

November 19, 2009

Dear Families,

Beginning December 5th, all first graders will receive a reading packet as homework on Thursdays. The packets contain a self-chosen book or books, a reading log, and a response sheet.

The Book Bag

Books will come home in your child's book bag every **Thursday**. Please return the book bag, along with all books and the reading log on the following **Monday**. All steps in this process will be thoroughly gone over in class. Your child is the expert! Please do not hesitate to ask us questions as we move forward together.

What happens after reading?

Reflecting and Talking About Books

After they have read a book, we hope children will reflect back on whether or not their choices were accurate: Was I able to understand this book on my own? Was it a "just-right" book, or could I have used some help? Did I end up needing help from someone? They also should be reflecting upon the story, the characters, making connections, etc.

Most importantly, we encourage you to take part in this "after reading" time. Help your child decide what type of book this was for her/him. Engage him/her in conversations about the book: help her/him make connections, etc.

The Reading Log

Please note that children will also begin bringing home Reading Logs in which they will record each book's title. This log will serve not only as a record of books read, but also as a record of the book choices your child is making.

The Response Sheet

Each week, we will send home a response sheet to be completed after reading. This sheet will reinforce reading skills and strategies learned in class. Please use the homework checklist to help make sure your child is doing his/her best work.

Word Wall Rings

We will continue to send home word cards each week to update “word wall rings” for your child to practice. These rings contain the sight words that children have learned so far this year. They should be kept at home to be used with the reading homework. Practicing and reviewing these words daily will help your child commit them to memory. Every week, we add approximately 5 new words. In school, children come in contact with these words all day long, but especially during reading, writing, word work and literacy centers, where they use them in many activities, such as playing word wall games, stamping the words, breaking words up and then putting back together and using magnetic letters.

Happy Reading,

The First Grade Teachers