

BRETON DOWNS ELEMENTARY

2nd GRADE NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER, 2011

Dear Parents,

Our classes are off and running into another busy month. The students enjoyed our mystery unit in October. They became efficient at solving mysteries and looking for clues. We enjoyed the field trips to the Farmer's Market. We have completed our study of rules and laws. We really enjoyed our visit from library, the fire station, Officer Perez and the city offices. It was a very exciting time with tons of questions.

This month our theme focus will be Native Americans. We have several legends that we will read and discuss during reader's workshop. We will be studying four Native American tribes as well as the Ottawa tribe and visiting the public museum to see the Native American exhibit.

We will be visiting the museum on **Tuesday, November 22**. Mrs. Eldersveld's class will be leaving at 9:30, Mrs. Gould's at 8:25 a.m. and Mrs. Dood's at 10:30. All classes will be eating lunch at the museum since it runs into lunch time so those students need to bring a disposable lunch to school that day. **We are in need of drivers for this field trip**, please **email** your child's teacher if you can drive that day and how many students you can take. If you have any Native American stories, books or artifacts that could be shared with our classes this month we would love to borrow them. Please make sure your name is on it.

READING

The students are doing a great job of reading independently and selecting books that are at an appropriate level of difficulty. Read aloud time is a favorite part of the day for all of us! We have been reading many mystery chapter books such as Vampires Don't Wear Polka Dots, and the A to Z Mysteries. The students enjoyed using clues to predict the suspects and solve the mystery. During this unit we reflect back on stories we have read together. When we meet other characters, or similar problems and situations in other stories, we compare and contrast the similarities and differences.

BOOK CLUB

The children are doing a great job of reading at home, and recording on the homework sheets, and adding up the number of minutes they have read. Thank you for supporting this reading project. We have supplied our prize boxes with some great prizes that have proven to be great incentives. If you have any ideas for simple or inexpensive prizes please let us know. Any items at home in your goodie drawer that you do not need would be welcomed additions to our treasure boxes. Happy Reading!

WRITING WORKSHOP

The students are progressing well in their writing. They have several opportunities throughout the day to write, such as responding to what they have read, writing workshop, conversation notebooks, theme time etc. The descriptions the children are using in writing workshop are amazing. We hope they have opportunities to write at home too. You can leave messages or notes for each other, have them make lists for you, etc. What a great way to encourage communication skills.

COMPUTERS

We visit the lab once a week to practice various skills. It is important that the children use proper hand placement. Please help in this area if your child uses the computer at home. As they become more proficient they will feel comfortable doing writing projects on the computer. In addition to keyboarding, we work on other projects such as word processing, visiting websites and math programs.

MATH

The students are becoming more capable at solving the story problems that we work on each day. We talk about how they arrive at their answers and explore strategies they need to think about and use when problem solving. Encourage problem solving at home when the occasion arises. Practice in this area would be beneficial. This month we will be working on addition and subtraction strategies, particularly 2-digit addition and subtraction.

We are also working on the Mad Minutes every week. Some of the students are making excellent progress. Rolling dice at home, using fact flash cards, computer games, etc. that help speed up recall would be helpful. Practice on the weekend is very helpful especially when it is specific to the type of problem your student is working on at the time. (Example hard addition, easy subtract)

HANDWRITING

We are using the program called Handwriting Without Tears this year. We've noticed that some of the students are only "bumping" (touching) the lines as we refer to it, during handwriting practice. Our goal is to encourage using the lines as guides in all of their writing.

CLOTHING

The weather has been up and down. Please make sure your child has warm clothing to keep them comfortable on the chilly days. It is helpful to have the student's name on sweaters and sweatshirts, mittens, hats, and gloves in order to return lost items to their owner.

SPECIAL DATES:

November 3 Parent Teacher Conferences 4-7pm

November 8 Trip to Porter Hills @ 12:45 p.m.

November 8 Parent Teacher Conferences 4-7pm

November 10, 11 No School

November 17 Variety Show

November 18 Native American Speaker John Pigeon

November 22 Trip to the Museum all classes.

November 23, 24, 25 Thanksgiving Vacation

November 30 Native American Pow-Wow in the Breton Gym

BOOK ORDERS

There are great selections in this month's orders. Please make your checks out to scholastic. Remember to put your child's name on the bottom of the order. If you would like to purchase books for gift giving at the holidays please write HOLD at the bottom of the slip and

we will save it for you. A book is a gift that gives all year long. As teachers it would be our wish that all students get a book or magazine at holiday time. What a great way to support your child's reading development. Please return orders and payment to school by **Wednesday, November 9.**

Items Needed for Pow-Wow:

Michael's coupons

Burlap

Large ziplock bags

Colored toothpicks

Natural feathers

Wooden beads-smaller size

1 inch strips of fabric 10 inches or longer

Paper grocery bags with handles

Altoid containers

Y stick (branch from a tree)

Colored sand (sometimes you can find at a dollar store)

Indian Fry Bread bakers (please contact your child's teacher if you can do this)