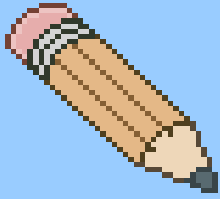


WHAT HAVE WE BEEN UP TO?



February 8, 2009

- This week we spent a great deal of time tying up loose ends and getting back into the schedule. The snow days caused us to have many assignments in incomplete stages. Writings about the White House were in a variety of stages... initial writing, revision and rewrites.
- The motivation of the writing was over and it was laborious to complete this project...however, the students trudged through and everyone handed in their writing assignment by Friday.
- We completed our spelling unit from the prior week and worked on Wordly Wise words. Many students practiced the words with the suggested website of Wordly Wise 3000. This website gives students the chance to see and hear the words and definitions. It covers the multiple meanings of words. If you did not get a chance to practice in this way, you may want to try it with Unit 7 words this week.
- <http://www.wordlywise3000.com/>
- I have posted Wordly Wise words from all the levels of books we are using in the classroom. Students are encouraged to use these words in their writing. Mustang Money will be rewarded for appropriate use of a word in the writing, or for replacing a word with a Wordly Wise word.
- On Friday, students began work on a new writing assignment about Time Travel that correlates to our book The Time Bike.
- They were given a STORY MAP to plan their stories and help to produce a writing with coherent structure. These original pieces of imaginative writing help the students to practice spelling words as they gain experience using grammar, punctuation, and capitalization correctly. Writing their own stories enhances their understanding of fiction and helps them gain the skill of expressing themselves comfortably and legibly in writing.



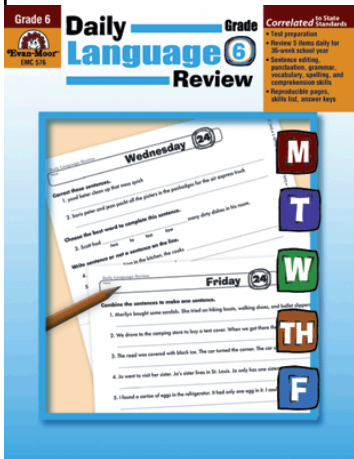
February 2009



Important Dates

- Valentine Party on Friday, February 13th
(See information on Page 3)
- School will be in session on February 16th, Presidents Day (due to all the snow days)
- Early Dismissal February 20th—11:45

Language Arts



We began using the Daily Language Review books in December. These daily activities help sharpen and expand students' language skills. I have noticed a strong improvement in capitalization, punctuation and grammar usage correlating to the use of this workbook. Additionally, this book presents questions in a variety of ways and prepares students for standardized testing formats. (On the IOWA Tests, there are questions that can be very confusing that focus on a part of a sentence... this book gives students practice opportunities with these types of questions.)

This book is used daily and corrected together. By reviewing the questions as a group, students are learning from their mistakes and/or identifying mistakes that someone else made.

We have covered appositives, suffixes, prefixes, synonyms, antonyms, similes, metaphors, pronouns, subject, predicate and many more topics this year. This book also reinforces these topics by asking students to identify examples of them and this helps me identify if there is retention of the topic. (When someone says "What is a synonym?", I know I need to review this topic again and reinforce their understanding of the topic.)

One way we work on reinforcement of topics is by assigning one of these parts to be applied to the writing assignments. In the White House writing, students were instructed to use an appositive somewhere in the writing. This could be as simple as saying...John, the secret service agent, took me to the movie theater. In other writings students may need to put in a simile or an idiom. Applying these skills to writing creates a better end product.

We have now moved on to peer editing. Once a student has completed their rough draft and check it over for errors, they need to find another student to read it and make revisions together. They are doing a great job encouraging each other and offering suggestions for improvement. (Peer editing also helps when the writer knew what they wanted to say, but never explained it clearly to the reader.)

We will continue working on writing skills and expect to see Daily Language Review books come home for you to review. Look for improvements on capitalization, punctuation and grammar usage. PLEASE DO NOT OVERREACT to scores On some of the examples for sentence correction, there can be up to eight errors in the sentence. Sometimes students are finding 3 or 5 of them.... Then the question is counted as wrong... but it isn't about the score... it is about learning to identify the errors and they are showing strong improvement in this area!!!

Math-

As we progress into long division and review 3-digit multiplication, it is VITAL that students know their math facts. This week we had a timed test and nearly everyone scored 90% or above on 5 seconds per problem. This is a moderate standard...3 seconds per problem is the goal. Students MUST have recall of the facts... practice of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division facts is necessary. Each long division problem has nearly 15 opportunities for a silly mistake.... You have to divide, then multiply, then subtract and finally bring down the next number and do it all over again. If you subtract 12-7 and answer 4... boom, the whole problem is now incorrect. PLEASE PRACTICE MATH FACTS!

Valentines Day Party:

A huge thanks to the moms that have been working on this party for the students. It should be fun. All students are asked to bring valentines for their classmates to school on Friday. There will be a bag for each child to "deliver/collect" their valentines. Please include everyone:

Lauren, Grace, Alexa, Christina, Julia, Emma, Erika, Ellie, Tori, Hannah, Alex, Dylan, Mitchell, and Nicholas.

Homework for the week:

Monday: Wordly Wise words...Test on Friday over Unit 7 words.

Tuesday: Honesty– We have been talking about honesty and what it means to be honest. Watch a television program with your family. Afterward, have a family discussion about the way characters in the program behaved. Can you find examples of characters either doing the right thing or not doing the right thing? What should any of the characters have done differently? Why. If you cannot watch a television show, tell me about a character in a book that we have read in class.

Wednesday. Practice math facts... and ordering fractions. Roll two dice and formulate a fraction (e.g., roll a 6 and 3 to make the fraction $\frac{3}{6}$). Then repeat this until you have 20 fractions. Order the fractions in descending order.

Thursday: Study Wordly Wise words for a test and read for 15 minutes. (Try our Crazy Professor Reading... like we did last week... read aloud dramatically and make motions to accompany the reading... this can help boost comprehension!!!) **BRING YOUR VALENTINES TO SCHOOL FOR TOMORROW'S PARTY!**

Family Math Games

All you need is a deck of cards and dice.

Concentration (add, sub, multiplication, division)

The object of the game is to find pairs of matching cards among an array of face down cards. Help your child write addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division facts on one set of index cards, and the answers on another set. Shuffle the cards and lay them out face down. The first player turns over two cards. If they match, the player keeps the two cards and takes another turn. The next player continues by trying to find two matching cards. When all cards have been collected, the player with the most pairs wins.

Dice Games (addition)

You will need 2, 3, or 4 dice and one score sheet. Tally to so many rolls or to a preset score such as 50 or 100 points.

Vary it by adding the sums of the dice together, and the greatest or least score wins!

Vary it again by rolling 3 colored dice and 1 white die. Subtract the number on the white die from the sum of the colored dice, and the greatest sum wins.

Go Fish (addition)

Prepare flash cards from 0-10 (3 sets of each number). Play "Go Fish" to add numbers up to 10. (Ex: Sally has the number 4, so she asks her mother for the number 6 because $4+6=10$.)

Card Games (addition) (multiplication)

War: Divide the deck of cards evenly. Each player will put out two cards and add or multiply them together. Whoever has the highest total will take all cards. The object is to take the whole deck.

Pig (addition)

Players take turns rolling two dice. A player may roll the dice as many times as he/she wants, mentally keeping a total of the sums that come up. When the player stops rolling, he/she records the total, and adds it to the scores from previous rounds. BUT if a one is rolled, the player scores a 0 for that round, and it's the next player's turn.

Race for \$1.00 (money addition)

You need 30 pennies, 10 nickels, 20 dimes, 1 quarter, a dollar, 2 dice, and a partner. Take turns. On your turn, roll the dice. The sum tells how many pennies to take. When you have 5 pennies, trade for a nickel. When you have 2 nickels, trade for a dime. When you have 2 dimes and one nickel, trade for a quarter. The first player to reach \$1.00 is the winner.

Guess My Number (number logic)

You need: paper, pencil, partner

Player one picks a number from 0-99 and writes it down. Player two makes a guess and writes it down. Player one gives a clue: "Your guess is greater than my number" or "Your guess is less than my number". Continue playing until player two guesses player one's number. Switch jobs and play again.

The 1 to 10 Game (addition)

You need: 2 dice, 1 deck of cards, and a partner

Use only the ace, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 cards.

One of you takes the red cards, one of you takes the black cards. Take turns. On your turn, roll the dice and figure out the sum. Remove enough cards from your hand to add up to that sum. For example, if you roll a 5 and a 3, you can make 8 in many ways (5+3, 4+4, 4+2+2, 8, etc...). If you can't make the sum with the cards in your hand, roll again. If you can't make a sum after three rolls, you lose the game. You win if your partner can't make a number in three rolls or if you use up all of your cards.

Number Family Rummy (fact families)

Use a deck of 40 cards: Four suits of ace through ten. The goal is to make families of three cards that are related by addition or subtraction. For example: 5, 5, and 10 are a family because $5+5=10$, and $10-5=5$. 6, 3, and 9 are a family because $6+3=9$, $9-6=3$, and $9-3=6$.

Shuffle the deck and deal 6 cards to each player. Place the remaining cards face down in a pile. If you have any families of cards, place them aside. If you don't have any families, you may draw one from the pile and discard one of your own. You may also discard the one that you picked up, if you don't want it. The first player to get rid of all 6 cards (2 fact families) is the winner. Remember that the ace equals one.

Grab Bag Subtraction (subtraction)

Choose a number of things to work with, and put that many objects into a bag. You can use crayons, coins, beans, buttons, etc...) Grab a handful of the items and count them. Use subtraction to figure out how many items are now left in the bag. So if you put 100 items in the bag and pulled out 20, then you would write $100-20=80$. Let your partner have a turn, and whoever leaves the least amount in the bag is the winner.

Lineup (number order, multiples)

Prepare number cards from 0-50. If more than two players are going to play, you might want to prepare two decks. Shuffle the cards and deal 8 to each player. Players place their cards face up in a horizontal line in front of them in the same order in which they are received. Players may not move their cards around. The object of the game is to be first to have your cards in the right sequential order from smallest to largest. A player does this by taking a card on each turn from the top of the undealt deck, and using it to replace any of the cards in his lineup. He discards the card that is replaced. Whenever a player's lineup of numbers is in the correct order from smallest to largest, he calls out LINEUP and wins the game.

You can vary this game by using multiples of numbers. You still have 8 cards, but are trying to get multiples in order from smallest to largest. So you can do multiples of 2 (2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16) or multiples of 3 (3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24). You can even have numbers such as 12, 16, 20, 24, 28, 32, 36, 40. Those are multiples of 4, but they don't necessarily have to start with the number 4. They are however, still in order from smallest to largest.

Card Capture (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division)

Use a set of fact flashcards. Divide the cards equally between the two players. One player attacks, while the other player defends. The defending player shows his cards (problem side up) one at a time to the attacking player. If the attacking player says the right answer, he captures the card and adds it to his own. He can continue capturing cards until he answers incorrectly. When this happens, the defending player becomes the attacker, and gets his chance at capturing the cards. This continues with cards being captured back and forth until one player winds up with all of the cards, or has the most cards when time is called. You can even set the rules to the first player to capture 20 cards, or any number you'd like.

Addition and Subtraction Turnover (addition and subtraction)

Each player is given 11 cards numbered 0-10. These are placed face up in a row. Players roll two dice on a turn and may choose to add or subtract the two numbers shown on the dice. If the resulting sum or difference equals one of the number cards still face up, the player can turn that card face down. Next player then takes a turn. This continues until one of the players wins by turning all 11 of his cards face down.

Subtraction Pig (subtraction)

Two or more players start out with 100 points each. Players in turn roll two dice and subtract that number from their points. A player on a turn continues rolling the dice and subtracting the resulting number from his remaining points until a 1 appears on any dice rolled. That player's turn ends, and the next player takes a turn. When a player has lost all of his points, he is out of the game. The last player in the game, is the winner.