

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

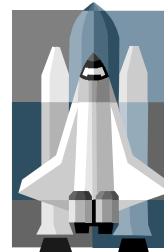


4th: Carnton Plantation, Oaklands Mansion - Civil War History and early American life

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

OVER



Dear MTCS TK – 3rd grade Parents,

The following article is provided courtesy of Scholastic Inc. I have always loved the read aloud time with my children, and I am sure you do as well. Here are a few tips to help make the experience an even better one!

Happy Reading!

Lisa Brock

Read With Panache

Sharing a book with your child? Ham it up!

By Jessica Tom

Laugh, cry, scream, whisper: reading doesn't have to be a silent activity. Transform the read-aloud experience by giving your child an impassioned one-person show that will stimulate his wonder for both the written and spoken word.

Once upon a time . . . : Authors spend a lot of time crafting their opening lines. Give the words the weight they deserve by reading them with extra importance. Who will we meet? What will happen? Grab your child's attention with an authoritative voice.

X said to Y, who immediately told Z: Read character names slowly and clearly so your child knows who is acting on whom. Books revolve around character, so spare confusion and make sure she knows who's who!

"Read to me!" the monster boomed: Animate characters with different voices. If you have time, preview books before you read them out loud with your child. Otherwise, you might stereotype and give a nasty princess a sweet voice, or a gentle giant a scary one.

Trust the layout: It's been well thought out. Take cues from the book's spacing. Line and page breaks are purposeful and give you an idea how the words ebb and flow.

Look for rhythm. Look for rhyme. Anticipate words every time: Tune into the author's sense of timing to accentuate the texture of the narrative. Many children's books will reveal a sort of melody that will delight your young listener.

Raise your voice! (And lower it too): Avoid toneless blah-blah-blah by altering your volume and tempo. Read loudly and quickly during frantic scenes, slowly and soothingly during tranquil ones.

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