

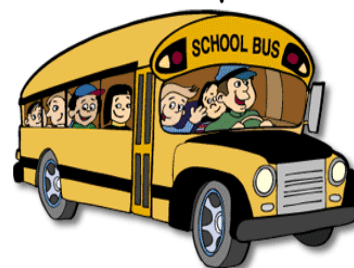
MRS. MACDONALD'S INTERMEDIATE CLASSROOM

What a Great Start

This was a great week. I am very excited about this school year. Our building is so wonderful. I just love the new space. The students are working nicely together and I appreciate all the support from all the families.

- This week was a week of introduction and assessment. I introduced the class to our surroundings, showed them how I want materials to be used and returned. They learned where our books are stored, how to share items, and where they can keep their supplies.
- I gave a spelling assessment to see where students are on word analysis skills. We will be working this year on spelling and vocabulary skills. Building vocabulary is important and helps students in fluency and reading comprehension. As we worked on writing this week I often heard, "How do you spell..." We will be working this year on recognizing patterns in spelling and being able to break down bigger words into smaller chunks for proper spelling.
- In math, students were given an assessment to see where they will be placed in initial groups for math. These groups will be changing as the year progresses and as strengths and weaknesses show up. We will be working in **Singapore Math Books**. These will come home from time to time. We also will be working on **Math Minutes** which are a spiral review of math concepts. Look for these folders to come home occasionally.
- Newsletters will come home on weekends via email. I will put important information and items that your child needs to remember for school in the "Important Items" section.
- I apologize that my newsletters are long, but I want to offer you the opportunity to see what is happening in the classroom in case your child does not tell you about it. Please use the newsletter as a catalyst for discussions about school. If you read about the read aloud we are using, ask your child to describe the book. This provides a check-up for reading comprehension. Encourage them to describe what we do in social studies and science. We will be reading books in reading group, but much more of our reading will go on in the classroom through themes and projects.
- Watch for websites that we have used in the classroom that will reinforce concepts we are studying. Look at the class website for pictures of our activities. Share this site with grandparents so they can see what your child is doing at school. This week we used **GOOGLE EARTH** to help us with our transportation to West Quoddy Head, Maine, Mount Washington, New Hampshire, and Plymouth Massachusetts. Google Earth is an amazing site-the download is free.

First Day of school



The Academy
Minds in Motion

Volume 1, Issue 2

September 1, 2007

Important Items

- ☺ No School September 3rd, Labor Day
- ☺ Please send in an empty cereal box by next Friday. If you do not eat cereal, I have extras I will bring in.
- ☺ Please return Friday folders to school on Tuesday next week. These will come home each Friday and contain some of your child's weekly work.
- ☺ Postcard project will begin in a few weeks. If you have an out of state relative that we can write to and ask to send a postcard, please send their name and address to school. We will be making this request as we work on "friendly letter writing" for English.
- ☺ Water bottles can be kept in the classroom to help with thirst. We are going to have another 90* week.

Mathematics

Math assessments took place this week. Next week we will begin math groups. This test assessed skills necessary for a strong foundation in math. Areas of weakness will be reviewed before new concepts are introduced.

Homework

I did not assign formal homework this week. Students will have one assignment a night. If there is an evening when it is impossible to get homework finished, just send it in the next day. We have evenings like that all the time.

Check your Email on Sunday Nights!

Newsletters will be emailed each week. If for some reason you need the newsletter to come home in a different format, please let me know. This will help save paper. Just look for the attachment.

Social Studies

In social studies this week we accomplished a great deal.

- We began with a mini-book about "Where in the World is Springboro, Ohio".
- We labeled the continents and oceans.
- We reviewed the countries that comprise North America and talked a bit about Alaska and Hawaii and observed their location in comparison to the other states.
- We located Ohio on a map, found Warren County, and then found the corner of 741 and Eleanor Drive. We labeled our school on this map.
- We identified the ordinal directions of North, South, East and West and began work on our "lapbook" about the regions of the United States.
- We "boarded a train" and began our exploration of the Northeast Region of the United States. (With the help of google earth)
- We identified the states that comprise the Northeast Region and explored WEST QUODDY HEAD, Maine. **Ask about the lighthouse and how old it is**
- We traveled further down the coast from Maine to Massachusetts and visited Plymouth.
- We reviewed the cards that were sent home before school began and talked about Mt. Rushmore, the Gateway Arch and Old Faithful.
- We watched a brief video about Old Faithful-**Ask about what the geysers and hot mud looked like.**
- We saved our train tickets to use in our REGIONS SCRAPBOOK PROJECT
- We will continue learning about the Northeast region next week and then begin to compare and contrast the different regions as we travel on to the Southeast Region.

Transportation

Drop off and pick up went well this week. Thank you for your patience as we learn the cars and drivers. It takes quite a bit of time to fill all the cars.

Pulling up to the first lamp post helps us load three cars at a time.

Drop off time begins at 8:45, students should arrive between 8:45 and 9:00.

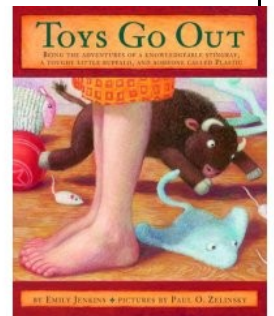
School begins at 9:00.

More Language Arts

We are currently reading the book Toys Go Out . It is a wonderful book about three toys that have adventures in the evening when the girl that loves them goes to sleep. It is a chapter book that reminds me of The Velveteen Rabbit.

This book is written from the viewpoint of the toys. There is a buffalo named Lumphy, a stingray named Stingray, and a red bouncy ball named Plastic.

We will use this story as a catalyst for our writing skill development. When our book is finished, I will ask students to bring in a stuffed animal from home. The writing assignment will be for them to write about a day according to this stuffed animal. It can be from the animals adventures at home, or from their observations of what happens at school in our classroom. We will be discussing "Point of View" .



Physical Education and Art

This year our schedule looks like this:

8:45-9:00 Student arrival,

9:00-10:15 Morning Message and Reading Group time

10:15-10:30 Morning snack and recess

10:30-11:00 Reading / Language Arts Time

11:00- 11:45 Math Groups

11:45-12:15 Lunch

12:30-1:15 Monday-PE Tuesday-ART/MUSIC

Thursday, SPANISH (Wednesday has EXTRA's 2-3 and Friday has Spotlight in the am or pm)

1:15-1:40 Recess

1:40-3:00 Science and Social Studies (Integrated Reading time)

Book Orders

I sent home Scholastic Book Orders on Friday. This is a great opportunity to buy great books at a discounted price.

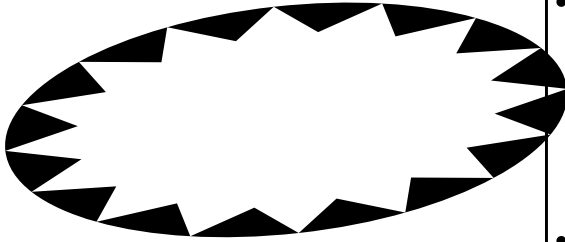
Book orders are due back by Friday if you are interested in ordering.

**The Academy
Minds in Motion**

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What a Great Group!

Spelling Assessment-

Students were given a test to identify strengths and weaknesses in their spelling skills. Each week word lists will be assigned to help your child master spelling patterns. Mastery of the spelling pattern will help develop strong spelling skills and assist in using this pattern for new words. The foundation for spelling begins with identifying correctly:

- The initial and final consonants of words
- The initial consonant blends and digraphs (sh, gr, bl)
- Short vowels
- Affricates (these are speech sounds made when breath stream is stopped and then slowly forced out at the point of articulation for example: the ch in chop, the j in jam, the g in magic or gem, the d before drip or t before trot also found in -tch and -dge patterns. These are often misspelled with jress for dress and you can understand why!)
- Final blends and digraphs
- Long vowel (consonant vowel consonant e pattern) late
- R-controlled vowels (star, bird, hurt, fern)
- Other long vowels (ai, ae, ee, ou)
- Complex consonants (scr, ck,qu)
- Abstract vowels (oo, ow, ou, oi, aw)

Homework for the week of September 4-7th

Homework should be turned in each morning. There will be an assigned turn-in basket. Mustang money will be earned for assignments that are turned in on time. Each evening students should be reading a book. Book reports will be assigned next week. In addition to reading, the following homework is assigned for this week.

Tuesday: Practice math flashcards for fact tests to be given on Wednesday. Intermediate students will be expected to master addition facts to 20, subtraction facts to 20, multiplication facts to 10 and division facts to 10. Drill and practice help in mastery of these basic facts and quick recall.

Wednesday: Write a summary about the Northeast Region of the United States. Tell me about what we have learned so far. Try to write as many sentences as your age.

Thursday: Read a book or magazine article and write a summary of what you read.

Try to remember to bring in : Cereal box for book boxes, pizza money if you want to participate, book orders if interested and sign up sheets for after school enrichment.

I am looking forward to another great week.