

Mrs. MacDonald's Intermediate Classroom

ZOO TRIP FAST APPROACHING



Issue 29

April 20, 2008

- We continued to work last week on writing skills and poetry. Students focused on Creature alliterations, color poems and haiku. We will be putting the final touches on our poetry journals. Students will be asked to prepare their final poems and select examples of poetry to add to their journals. Edited versions of their poems will be graded the following week. Students have been made aware of the expectations of the poetry journals. Effort in neatness and spelling are important.
- We learned about the classification of animals last week. We learned about the features that differentiate birds from reptiles and mammals from fish. Short reports were written about each of these classifications.
- On our trip to the zoo we will be looking for these features and identifying patterns in animals.
- Students will look for the features found in arboreal animals...tails and claws? Students will look for common features of animals with hooves– are they carnivores, herbivores, or omnivores?..Students will observe the beaks of birds and determine the type of food they may eat with that beak....do they sift, crack, or tear with that beak? Students will look at the way the animals relate to their habitat. We will look for pink feathers on the flamingo to see if it has a diet rich in shrimp, we will look to see if oxpeckers are on the giraffe as the “doctor bird” taking insects off its back. We will look for nocturnal and diurnal creatures. This should be a fantastic trip that will be beneficial to our study of animals.

This week we celebrate EARTH DAY and will be working around the school on Tuesday. Play clothes can be worn instead of uniforms. We will be working in the flower boxes and landscape boxes around the school, so please wear clothes that can get messy. Sunscreen is advised!!! We will be meeting back at school on Tuesday at 5:00.

No formal homework this week.

Tuesday April 22nd– overnight at the zoo. Meet back at school at 5:00. Students will spend the night at the zoo.

Be sure to eat before your return and bring a snack for the evening.

Everyone is responsible for carrying their own belongings, so pack lightly. Last year at COSI, they suggested toothbrushes, hairbrushes and deodorant (if necessary) as the added items. Students simply slept in the clothes that they wore. This causes less loss of items. Bring a sleeping bag and a pillow. NO ELECTRONIC devices.

Math

We continue to work on building foundations for math skills. Students practiced addition, subtraction, multiplication and division skills. We worked on volume, area and perimeter. We reviewed the definition of perimeter and the times we would want to know the perimeter of a space... for fencing in an area, for putting baseboards in a room.... We talked about area and discussed times we would want to know the area of a space...for putting in carpeting, putting down grass seed... the carpeting needs for a room are different than the baseboard needs of the same room and need to be figured out in different ways. We will continue to practice these skills and reinforce the meaning of perimeter and area.

Reading



We began a read aloud called WRIGHT 3. This story is about a group of children that solve mysteries. The first book in this series was read by several of the students that participated in my summer reading club. It is called Chasing Vermeer. Chasing Vermeer has been described as the Da Vinci Code for kids.

In the Wright 3, students are learning about Frank Lloyd Wright and his architectural designs. We viewed several of his designs this week including the Guggenheim Museum and the Robie House in Chicago. The story centers around the Robie House and how the University of Chicago wants to tear it down, but Tommy, Calder and Petra are working on discovering the secrets this house holds. Calder is fascinated by pentominoes. This week, I introduced the class to pentominoes. Pentominoes are 5 squares put together into 12 different shapes. These shapes can be put together to form a rectangle in several different ways. Calder carries around a set of pentominoes and uses them to help him make decisions.

This book is rich in mathematical thinking, references to art, and historical facts. We are enjoying this as our new read-aloud.



Reading groups are reading books in a series. Several students are independently reading Lois Lowry selections about Anastasia Krupnik and her brother Sam, while others are reading Andrew Clements The Report Card. We just completed another book by Andrew Clements-Frindle. Ask your child about this book.

Science

Tomorrow I pick up the incubator and will have eggs delivered on Wednesday. This is an exciting hands-on experience with life cycles. I hope that everyone enjoys participating in the rotation of the eggs and the thrill of the HATCH!

We will be researching more about animals and learning about environmental awareness in a celebration of Earth Day.

This week:

Monday: Animal explorations and poetry journal activities.

Tuesday: Dress down day– play clothes for outdoor planting and environmental clean-up....

Return to school at 5:00 (dinner eaten) for travels down to the zoo.

Overnight at the zoo, remember to pack your sleeping bag, pillow, toothbrush and hairbrush.

Wednesday: Explore the zoo with your group. Look for the animals that we have discussed....Komodo dragons, flamingos, turtles and tortoises, penguins, elephants, river otters, feathered friends...(look at their nesting patterns, } ostriches, rhinos, giraffes, sloths and pythons. Enjoy the day... I will be searching for you with my camera. (*Go to sleep early to make up for last night!*)

Thursday: Recap on zoo trip, animal research and reports.

Friday: Review of Earth Day and environmental issues. We will discuss water conservation. Spotlight on Friday!!!

- As we work on Ohio History, several mentions of the Miamisburg Mound have been made in our Ohio books. I would like to take a trip to Carillon Park and stop back on the way home for a picnic at the Miamisburg Mound to show the class what this actually looks like. This would require two volunteer drivers. Please let me know if anyone is interested in helping transport students for a possible trip to see these two sites rich in Ohio History....

Update!!!! Interruptions were reaching epidemic proportions... a new class management system has been put in place and halted the spread of INTERRUPTIONS IN CLASS!!!! Thank goodness! Ask your child for an update.