



Corbitt Connection

October 19, 2009



NO SCHOOL

Monday, October 26th, is a
Teacher's Planning Day.

Parent Night

Tonight is Parent Night. Please join us here at 6:30 p.m. for lots of information on how you can help your child in math this year.

Box Tops

Last week I mentioned to you about collecting, and sending in the *Box Tops for Education* to school. This week I am sending home a special Halloween collection sheet. The deadline on the sheet is officially October 26 but we will gladly accept any and all Box Tops throughout the year.

Spelling Tests

In two weeks, beginning on November 2, we will begin spelling tests. I like to differentiate the spelling words each week because all of the students do not need to study the same words. For this reason your child will participate in "Spelling Investigations" this year. Please see the attached letter for more information.

"What Can I Do at Home?"

Last week as I began sharing ideas with you from, *The 10 Best Ways to Help Your 1st-Grader Succeed in School, A parent's to-do list*, by Ann E. La Forge. This week's tip is regarding writing and it is "treat your child as though he/she's an author." I am a little partial to writing because this is where I can really see the growth and application of all of the literacy skills that are being taught throughout the day. I encourage you to take a few minutes to read through Ms. La Forge's article, it is attached.

Writer's Workshop Update

We are almost ready to wrap up the Narrative writing genre. This week we will be talking about how we can develop our characters. One way we will be developing our characters is through the use of dialogue and using better words for said, such as yelled, whispered, giggled, etc . . .

Reader's Workshop Update

This week we will be reviewing the comprehension strategy of prediction and introducing the comprehension strategy of inferring. Readers make inferences when they use what they already know based on the pictures and text to decide what happens beyond what is explicitly stated.

Skills Block

This week we will be reviewing the last of the short vowels. This week's letter is "u." It is very important that your child knows the difference between the short sounds of "u" and "o." The differences in the sounds are very subtle, just like "i" and "e," so I encourage you to help your child at home to be certain that he/she hears the difference.

Math Workshop Update

This week the students will be working with the 100s chart and it is imperative that your child knows and can write the numbers to 100. The numbers 18 and 81 are very different so it is important that your child also knows that reversing the digits makes a different number.

Important Dates to Remember

TONIGHT	Parent Night @ 6:30 p.m.
October 21	Early Dismissal @ 1:45 p.m.
October 23	End of the 1 st nine weeks
October 26	NO SCHOOL-Planning Day

Treat your child as though he/she's an author

He doesn't have to be Hemingway or Shakespeare. All he has to do is grow up thinking that he is an author. As with reading, you can help in different ways, at different stages of development. Look for these milestones, and use these tips:

MILESTONE: Your child begins to produce marks on a page that resemble written words, and can "read" you what he's written.

How to help:

- Encourage your child to "read" you his words, and express your enjoyment ("What a wonderful story!" or "Thank you so much for sharing that with me").
- Keep providing the materials and time for your child to write her own stories and books.
- Write stories and poems alongside your child, and read to her what you've written (even if you think it's awful — your child won't judge it).

MILESTONE: Your child understands that sounds are represented by certain letters, and begins to write actual letters to represent real words ("sn" for sun, for instance).

How to help:

- Encourage your child to write notes, keep a journal, or write her own books.
- Offer to rewrite his words or sentences, using the real spellings.
- When reading together, point out how most sentences have the first letter of the first word capitalized, spaces between each separate word, and a period at the end.
- Mention who the author is when you read books together, and talk about what authors (and illustrators) do. Point out that when your child writes stories, he's an author, too.

MILESTONE: Your child begins to fill out the words she writes, using more standardized spellings.

How to help:

- Don't act overly concerned about spelling. Instead, continue to praise your child for the imagination and ideas he expresses in writing.
- Gently correct spelling on school homework assignments (when the teacher requests it). Your attitude should convey "Let me help you" rather than "Get it right!"
- Reinforce the idea that a piece of written work rarely just happens: It gets written, edited, proofread, and rewritten before the final copy is published.
- Let your child create a quiet writing corner in the house, and encourage her to write frequently. Give her ideas about what to write if she's stumped. For instance: "Write a note to Grandma to say thank you for the birthday present"; "Write down your favorite memory from when you were little"; or "Write a story about your favorite toy."
- Have your child write lists — of anything from what she wants for her birthday or what her favorite movies are, to what she loves most about school or what she wants you to buy at the grocery store for snacks.
- Let your child see you writing, and talk about how you're using writing: to express thanks, for instance, communicate information to office mates, lodge a complaint, request vacation information, remember errands; create a shopping list, etc.
- Get the whole family involved in keeping a vacation or "special days" journal.