: No School-Columbus Day

TEAM BUILDING



One of the important jobs of the first few weeks of school is for the children to make a classroom promise together. To make the promise the children had to first think about what they hoped to do and learn this year in school, then figure out the kind of expectations/rules that would help us all accomplish those hopes.

These expectations/rules are broad guidelines that we will work on following throughout the year. This will take practice. We expect mistakes and, as I shared with the children, it is not the mistake but how you learn to fix it that counts. You can support your child by reading over the attached "**Class Promise**" and talking about it with them.



Our Promise



We promise to take care of ourselves:

- Use whole body listening, follow directions the first time, and use my self-control

We promise to take care of each other:

- Be a Bucket Filler and Help each other

We promise to take care of our classroom:

- Put our tools away and keep our class tools looking like treasures.



Reading Workshop

We have just begun our Reading Workshop adventure! Reading Workshop is a way of structuring the reading block so every child is independently engaged in meaningful literacy tasks. These research based tasks are ones that will have the biggest impact on their reading achievement, as well as help foster children who love to read. The children receive explicit whole group instruction and then are given independent practice time to read their books while I provide focused, intense instruction to individuals and small groups of children.

We have been spending our first weeks working intensely on building our reading stamina and learning the behaviors of Reading Workshop. Our first unit of study is called **Readers Build Good Habits**. Please ask your child to share with you what it means to take a sneak peek at the beginning.

I am also spending time learning about your child's strengths and greatest needs as a reader in order to best plan for each child's instruction. Therefore I will be inviting parents into the classroom after we have accomplished this important work. Thank you in advance for your patience and understanding.

One thing you'll notice that may be a change for you is a direct decrease in the number of worksheets your child brings home. While worksheets keep children busy, they don't really result in the high level of learning I want for your child. Instead, your child will be taught to select "Good Fit Books" or books they can read, understand and are interested in, which they will read during Reading Workshop. They will be spending most of their time actually reading, which research supports as the number one way to improve reading. I anticipate the motivation and enjoyment of reading will skyrocket when this gift of choosing their own books is accompanied by extended practice and specific reading instruction for each individual child.

Thanks so much for all your support!

Brenda Shea

