

# Mrs. MacDonald's Intermediate Classroom

## April is National Poetry Month



Issue 27

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### Homework:

**Monday:** Reading Assignment, (usually a post it note is attached to the books to remind students of the assignment). Wordly Wise comes home... write your words down so you can practice using them for the week.

**Tuesday:** Math Practice (Please read on page two under math about the importance of math practice)

**Wednesday:** Poetry Journals come home, get some help with editing spelling.

**Thursday:** Study Wordly Wise words for spelling and definition test!

**Congratulations to the Powers Family on the arrival of EVY!!!!**

This was a fantastic week. We started our new unit on Poetry. I thought this may be difficult for some-to *find their creative side*, but EVERYONE enthusiastically jumped into writing poems on Monday (I even heard several ask if they could keep writing through lunch!)

Our poetry unit is a reinforcement of skills learned in language arts.

On Monday, students were asked to create an **Acrostic Poem**. This is a simple poem where the first letter of each line forms a word or phrase vertically. Acrostic poems can describe the subject or tell a little story about it. Everyone had a successful start with the ACROSTIC POEMS and they were placed in their Poetry Journals.

On Tuesday, **Alphabet Alliteration Poems** were introduced. Alliteration is the repetition of the *letter sound*. This assignment asked students to write an adjective, a noun and a verb for each letter of the alphabet something like this:

blissful bugs bounce or grumpy groundhogs grunt...

There were many giggles and students were very proud of their efforts.

On Thursday, the poem assigned was a **CINQUAIN POEM**. This is a very structured form of poetry. It deals with word choice, word meaning, syllabication, and parts of speech. It also expresses a meaningful message. We began with a modified version, where word choices weren't dictated by the number of syllables, but some students may want to attempt the more structured poem. A CINQUAIN POEM has five lines. The first line is a noun and the title of the poem. The second line uses 2 descriptive words (adjectives). The third line has three words that express action (verbs). The fourth line uses four words that express feeling. The last line is a synonym for the first line. Again, students were very successful and creative.

All poems are being collected in their poetry journals. The journal contains a rubric for scoring.

I will send these poetry journals home this week for you to get a chance to help your child **edit the spelling** on their poems. Spelling counts!...please limit your help to spelling corrections and allow your child to express their creativity independently.

# Math

Math groups worked on :

Group 1- multiplication and division facts, money and decimals

Group 2- long division and multiplication

Group 3—representing fractions as a decimal and ordering decimals.

Each group continues to make steady progress.

HOWEVER

Math facts continue to be the speed bump we are encountering. This week, all students were given several “TIMED ASSIGNMENTS”. These were basic addition, subtraction and multiplication worksheets that were given with five minutes of time assigned to the work. I am concerned over the number of students that are still counting on their fingers. Students need to develop quick recall of basic math facts. The only way to achieve quick recall of the facts is through memorization of these facts.

At school, I am working on the application of math in problem solving, addition and subtraction of decimals, and applying multiplication skills to area and volume. The memorization of the addition facts, subtraction facts and multiplication facts MUST be practiced at home.

I think of it as a coach of a team— the coach only has an hour or so for a practice and cannot be expected to get the team in shape in that hour.... But that hour is spent working on skills and applying the skills to the game. The player needs to know how to run and have developed stamina to make it through the game. The only way to build stamina and endurance is to practice running at home.

I hope this analogy makes sense. Students already know their math facts, they know how to determine the answers to addition, subtraction, multiplication and division problems.... Now, our only obstacle is the speed in which they apply these skills.... Students that do not have quick recall of their basic math facts are like players that get winded one run down the field. This player would not be able to sustain the level of play necessary to complete an entire game... it is the same with students that do not know their facts. They can only complete a few problems in a reasonable amount of time.

PLEASE— practice math facts at home!!!! Tuesday is not a “NO HOMEWORK” night... it is a conditioning night for math facts...and conditioning should not happen only once a week to get in shape! To be in good shape mathematically, these math facts must be practiced often until they are committed to memory.

- In science, we completed work on plant life cycles and learned how plants reproduce. We discuss how different seeds disperse and how this helps with overcrowding. We reviewed plant parts and their function. We reviewed the process of photosynthesis and due to an episode several students have seen on Sponge Bob, this is a very funny word that evokes much laughter and a slightly odd re-enactment?!?
- In social studies, we continue to learn about Ohio history.
- We discussed the events that occurred in the beginning of Ohio's statehood.
- We learned about the Northwest Ordinance and the treatment of the Native Americans at this time in history.
- We learned about the Treaty of Greenville and several students were quite indignant about how the Native Americans were only given land in the Northeastern corner of Ohio.
- We learned how to make a timeline and put the events in chronological order.
- We discussed the time it took for information to travel from one place to another at this time and we reviewed the importance of waterways and the reasons why cities grew along the water routes.
- We discussed how the introduction of the railroad changed the importance of the rivers.

THIS WEEK we will learn more about Charles Kettering, Granville Woods, Thomas Edison and the Wright Brothers. We will discuss the impact these people had on Ohio and learn more about the places that bear their names. Trev already told me his dad works at Kettering Hospital, now we will learn why this city and hospital were named after Charles Kettering.

#### THE LEGACY PROJECT

There has obviously been quite a delay in completion of this project. The books are currently being completed. There were many more pictures to scan than I thought there would be, this takes quite some time (work at home time)... and I never dreamed I would be down for two weeks in the middle of a school year... with that said, it looks like the date for Legacy Project will be Friday May 16th.

Any person involved in the legacy project is welcome to join us that morning at school...students will read their books to the group and present this person with the copy of the book. Parents are also welcome to join us.

The cost of the books is \$30. I will send home a note about this in the next week. Additional copies can be ordered on your own after you view the book your child created. I will send more information about that after the books are ready.

Thanks for your patience in this project. Two of my most favorite projects will culminate on the same day... the legacy project is one that touches my heart. I learn so much more about the children and their families and I love it. The chicks will be hatched on May 16th and be in the classroom. This is also a truly incredible experience for the kids.

That's all for now.