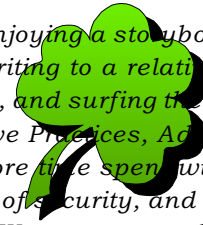


Parliament Oak News for March 2010

From the Principal's Desk...

Family Literacy refers to the many ways families develop and use literacy skills, from enjoying a storybook together at bedtime and during the day, to playing with word games, singing, writing to a relative or friend, sharing day-to-day tasks such as making a shopping list or using a recipe, and surfing the Internet for fun and interesting sites. (Family Literacy in Canada: Profiles of Effective Practices, Anne Thomas, Soleil Publishing Inc., 1998). It has been proven that for a child, the more time spent with a parent reading aloud increases his or her level of attachment, enhances a sense of security, and imparts the knowledge that their parent feels they are worthwhile people with whom to spend time. We encourage all parents to read with their child(ren) whether they are 4 years old or 14. Develop a routine of spending 15 minutes before bedtime reading to each other. Nothing inspires children to read more than a shiny new book!



☘ **March Break**

There will be no classes for students from Monday, March 14th to Friday March 18th. Classes will resume at 8:45 A.M. on Monday, March 21, 2010. We hope that students and staff will take this opportunity to relax and return refreshed for the final school term.

☘ **Students of the Month**

Congratulations to our students who demonstrated improvement this term:

JK/SK1 Sienna Browning, Nicholas Kononyuk, Melina Karpetas

JK/SK2 Luke Midgley

1 . . . Ava McGuire,

2/ 3. Keith Martins, Owen Mummery

3/ 4. William Couroux, Alexia Kofell

5. . . Alice Woods, Nathan Zalepa, Diego Sancho

6. . . Sean Papadimitriou, Seth Woelke

7/ 8. Jason Walton

The character trait we will focus on for the month of March will be perseverance. Students demonstrate the effort and determination to complete a task to the best of their ability and to stick to that task even when it is difficult.

☘ **Kindergarten Enrolment**

We are still accepting Junior and Senior Kindergarten registrations for September 2011. If you have a child who will be four or five years of age on or before December 31, 2011, please call the school. To register a student, you will need the child's birth certificate, immunization record and health card number. If you know a neighbour or friend in our school area with a child who may attend Kindergarten, please ask them to call the school.

☘ **News from the Library**

Reading has a huge impact on student success in school. Reading aloud to our children and encouraging them to read makes a real difference in their lives. It impacts thinking skills, grammar, vocabulary and introduces students to interesting characters, settings and adventures. In April we will be hosting a Young Author's Day at Parliament

Oak . We are please to welcome author Eric Walters to our school that day to speak to our students. Further details will be sent home after the March Break.

Use the following suggested books lists to teach kids the joy of reading

Suggested Reading List: Ages 3-5

1. The House in the Night by Susan Marie Swanson
2. How to Heal a Broken Wing by Bob Graham
3. The Snow Day by Komako Sakai
4. Up, Down and Around by Katherine Ayres
5. Never Take a Shark to the Dentist by Judi Barrett
6. Big Bad Bunny by Frannie Billingsley
7. Monkey and Me by Emily Gravett
8. Oragne Pear Apple Bear by Emily Gravett
9. A Kitten Tale by Eric Rohmann
10. I'm the Biggest Thing in the Ocean by Kevin Sherry

Suggested Reading List: Ages 6-9

1. Goin' Someplace Special by Patricia McKissack
2. Spuds by Karen Hesse
3. Jack Plank Tells Tales by Natalie Babbitt
4. Mind Your Manners, B. B. Wolf by Judy Sierra
5. Moxy Maxwell Does Not Love Stuart Little by Peggy Gifford;
6. Snoring Beauty by Bruce Hale
7. Just Grace by Charise Mericle Harper
8. The Chicken-Chasing Queen of Lamar County by Janice Harrington
9. Oh, Theodore!: Guinea Pig Poems by Susan Katz;
10. Diary of a Fly by Doreen Cronin

Suggested Reading List: Ages 10-12

1. Savvy by Ingrid Law
2. The Graveyard Book by Neil Gaiman
3. Ten Things I Hate about Me by Randa Abdel-Fattah
4. Edward's Eyes by Patricia MacLachlan
5. The London Eye Mystery by Siobhan Dowd
6. Brendan Buckley's Universe and Everything in It by Sundee T. Frazier
7. Igraine the Brave by Cornelia Funke
8. The Willoughbys by Lois Lowry
9. Billy Creekmore: A Novel by Tracey Porter



10. Emma-Jean Lazarus Fell Out of a Tree by Lauren Tarshis

11. Nurk: The Strange, Surprising Adventures of a (Somewhat) Brave Shrew by Ursula Vernon

☼ **Parliament Oak Silver Birch & Silver Birch Express Book Clubs**

We have had a great turnout this year. There are 16 participants in the Silver Birch Book Clubs. Parliament Oak students have joined the 2011 Silver Birch Book Clubs. We are reading a variety of excellent non-fiction and fiction books written by Canadian authors and selected by the Ontario Library Association. In May students will join thousands of kids from across Ontario in voting for their favourite books. Only book club members are eligible to vote for the Silver Birch Awards, making this truly a children's choice award for best new Canadian literature. Students in the Silver Birch Club will have the opportunity to attend the DSBN Silver Birch Celebration of Literacy Student Conference. A special thank you to Mrs. Janzen for dedicating her time to run the Silver Birch Express Book Club.

☼ **News from the Tech Desk**

As technology is bound to rule our present and future, it is good to obtain a 'know how' of the technological reforms at the earliest age. Children learn faster and can adapt to changes relatively easily. If they are trained during their school years, they have high chances of becoming experts in technology. An early beginning is always beneficial in the long run. When we know that technology is bound to be a part of their future, it is best to introduce them to it during school life. Instead of seeing them struggle with learning later in life, it is advisable to give them a basic idea of the technological reforms

(<http://www.buzzle.com/articles/importance-of-technology-in-schools.html>).

Students are being introduced to many different media forms. They are learning to blog, vlog and create their own slideshows. They are also learning the importance of internet safety, navigating effectively through websites as well as determining the accuracy of the sites they visit. If parents would like more information on the websites their children are visiting or questions on internet safety, contact Mrs. Hamdani.

☼ **Royal Canadian Legion Public Speaking**

Congratulations to Sadie Williams and Max Schiff Malins who competed in the Legion Public Speaking Contest on February 27th.

Congratulations to Sadie who will compete on March 5th at the Zone Championships. We are proud of both Panthers for their courage to compete in this event! Well done!

☼ **From Your School Council**

We had a very busy month in February. Our Parent Community Conference was very successful with over 70 attendees. The Pasta Dinner raised nearly \$1000 to be put towards expansion of our Learning Commons. Thank you to John Woods for organising the food, Stone Road Grille for providing

the salad, Epicurean Restaurant for providing food and preparation space and all the Parliament Oak families who provided help and gift donations. It was great to have so many Parliament Oak staff attend as well. Our next Parent Council meeting is Tuesday March 8, 7 pm in the Staff room.

☼ **Student Performance Boards**

When you're in the school, we hope you will take the time to look at the Performance Boards posted in the hallways outside the classrooms.

What is a Performance Board?

A performance board is a display of student work that is accompanied by several supports to help the learner understand the task at hand and to assist the observer in interpreting the task/work posted.

What will I see on the performance board?

One essential component of a performance board is a description of the task (i.e. What did the students do?). The curriculum expectations met by completing the task may also be listed (i.e. Why did the students complete the task?). Finally, some type of assessment tool (rubric, checklist, student self reflection, etc.) to indicate to the student or other observer what was expected will be included. In addition to these items, you may also see: exemplars of levelled work (e.g. What does a Level 3 piece of work look like for that task?); anchor charts indicating key concepts essential for successful completion of the task; and descriptive feedback on the strengths and next steps of the work provided by either the teacher, a peer or the student him/herself.

What is the purpose of performance boards?

A performance board is a physical representation of a learning journey. It lays out the path followed to not only bring students to the successful completion of the task, but also to encourage reflection for future growth. In some cases, the board will clearly show the increase in achievement from one point in the learning block to another. For example, please take a look at our grade 4-8 performance boards which show growth in the concept of inferring that was the class focus for several weeks. Mrs. Pyle's students have actually graphed their progress—it's truly amazing! The primary performance boards demonstrated how students "Bumped Up" their work when they made connections while the kindergarten performance boards show how students showed growth when making predictions.

How do performance boards fit into the school growth goal on assessment?

Rick Stiggins (a prominent researcher on assessment) states that 'Students can hit every target they can see.' Performance boards make the target obvious and help scaffold the learning process for students.

Please join us in celebrating our student achievement on display!

☼ **A Great Learning Tool**

We want to share some great news with you about our **Premier AT Home** website where you can download reading, writing and study tools that can be used on your **home** computers. This program is sponsored by our school in conjunction with Premier Literacy. If you haven't already used the site, you'll want to take advantage of the free literacy tool downloads from

www.premierathome.com. You can download software, documentation and support videos using the following login information.

Username: dsbon

Password: enable

Please note the following: The login page is customized specifically for our School Board. The interface and graphics make the site user-friendly.

- A Getting Started page will help you determine which tools might be best for you.
- A detailed description of each tool is right on the site so you don't have to look anywhere else.
- Additional support options like online video tutorials, online product manuals and email and phone contact information for Technical Support and Customer Service.

A QuickStart Guide can be obtained through the office. Send us a note, and we'll send one home with your son/daughter! The guide shows you the interface features and functions, a list of all the available tools and steps on how to download the software for your computer. Don't forget that these tools will work on Windows XP and Vista operating systems. (Older Windows operating systems are not supported.) We're excited about this technology and hope that you'll make use of the great tools that can benefit you at school and at home.

☼ **Communication Matters**

Smart Talk from your Board Speech-Language Pathologists

Develop Word Meanings to Improve Your Child's Comprehension Skills

Understanding word meanings is essential for comprehending and understanding what you are reading. However, vocabulary is a weak area for many students. Given a list of words to learn, many students will complete the task but may not actually learn what the words really mean in order to develop their spoken language and vocabulary knowledge. Developing vocabulary as part of knowledge structure requires more energy and focus than simply memorizing words.

Develop vocabulary by going beyond the 'label' and the 'spelling'.

- Teach word synonyms (words that mean the same thing e.g. night, evening, dusk), antonyms or opposites (night and day), and multiple meaning words (e.g. block; a lego block, a city block, a building block). Also teach categories, classifications and associations between words (e.g. a shoe and sock go together -are associated; and belong in the clothing category as 'things you wear').
- Illustrate new words. Show pictures or video clips that demonstrate the meaning of a word.

Help your child draw and label something illustrating the meaning of the word.

"Flashcards" can be made more meaningful with pictures as well.

- Play "vocabulary charades." Have your child draw a word from a hat and act it out.
- Play "find the word used in the real world".

Help your child identify when he hears or sees a new vocabulary word being used in the real world - beyond the learning activities designed for school.

Check out the following web site for more ideas and fun ways to develop word meanings:

www.enchantedlearning.com

☼ **Learners in Action at the DSBN Road Race**

Come on Parliament Oak it's time to lace up those running shoes and get your feet moving once again for the DSBN Road Race. You can walk or run a 1Km or 5Km race on Sunday, April 17th, 2011. You can get a form from your teacher or from the office. The cost is \$10 per race entry under 20, \$20 for adults. A DSBN Road Race t-shirt is given to all runners who register before April 8th. Please return all forms and cheques to Mrs. Hadfield by April 2nd if you want to receive a t-shirt.



☼ **Winners Day Camp ~ March Break 2010**
Winners Day Camps will be offering camps this March Break & Summer to all children ages 3 - 12. March Break Camp runs from March 14 - 18, 2011 and the Summer Camp runs from July 4 - August 26, 2011. This March Break Winners Day Camps will once again be located at the Kinsmen Scout Hall, 430 King Street. **Join us this March Break while we get stranded on a deserted island during our Island Adventure theme.**

As of this summer, Winners Day Camps will be moving to the new community centre. Full day and half day camps available. Winners is back with an experienced staff of certified school teachers and campers will participate in cooperative games, sports including floor hockey & soccer, arts & crafts, drama, special events and so much more! All sessions are still open. Please call or email to register and be sure to check out our website for weekly themes and further information: <http://www3.sympatico.ca/winnersdaycamp>
Web Site: winnersdaycamps.ca or call Jennifer Caughill: (905) 468-9408 We hope to see you!

