

Friday, September 11, 2009

Dear Parents:

We have completed our second week of school and it certainly has been a busy one. The children are starting to get used to the routine of school. Our theme this week was shapes and colors. We learned poems about the shapes and played I Spy. Your child should be able to identify circles, squares, triangles and rectangles. Our Big & Little book was Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? We also worked on listening skills. Ask your child to tell you and then demonstrate the five things active listeners do (*sit up, hands in lap, eyes on speaker, no talking, & concentrate*). We practiced writing our names. I would like them to learn to write their name with a capital letter at the beginning and the rest in small letters.

Your child's homework assignment every night is to spend 20 minutes reading to or with someone. To help fulfill this goal, I am asking that you assist him/her in keeping a reading log. I cannot overemphasize the importance of sharing reading experiences with your child. Reading to or with him/her is the best thing you can do to enhance his/her learning. Our most important mission this year is preparing the children to learn how to read. Your cooperation in providing your child with reading experiences in the home will be an essential component of his/her success in accomplishing this goal.

After 20 minutes of reading to or with your child, have him/her write the title of the story on the reading log. A reading log is a list of stories that each child has "read". *The child's writing will be at the developmental level of the child.* Please accept any valid attempt by your child to write the title. The adult who heard the story will then sign his or her name or initial the child's entry.

Please return the reading logs to school each Friday. We will have a celebration for all students who return their reading logs. New reading logs will be sent home each Friday and extra reading logs are available in the classroom. If you fill up one side of the paper, there is room on the back for more. If you do not have one, just write on a plain sheet of paper.

To receive full homework credit the front of the Reading Log must be completed and returned to school. The student's homework grade on the report card will reflect the number of properly completed reading logs returned to school.

An important goal of the program is to have the children believe that they are readers. **Children are not expected to read each word on each page verbatim.** Depending on the ability of the individual child, there will be great variability in what each child can "read". Some children will be able to memorize the words, phrase, or sentence on each page. Others will be able to paraphrase a version of the text on the page. Still other children will give lengthy descriptions of the pictures on the pages. **All of these behaviors are considered reading.**