

Mrs. Walters' Class 2008-09

Janney School, Washington, DC - Mrs. Walters' Class September 23, 2008

Teacher's Corner Each week I will be sending you a newsletter to update you on what we will be studying in class, and also to give you a "heads up" on upcoming events. You can find the newsletters in the Tuesday Take Home Folder that are sent home with your child. Please remember to sign the outside of the folder and have your child return it to class each Wednesday.

Congratulations to Ethan Rosenthal and Philip Wright who are our Student Council Representatives for the 2008-09 school year. They will attend monthly Student Council meetings and learn about the many activities and projects sponsored by the Student Council and bring that information back to the class.

Last week I sent home a daily schedule so you get an idea of how your child's day progresses. We have five specials each week - Physical Education, Spanish, Library, Music, and Art. We have P.E. on Wednesday, so have your child wear the appropriate shoes. You will find out more about our specials, daily schedule and third grade curriculum at Back-to-School Night this Wednesday, September 24.

If you need to reach me, my email address is ronawalters@yahoo.com, or send a note with your child.

Reader's Workshop This block of time comprises a mini lesson, independent reading, and share time. I also read a wide variety of books to the students, and we discuss them as a whole class or with a partner. The students and I will meet for guided reading and have group and individual conferences. This model is copied from Columbia University Teacher's College and encompasses all DCPS curriculum standards. Students are learning about different reading strategies. We have still been focusing on "envisioning", an important strategy that asks the reader to make mental images in their mind, use their senses to make the text come to life, and make a connection to what they already know. We started discussing "prediction", another important strategy that helps you understand the characters and actions in the story by figuring out what we think they will do by their prior actions. The kids are

enjoying the book *The Haunting of Third Grade* that I read to them during Teacher Read Aloud. We identify the characters, discuss that setting comprises time and place, and practice using the reading strategies of "envisioning" and "making predictions".

Writer's Workshop This time is similar to the model that we follow in Reader's Workshop. First, I do a mini lesson, then the students practice the learned skill, and then we have share time. This year we will write personal narratives, fiction writing, literary essays, poetry, and research reports. From time to time the students will have a writing assignment and bring home their writer's journal. Students are still collecting ideas for personal narratives, taking an idea and writing a story about it, and sharing their writing with the class.

Word Study Last week I gave the students a spelling inventory test to help me identify what spelling stage they are currently in. This knowledge will assist me with identifying their needs and individualizing their "word sort" activities.

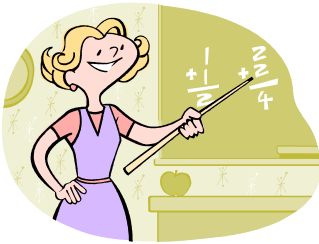
Math Our first unit involves working with number patterns. Students are also learning procedures and the components of the Everyday Mathematics Program. Every daily lesson involves: mental math (warm-up activity); math message; whole group, partner and individual activities; workbook exercises; individual options; math boxes (review of cumulative skills); and once or twice a week math games. Students use rulers, templates with shapes, calculators, clocks, and a Student Reference Book. The Student Reference Book consists of game instructions, a glossary, an index, a data bank, and tables of measures.

Students used the "<" and ">" symbols to compare dollar amounts, learned how to make change by counting up, worked on Frames and Arrows patterns, and reviewed for a unit test.

Science Using a magnifying glass and a spoon, we identified the structures of our crayfish, read several non-fiction articles about them, and made observations of their habits.

Social Studies We learned how to read a grid map and made a map of the world. Our map included a compass rose, all seven continents, and labels of the imaginary lines including the Equator, the Prime Meridian, the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn.

Helpful Hints Have your child read for at least 20 minutes daily. If you have a chance, have them tell you something about the story. It is also important for them to have the opportunity to read aloud to you several times each week. Look at the Kids' Post or Mini Page together and discuss current events. Visit the library or a local bookstore often to get a variety of books. Practice mental math problems and basic addition and subtraction facts daily. Have your child bring a healthy snack daily.



Important Dates

Wednesday, September 24 Back-to-School Night

Friday, September 26 Spirit Day and Sign up for Parent/Teacher Conferences

Friday, October 3 Parent/Teacher Conferences

Mrs. Walters

P.S. Our class is still in need of "G" rated DVD's and board games (preferably with few pieces that can get lost). All donations are greatly appreciated.