

Friday, January 18, 2008

Dear Parents:

We have finished the second week of our unit on Kenya. We have learned about clothing, markets and school in Kenya. We learned that most people in Kenya speak a different language called Swahili. We learned how to count to ten in Swahili. We also learned other Swahili words. Ask your child to tell you some.

Our Social Studies link book this week was Masai and I. The Read Aloud Book was Zomo The Rabbit. Our KinderFriends Book was Achoo!. The Phonics Library book was Go, Cat!. Our AlphaFriend this week was Gertie Goose, who introduced the letter of the week, "Gg" making the hard g sound. Instead of a Barbara Saul book, the kindergarten teachers got together and wrote a new book, My Swahili Counting Book.

Reading Logs are due every Friday. Blank logs are sent home with this note every Friday. I ask that someone read for 20 minutes to or with your child at least 5 times a week. I cannot overemphasize how important this reading time is for your child. I would like to share an article from Ladies Home Journal entitled, "TV or not TV":

Plopping your infant in front of the TV won't help him learn to speak: in fact, it may impair his language development.

Monitoring the speech progress of over 1,000 children aged nine months to four years, Sally Ward, Ph.D., a senior therapist at London's Speech, Language and Hearing Center, found that of the one in five children with poor listening and speaking skills, almost all lived in homes where the TV was constantly on. This "auditory chaos" says Ward, drowned out interaction between parent and child - essential in language acquisition. "We could present a ten-month-old watching TV with a bag of toys and find it extremely difficult to get him interested in them or us."

The good news? When parents spent at least thirty minutes each day with their child without TV or background noise, "After three years," Ward says, "the average language comprehension of the experimental group soared." - Aimee Kendall

Reminder: NO SCHOOL next Monday, January 21 (Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday)

The end of the second quarter is Friday, January 25. Parent/Teacher report card conferences will be held February 4-8 with make-ups on Wednesday, Feb. 13. Next week I will begin conducting formal assessments of the students. I am asking for your help in getting the best results from your child. Please try to ensure that your son or daughter has a full and restful night's sleep. Starting the day with a nutritious breakfast will prepare them to do their best at school. I am looking forward to meeting with you and discussing your child's progress.