



October 31, 2008

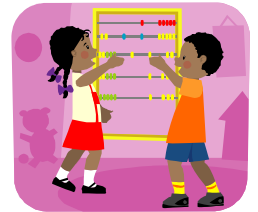
Happy and Safe Halloween!!!



It was a wonderful experience for me to meet with you this week at conferences. I have a better picture of the whole child when I see the family group they are growing up in. It is my understanding that we concur on our observations of your child's behavior and performance. There were few surprises.

Many have asked what they can do for their child at home to help them meet their academic potential. I offer these suggestions in reply.

- read to your child every single day
- give them plenty of books to look at, independent or buddy reading style
- visit the [local library](#) for an even better selection
- talk with them about everything they see in their world
- help to develop their vocabulary and understanding of other cultures. This week a student asked me what an Indian was as we read a book about Thanksgiving. Our own personal experiences brought us this information in other ways. Help your child by talking meaningfully with them in the supermarket, in the car, as you watch TV, and especially when they ask questions. You are their most important teacher. What are you teaching them?
- play letter and sound games
- help them to read their numbers and letters out of order
- have them practice counting objects accurately
- arrange play dates for them as often as possible, especially if their preschool experience has been limited
- limit screen time that includes TV, computers, and video games. I suggest 1 hour per day.
- get them outside for good, active, strength building play; they really need it and their bodies crave the movement
- get them to bed early even if it means they are getting up early
- feed them breakfast either at home or in the school cafeteria
- give them plenty of hugs, praise, reassurance, and positive feedback for their best efforts in everything they do, be that playing with siblings, making their bed, or solving a problem for themselves



I am including a homework sheet which you may be interested in using. You can add stickers for each job completed, each day. At the end of the week you can award a prize for getting an agreed upon and predetermined number of stickers. Feel free to create your own sheet or not use one at all.



Next week we will have no school on Tuesday. Be sure you get out to VOTE. You are setting an example of civic responsibility by doing so. The school staff will join many other schools in the region for professional development work on a number of topics. Kindergarten through grade 2 will once again focus on Math Investigations.

Have you visited the web page lately? Edublogs went through a number of upgrades in recent weeks and that put them out of commission a bit longer than they had planned. Things should run more smoothly now. I can offer a couple of tips to make your browsing easier. Update your browser to the latest version and update your Flash player. My experience has been that when I do these things, I have better luck both reading posts as well as creating posts. On the main page, there is a link for subscribing. If you add your email addy there, you will get an email notice with a link to the newest material. Please feel free to share the website with family members in other places. It would be a thrill for them to see your child in action with their friends. Comments are welcome as well. This month's poll question is about where you will celebrate Thanksgiving.



Here are a couple of links you might find helpful for working with your child.

- <http://www.starfall.com> used by reading specialists in our school
- <http://www.sesamestreet.org/home> offers many games suitable for young children
- http://www.paulysplayhouse.com/paulys_playhouse/game_page/game.html pick a game
- http://www.kidport.com/GradeK/Math/NumberSense/MathK_9.htm identifying a given number of things
- <http://www.chevroncars.com/games/connect-dots/> connect the dots to make cars
- <http://www.professorgarfield.org/Phonemics/chickenCoop.html> phoneme practice
- <http://www.internet4classrooms.com/month2month.htm> scroll down to the literacy section and try a few

I hope this provides enough food for thought and activities for you to start with. There are many programs available that can provide fun practice. The internet has loads of free materials that you can bookmark for your child to use independently. There's no need to purchase expensive software. Our focus in literacy is on sound awareness, sound matching, sound-letter connection, rhyming, and always comprehension of language. In math, we will continue counting practice up to 31, and we will begin pattern work.

Have a wonderful weekend with your hard working children. They deserve lots of fun and playtime this weekend.

Regards,

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