

Second Grade Newsletter

September/October 2010

In second grade the 2010-2011 school year is off to a wonderful start! The girls are learning about each other, their new teachers, and the expectations and routines in their new classroom environments. During the first several weeks of school the second graders have been focusing on the skills of cooperation, collaboration, and compassion in order to establish a productive, safe, and supportive learning environment where all of the girls can work to their full potential. We believe this time enriches and enhances the academic and social learning that occurs throughout the year.

In social studies the second graders spent time thinking about, writing, and sharing their hopes and dreams for the 2010-2011 school year. Those hopes and dreams served as a guide when the girls worked collaboratively to create their classroom agreements. These agreements will be a foundation for the positive and productive school year ahead.

During class meetings, we have had discussions regarding how each of us can be an inclusive and supportive member of our school community. We have had many partner lunches and Mix-It-Up lunches this fall. On these days, girls have the opportunity to branch out and make new friends as well as practice conversational skills. The second graders have also learned that one of the many vital pieces of living and working in a community is to handle conflicts and frustration appropriately so that all those involved can move forward. We are beginning to teach a five-step process for handling conflicts as they arise:

1. Stop and Cool Off
2. Talk and Listen
3. Think of Ways to Solve the Problem
4. Choose a Solution That You Both Like
5. Let It Go

During language arts time, the girls have been working in small groups, pairs, independently, and as a whole class to participate in varied reading and word study activities. Our word study focus has been a review of short vowel families. We will now begin to investigate long vowels and the varied patterns we use to spell them in the English language. In writers' workshop each girl has begun to create pieces of fiction. As they read literature and write their own pieces the girls have been paying close attention to two particular traits of good writing. They are learning that authors are inspired by the world around them, and they use words to communicate their ideas. The girls are also beginning to identify strong word choice in the books we are reading together and have been striving to implement some of these unique words into their own written work to help their readers create vivid mental images.

In mathematics, we just we began the year with a unit entitled, *Counting, Coins, and Combinations* in order to lay the groundwork for the mathematics we will do

all year. We have been focusing on counting, combining, and breaking numbers apart in different ways. The girls have been busy discussing strategies they use in order to solve addition and subtraction problems. In our math lessons the girls have also been focusing on telling time to the hour and working toward fluency of the addition combinations for 10, adding 1, and adding 2. We are now starting an exciting investigation into geometry. The second graders will identify two- and three-dimensional shapes, focus on the properties of rectangles and rectangular prisms, and identify and create symmetrical designs. During this unit, the second graders will continue to engage in math problems and activities that allow them to communicate and share how they solve given problems, as well as develop fluency with the doubles facts.

We are proud of the progress that the second grade class has made and look forward to the exciting months ahead.

Sincerely,

The Second Grade Team