

Friday, October 9, 2009

Dear Parents:

We have begun our next three-week unit: Community Helpers. Our Read Aloud book was I Went Walking. Our science link book was What's My Favorite Color. The KinderFriend Book was My School. The Big Book was Pumpkins Grow. The wordless Phonics Book was My Red Boat. We met the first of our Alphafriends this week: Sammy Seal. He helps us to learn the letter "Ss". We learned the sound of "Ss", how to write it, thought of words that begin with the "Ss" sound and recognized the letter "Ss" in words that we saw. Ask your child to tell you all the pictures that start with S in the My Red Boat book.

I want to talk about writing. Daily writing is an important part of our program. From the first day, your child has been immersed in a print-rich environment that will model and encourage the writing process. One of the first experiences your child will have with writing will be the use of a journal. Your child will have an opportunity to write about a personal or theme-related experience. The journal serves as a valuable tool in helping children to transfer his/her ideas to paper and encourages writing for ownership. When your child shares his/her writing with you, you may find it difficult to read. Please do not be alarmed!

Young writers often use various emergent writing forms to convey their written ideas. Children at the beginning stages often use drawings, scribble or non-phonemic letter strings to represent words. On many occasions these forms are mixed. As the child gains more experience with print and it's meaning, these forms become more conventional and readable. Simply ask your child to read his/her writing to you. If your child has forgotten what was written, ask what he/she was thinking about while writing.

At this time, I am asking that you not correct your child's spelling. The goal of these early experiences in writing is not to practice handwriting and correct spelling, but to write for meaning and self-expression. Just as you accepted and celebrated your child's early speech approximations ("Dada" for daddy or "baba" for bottle), try to accept and encourage these writing models and guide your child at his/her own pace.

Let's work together to celebrate your child as a writer and help him/her to develop a life long desire to write. If you have any additional questions, please contact me.

You should have received your child's progress report in the mail sometime this week. If you have not yet received it, please see me for a copy.