

All About Second Grade!!!!

This promises to be the best year yet! Already I am loving this "coming" second grade and look forward to working with you to provide a year of learning and growth. **Please Study Through the Family Handbook** - It is your resource for questions about dress, conduct and school procedure that I don't cover in this letter.

Second Grade is a transitional year. We will progress from "learning to read" to "reading to learn". The emphasis is heavily on reading fluency, reading comprehension and solid math skills. We will have social studies, science, music, art, and computers weekly throughout the year, and will learn cursive after the first of the year. It will be a great year. We will study hard and play hard.

Again the emphasis is to:

Read! Read! Read! Read! Read!

We don't have enough time to do all the reading each child needs in class. It is important that each child have the opportunity to read every day for 20 minutes. This is time when they read out loud, with someone listening to help. (This is **not** 20 minutes reading alone in their bedroom) This is Great one-on-one time with your child - **Please enjoy it.**

To begin the year this reading will include a fluency sheet for part of the 20 minutes. Here are the instructions:

Fluency Sheet - Your child will receive a fluency sheet each week. It may be a page of phrases, a short story, or a list of words your child is to read every night. The goal of a fluency sheet is to improve on reading the passage with expression, speed, and accuracy. **The object is to count the words your child has read correctly for a one-minute period to obtain a "correct words per minute" score.**

To obtain your child's reading score, follow these directions.

1. Ask your child to read the entire sheet every night out loud to you.
2. When your child begins the reading, time him/her for ONE MINUTE.
3. In your head, make a note of which words your child misread.
4. As your child is reading, help him/her if there is more than a 2 second hesitation to read a word correctly. If your child needed help with a word, that word will count as a word not correctly read. If your child says a word incorrectly, but then quickly corrects it, count that word as correctly read.
5. Note how far in the passage your child has read after one minute, but have your child finish the entire passage.

6. After the passage has been completely read, count the number of words or phrases your child correctly read, without help, in the one-minute time span.
7. Record that daily fluency score on the monthly reading calendar along with the rest of the 20 reading minutes done.
8. I will use the fluency sheets next year, so please keep them in the plastic sheet protector that I put in your child's homework folder.
9. For those children going to Homework Club, the fluency sheet is not done with the Homework Club teacher. I feel it is important for You, the parent, to hear the child read.
10. Parents, you get to ask questions to check for comprehension. Reading fast does no good if the student doesn't understand what he/she is reading.

Reading 20 Minutes a Day - The national reading campaign recommends reading 20 minutes every night. There will be a place on the monthly reading calendar to record the number of minutes your child reads. Fluency can be part of the 20 minutes. Please have your child read for enjoyment during these 20 minutes. When reading with your child it is good to do some predicting as to outcome, clarify meaning of words and situations, and summarize what has happened in the story. This all helps develop comprehension. Fluency sheets with extra reading stop and 20 minutes of reading becomes the homework after the first report card.

Keeping track. We keep track of our reading on a monthly log. Please record minutes read each day and initial or sign. This is part of your child's HOMEWORK. It also records minutes for Pizza Hut Book-It reading.

Reading to Your Child - The best advice is: NEVER STOP. Besides enjoying it, children need to hear word phrases and expression to learn good reading techniques. Their comprehension is dependent on having a reading rhythm that fits and makes the words flow. Hearing you read to them is a wonderful way to help this.

Accelerated Reader - St. Nicholas has an Accelerated Reader (AR) program. The program is based on students reading a library book, taking a computerized comprehension test, and earning points toward prizes for every passed test. I fully support this program. Tests can be taken on line at home. For more information check the St. Nicholas website under parent resources - quick links. Your child will earn class rewards for every 5 AR points earned, and will have short and long term reading goals set at the first of the year with incentives included.

Scootpad - Scootpad is our math equivalent to AR for reading. You can download an app or find it on line (see my class page on the school website) Again second grade students earn rewards by working through the program.

Homework, etc.!

Homework - A typical night's homework consists of a 1) writing, spelling workbook, language arts activity, or publishing and 2) math worksheets. Of course 3) reading homework will be recorded on the monthly log. It is recommended that children read 20 minutes every day. **Please encourage your child to read more than the assigned reading.**

The purpose of homework is to practice the concepts taught during the day. This practice is paramount to your child's success. Please be positive when talking to your child about homework. I encourage you to look over your child's completed work and have him/her redo any incorrect answer.

If your child does not turn in an assignment, a Parent Notification is sent home. This Parent Notification is to be signed and returned the next day. If a child receives 3 notifications for any reason during a one month period, he/she loses the citation-free activity privilege for that month.

Homework is on the website!!! Please check the website under the second grade to see what we are up to. Assignments, activities, and reminders will be there for you. Please make this your "GO TO" place for information.

Assessments - Your child will have vocabulary, spelling, and comprehension assessments weekly through the Open Court reading program. In addition math assessments occur after every 5 lessons or about once a week. Grammar assessments will be every week or so, depending upon the lessons taking place.

Makeup Work - Work missed due to an absence will be due two (2) days after returning. For planned absences, please see me ahead of time to get the work.

iPads - Each student will be assigned an iPad. These will be used for math (especially as we learn to use different strategies for solving problems), vocabulary, AR, Scootpad, and other things. Students will not be bringing the iPads home. You will notice the addition of ear phones on the supply list. This will be more sanitary and require the student to be responsible for the ear phones.

Scholastic Book Orders - I will be inundated with order forms from the book companies. I will send them home with a due date for each. If ever you want to use books ordered for gifts, please note it on the order form and I will contact you personally when the order comes in. Hopefully you feel no pressure to order. One benefit is that our class earns free books from our orders.

Volunteering - School policy asks that each family volunteer 15 hours to the school. This can be inside the classroom or outside. The school depends on volunteers to fill needs that might otherwise have to be paid for. Volunteering is one means of keeping tuition in check.

First Reconciliation/First Communion - First Reconciliation is in February and First Communion is the first Saturday in May. For those children receiving these sacraments, please have a copy of your child's baptismal certificate on file with the school by the end of September. If you want your child to receive these sacraments and he/she has not been baptized, see the priest immediately.

We prepare for these sacraments during the scheduled religion class. If your child is not receiving these sacraments, he/she will still be taught the lessons.

Discipline - All children have a right to a positive and peaceful learning environment. The school has a discipline policy based on written warnings and citations. My classroom discipline is based on a warning and separating the child from the situation. For continued misbehavior there will be time on the wall and then a Parent Notification will be sent home. This is to be signed and returned the following day. For serious offenses a citation will be issued.

A citation-free activity is planned every month for those children without a citation or those children who do not have 3 Parent Notifications during that period.

Birthdays - Your child will be presented with a small token from the class as a birthday recognition and will sit in the birthday chair. They will bring home a birthday bag to fill with items that tell about them (instructions are in the bag). We will not have a class celebration beyond this. **Please do not send in treats.**

As a reminder of school policy, party invitations may only be passed out at school if the entire class is invited (or all of the boys or all of the girls). If the party is right after school, please notify the office of a change to your child's normal pickup schedule.

Please take time to read through the Family Handbook. Attendance, emergency procedure, dress code, etc. are explained there.

It is going to be a wonderful year. Hopefully you can tell that **READING** is the key. Reading **WITH** you child this year will be the best gift you will give. You can contact me at the school or email mpackham@stnicholasrupert.org. My home phone is 208-650-6002. Thanks for sharing your child with me.

Marie Packham

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