

ELEMENTARY FOCUS FOR PARENTS

October 16, 2009

FROM LISA BROCK, THE ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL

www.mtscougars.org 

Elementary Happenings

Visual Lesson Bags

Joyce Wright did a terrific job integrating **Bible, language arts, and math** in a PK-4 lesson recently. She had the students pull items and word cards from a bag and then guessed which Bible story it went with and why, such as the angel went with the story of Jacob's ladder because he saw angels in his dream. After grouping the objects and words into the stories they belonged, they identified the beginning sounds of many of the objects. Then, they counted the number of objects in each story group and placed a number card beside them. The students remembered so many details about the stories and are obviously learning those letters and numbers, too!

Melanie Speck did a similar activity with her kindergarten students as she introduced our **Tennessee** state symbols and other facts about our state. Students reached in and pulled an object, often a symbol of TN, out of a bag as the teacher began to tell about it. They felt a coon-skin cap, examined the state flag, looked at a walking horse, talked about the music for which we are known and many other things. She read parts the ABC book, V is for Volunteer, throughout the discussion, sharing interesting background information about Tennessee. Identifying the three sections of the state, they found where the Smokey Mountains are and where we are located on a map. They listened and sang along with "Rocky Top" and then listened to Elvis music while they colored their own Tennessee booklet.



Fall Field Trips

Since school started, our students have been on a variety of field trips, expanding their educational experiences and strengthening their relationships with their peers and teachers. Here are some of the places they have been:

PK-4: Kroger - watch meat ground, visit the big freezer, scanning items at the check-out ;
Walden Farm - Fall, harvest



TK: Little Caesars - how pizza is made

K: Discovery Center - many uses of wheel;
TPAC - The Hungry Caterpillar play
Walden Farm - Fall, harvest

1st: Discover Center - Murfree Springs Wetlands;
Walden Pumpkin Farm - Fall, harvest

2nd: The Sam Davis Home Heritage Days;
Ridley 4-H - animals
Great Harvest Bread Co. - bread making process & tasting, healthy foods (2-K only)

3rd: Nashville Zoo - animal habitats

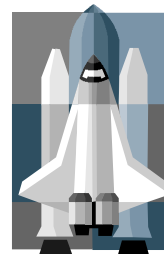


4th: Carnton Plantation, Oaklands Mansion - Civil War History and early American life

5th: Land Between the Lakes (LBL) - three days of hiking, canoeing, campfire, nature study, Planetarium visit, conquering a challenge course, and animal viewing between the Kentucky and Barkley Lakes



6th: Huntsville/Chattanooga - space & rocket center, Chattanooga Zoo, Tennessee Aquarium, Ruby Falls, and two IMAX educational presentations on space and the ocean



Hall of Famers

9/8 1 - Jennings
9/14 5 - Cooper
9/21 3 - Oxley
9/28 4 - Pruitt

Lunch Bunch

9/8 5th Grade
9/14 2nd Grade
9/21 4th Grade
9/28 1st Grade

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- ◆ OCT 19-23—FALL BREAK
- ◆ OCT 30—Fall Parties
- ◆ NOV 2—NO SCHOOL, CHR SCHOOL IN-SERVICE
- ◆ NOV 5—STEAK DINNER

This month, I have included an article on reading which is age-specific for your child. On the back of this Focus, I included an article on encouraging pre-reading skills for the PK parents, tips on reading aloud for the TK-3rd grade parents, or an article on reading comprehension for the 4th - 6th grade parents. We will post all three articles on the website with this month's Parent Focus if you are interested in reading all three, and I encourage you to do so! Reading is by far the most important subject for which success is vital in their educational process.

In Christ,
Lisa Brock

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To our MTCS Pre-K Parents:

The following article is provided courtesy of the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL) through Scholastic. I hope you enjoy it.

Happy reading!

Lisa Brock
MTCS Elementary Principal

Make Reading Part of Your Preschooler's Everyday Life

Do you enjoy reading? Do you look at the newspaper? Read magazines? Go to the library? Chances are, if you do any of these activities, your preschool child is on his way to becoming a reader.

The process of learning to read is complex. While there is a lot of information about this process, one of the most important things to know is that parents help their children learn to read as they go about the routines of everyday life.

The basics of learning to read are talking, listening, reading and writing. As children have conversations with caring adults, they hear both new and familiar words and their vocabulary grows.

Opportunities for adults and children to talk together happen during daily routines such as riding in the car or bus, doing household chores like fixing dinner and folding laundry, or bathing and getting ready for bed.

A major part of conversation is listening. When children talk, adults listen and respond. Then children listen and respond, and so the flow of conversation happens.

Remember snuggling with a favorite adult as he or she read aloud or told you stories? Have you watched your preschooler "pretend" to read to his favorite teddy bear or younger sibling? Have you read his favorite story over and over and over again? These experiences tell children that reading is fun. And when things are fun, they are repeated.

During these reading experiences, children become familiar with many elements of print, such as words and the symbols (letters) that go together to make words.

As your child sees letters, she begins to connect them to familiar words, especially the letters that make up her name. It is a natural next step for her to want to write those letters.

Children will copy the actions of the adults who are important to them. When they see parents make a grocery list, they want to use pencil and paper to make their own list. A simple way to encourage these beginning writing activities is to have pencils, markers, crayons and scrap paper available for your child to use.

The more children get to practice behaviors connected with talking, listening, reading and writing, the easier it is for them to become enthusiastic readers. While you as a parent have a big influence on these early literacy behaviors, it is important to remember that opportunities for literacy experiences occur while you and your child share in the basic routines of everyday life.

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