



November 2008 News

From class K-220

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November 18th, 2008

Dear Parents and Guardians of class K-220,

Happy November! We have had a fun and eventful month. So far, we have been acting like scientists during writing workshop by observing and exploring seasonal objects. Reading workshop has us using our reading superpowers, as we have learned how to notice initial sounds of words and use picture clues to sound and stretch out unfamiliar words. We have been very busy, so let's do a breakdown of the curriculum, upcoming units, supply lists and logistics.

Quick-n-Easy Words

We have been adding "quick-n-easy" words to our word wall. The quick-n-easy words are also known as high frequency words. Each time we learn a new word, we snap it, clap it, spell it and skywrite it in the air. In addition, we learn the word in a poem and use it during interactive writing. The poem gets glued every Friday into the student's poetry notebook. Here is a list of the words we have covered thus far: *I, the, on, in, it, is, there, are, this, me, a.*

Math

We have been busy designing and learning all about patterns. As you have noticed in the homework, we are learning about sound patterns, movement patterns and shape patterns. We will continue working with patterns as well as positions. The children have learned how to identify an object based on its position. For example:



The car is on top, or over the bicycle.





The star is on top, or above the square. The square is in the middle. The circle is on the bottom, or below the square.

Therefore, the new math vocabulary terms we have learned include: ***above, on top, below, middle, bottom, under.***

Writing Workshop

We have launched a brand new unit in writing workshop this month. This month's topic is: Writers write by observing and exploring objects just like scientists. The children are working and writing as "scientists" where they each sort through a bucket of leaves, pine cones, seashells, branches or bark. As they look at and observe each of these objects, they are writing what they see, what they notice, and "zooming" in on their favorite part. It's amazing to see their writing growth in just one month! The students are beginning to write out full sentences, leaving space between words, beginning a sentence with a capital letter, and adding a period at the end!

Reading Workshop

For this unit in reading workshop, the students are reading familiar and repeated texts, such as "*Mrs. Wishy Washy, Mr. Dishy Washy, Quick as a Cricket, Brown Bear Brown Bear, I Went Walking, and Leo the Late Bloomer.*" These texts all have repeated simple words that the children are now sounding out. They were taught to use "all their reading superpowers to read the words as best they can." These superpowers include:

- Asking yourself as you read, "Does that make sense?"
- Asking yourself as you read, "Does it look right?"
- Using the picture as support to sound out words
- Using the initial/beginning letter to figure out the word

The book bins are also filled with "just right" books. These are books that the students are capable of reading. I am currently assessing the students reading level, and soon will have a better idea of the children's literacy

development. This way, I can find "just right" books for them - not too challenging and not too simple, but just right.

Foundations

The time has finally come! We are just about finished with the alphabet. We are introducing two more letters this week: *p*, *j*. We have learned the following letters so far: a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, k, l, m, n, o, p, r, s, t, u. The students have learned the letter-name-sounds to help support their literacy development.

I have attached a typical Foundations paper that includes the skyline, plane line, worm line, and grass line. As the new letters are introduced, the children learn where each letter begins. *We have only learned the lower case letters so far.* It is my goal once finished with this unit, to have the children able to recognize and identify all the letters and sounds of the alphabet as well as write the letters using the Foundations lines. We will then move on to learning all capital letters. This transition will happen within the next couple of weeks.

Homework

As you have noticed, homework began last week. I apologize for sending it in the Home Folder. I found it much easier to create Homework Folders instead. These Homework Folders will be given out on Monday and must be returned on Friday. The homework is intended to reteach and enrich the lessons that were taught throughout the week. It is not intended to "trick" the students (or the parents!). If you have any questions about the homework policy, the lessons itself, or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact me. I understand that sometimes the wording may be vague or it may require manipulatives that you may not have access to at home. I will do my best to make sure the homework is clear and concise.

Field trips

The children had a blast at the Queen's Farm museum field trip! I want to send a special thank you to all the parents that volunteered. The kids learned all about different farm animals, and were even able to take home a pumpkin. I look forward to taking more class trips! We also recently went on a quick trip the Long Island City Library. The kids were given their library cards. I send them home in the Home Folder. They are yours to keep. I will keep you posted when we will need them.

LEAP

The children have started a new program called LEAP. LEAP is a non-profit organization committed to improving the quality of public education through a hands-on, arts-based approach to teaching the academic curriculum. We have LEAP every Monday and Wednesday with a fantastic instructor, Miss Anne. So far, we have made Play-Doh and used cheerios to spell out letters and words. The kids love Miss Anne and look forward to her visits. I will also be out once a month to receive training and professional development from LEAP.

Other

Please remember to send your child with an extra set of clothing. If they have an accident, please send an extra set the next day. This way we can avoid any potential phone call homes to pick them up from school.

I encourage you to write the name of your child inside their sweaters. We have similar sweaters and shirts that get mixed up or lost. Please write their name so I can return a missing sweater to a child.

If you arrive late to school with your child, you must first go directly to the office. Please do not send them to class without a late pass. It is school policy.

Thanks again for all your help and support. I couldn't do it without you. **I look forward to another amazing month.**

Warmly,

Miss Rizzo



Friendly Reminders

- There will be a half day of school on Thursday November 20th, 2008. Children will be dismissed at 11:30. Regular bus schedule is provided.
- Parent-teacher conferences will be held on Thursday November 20th, 2008. The conferences will be held from 1-3 and 5-8:30. Many of you have already signed up. If the date does not work for you, please notify me immediately so we can reschedule.
- There is a possibility of a Thanksgiving Feast for class K-220. The tentative date is Wednesday November 26th, 2008. More details to follow.
- There is no school on 11/27/08 and 11/28/08
- Parent teacher conferences will last 10 minutes per family
- Have a Happy and safe Thanksgiving!



It is almost here...

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Thanksgiving is just around the corner! I have been notified by several parents asking if it would be possible to have a "Thanksgiving Feast" in our classroom. It would be held on Wednesday, November 26th. There is some planning that we should go over first: cooking food vs. bringing a snack.

Some parents would like to cook for the children. The food would include items such as rice, peas, beans, carrot cake and meat. I understand there are restrictions of several food groups. It would not be a problem to replace the meat with a different food.

Other parents would like to bring in a snack.

It is important that we know whether you would prefer to cook for the children, or bring in a snack. The reason for this is due to lunch plans and meals.

- If we decide to cook, the Thanksgiving Feast will happen in our classroom during lunch period (10:35-11:40) and the children will not receive lunch from the cafeteria that day.
- If we decide to bring in snack, the children will have the Thanksgiving Feast during snack time (2:00-2:20) and will need to receive lunch from the cafeteria.

Either way, it is important that I notify the kitchen so they are aware. Please fill out your preference below and return it at your earliest convenience. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me via your child's home folder. Thank you!

Yes, I wish to cook for the Thanksgiving Feast.

No, I wish to bring in a snack for the Thanksgiving Feast.

