

October 3, 2016

Dear Parents,

I enjoyed meeting many of you at Open House. I hope the slide show and presentation gave you a peek into your child's first grade experience.

We had a fun learning experience at Applecrest last Friday. It was wonderful having many families join us. I will be adding pictures to our class web page later this week.

Important Dates this Month

Bulb Planting - date to be decided soon. It will be based on supplies and weather. Please see the flyer in your child's Blue Folder.

October 7th: no school for students - Teacher Inservice.

October 10th: Columbus Day Observed - no school.

October 28th: Halloween Celebration 1:30 - stay tuned for more information.

Academic News

Reading Workshop: Using Lucy Calkins' Units of Study, as a resource, I am preparing students for Reader's Workshop by teaching behaviors and strategies they will need to read independently, as part of a class, and with a partner. Students are setting goals and building stamina.

Writing Workshop:

We will continue to work on our Small Moments (personal narrative) Unit. In this writing unit students are asked to write about true events from their lives. To help your child come up with and share their ideas for writing, please send in a gallon sized Ziplock type baggie filled with ideas to inspire your child to write a variety of personal narrative stories. Examples of items may include photos, a trinket from a special trip, a special toy, a holiday item, etc. These items will stay at school for a bit of time. Please do not send anything too valuable or something that your child cannot be without at home (maybe put in a photo of that item instead). Try to include a minimum of five items but no more than ten. Due to storage space all

items should fit in your child's baggie. Please send in items as your schedule allows. Thank you for your support!

Volunteers will be starting later this month. When volunteering during Writer's Workshop please notice something the writer has done well and praise him/her by being specific - "I noticed how you spaced between your words" or "What great detail in your picture". Also look for an area for instruction "Writers space between words to make it easier for people to read their writing. Tomorrow when you write try to leave a finger space between your words". The tricky part is for every student the instruction will be different. My main goal is the same for all students and that is to create a climate where children develop as writers.

If a child says he can't spell: I might say, "That's okay, writer's don't always spell perfectly when they start to write. All you have to do is say the words you want to write, listen for the sounds, and write what you hear." I tell them what is important is their ideas. However, students are responsible for correct spelling of word wall words. I also encourage them to look around the room for words. You may hear terms such as "first grade perfect" etc.

If a child says he is done after five minutes: Gently nudge the writer to keep writing by asking for more detail. We use the words "When you think you are done, you have just begun!" from Lucy Calkins' Unit of Study. My expectation is 30 minutes of writing. Students may draw first if they get their ideas from pictures, however they must spend half of the time writing words.

If a child says he doesn't know what to write about: Refer to the "ideas list" on the Map of their Heart or their personal baggie of ideas.

Math: We have completed Unit 1. We will begin our second unit. Please look for the Everyday Math Parent letters in your child's blue folder.

Science: Behavior of Light

We will-

- * Plan and conduct an investigation: Think and do a project to answer questions

- * Make observations: Describe what we see
- * Illuminate: Light up something
- * Block: Keep something from moving in a line
- * Redirect: Change the motion of something

Social Studies

We will learn about Fire Safety and Christopher Columbus this month.

Thank you for your help and support. Please feel free contact me with any questions or concerns.

Take Care,
Julie

