

← Back

Please Read: Moonlight Leopards Weekly Newsletter January 14

Monica Schuster • 18 days ago • Friday, Jan 14 at 4:29 PM • **1st Grade - Monica**

Dear Families,

As we strive to find balance during this wild ride in the COVID surge, we continue to find it important for children to have a place to express themselves and their feelings and concerns. We have talked in our morning circles about the changes they feel in our classroom and on campus, most notably the constant reminders of: “mask up” and “remember your bubble space”. Students shared “me too” signs so that others would know they were not alone in their feelings. Despite the changes we all feel and notice, we have continued to have days filled with joy, excitement, and, of course, learning!

Here are some highlights from our week. Be sure to check out the photos.

Ask Me: What are features that help you find out information in a non-fiction book?

This week students worked in their study animal teams to complete a Scavenger Hunt aimed at teaching them about how to navigate non-fiction texts. Students searched for text features such as table of contents, index, glossary, captions, labels, diagrams, headings, and bold words. Knowing how to use these features will support them as they read to find answers to their study questions.

If you stepped foot into our classroom, you would notice the beginnings of a beautiful, collaborative mural that students will use to demonstrate their learning. Each study team will be challenged with creating a habitat where their animal can survive at night. The Moonlight Leopards were asked to consider what they would need to know in order to meet this challenge. Their list of questions included:

- What is their prey?
- Who are their predators?
- Where do they live?
- How do they protect themselves?
- Do they need to drink water to survive?
- What are their special body features?

Next week the teams will conduct their research and begin recording their information into their own non-fiction books. Their facts will help them add to the mural, which will be used to build their understandings about habitat, ecosystems, food webs, and consequences of human impacts on the environment. We look forward to sharing how this project unfolds.

Ask Me: What did Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. want to change and what strategies did he use?

In honor of Dr. King’s birthday and legacy, the Moonlight Leopards began investigating who he was and what contributions he made to the world that we continue to benefit from today. We started by listing what they knew (or thought they knew) about him. They named ideas like:

- He was a nice person.
- He wanted to make people happy.
- He wanted to change laws that made it unfair for people of color.

We used many different picture books to start learning the story of Dr. King's life and how he made change. From these texts, the class understood that the biggest problem he wanted to solve was helping Black people have equal rights under the law. We talked about segregation, equality, rights, and forms of protest and the kiddos volunteered their own emotional responses, saying things like "we would miss out on all of our friendships and getting to know each other if these laws were still here." There were many hugs and 'I love you's' throughout the conversations.

We noticed patterns between Dr. King and Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta in their uses of people power, marches, and protest to make change. Hearing the helicopters overhead this week as Oakland Tech students walked out highlighted how powerful these strategies remain today. Check out the photo of our class poster to see all of the learning points shared by the students this week.

To launch us into the holiday weekend, the students created a list of Dr. King's values based on our readings which included: learning, God, teaching, kindness, helping, peace, and equality. We talked about how this holiday break is often used as a time to honor and reflect King's values by giving back to our communities through service projects. This weekend we encourage your family to participate in some **activities** happening in the bay! Please share any photos if you choose to participate. We would love to share them with the class when we return on Tuesday.

Ask Me: What is the baseword for shells? And what are 2 sounds that the suffix -s makes?

Our new concept in Foundations is creating plurals by adding the suffix -s to a baseword. For example, if they want to write the word 'pills' they are identifying the baseword 'pill' and then adding the suffix -s. We are also working on identifying when the suffix -s sounds like /s/ or /z/ or when a suffix is actually needed in a word. For example, we are analyzing words like 'fox' and noticing it is not plural so it does not need an -s. The students practice marking up these words daily to help cement these concepts. Ask them to show you how to write and mark up the word 'shells' to see these skills for yourselves!

Ask Me: What books did you bring home from school?

On Tuesday your 1st grader brought home their Tuesday Folder with 2 borrowed books from our classroom library. These are books they have read before and are at their just right reading levels. Please read and re-read these books throughout the week. There are many benefits of re-reading books including increased fluency and comprehension skills, Encourage them to re-read so their voice sounds like their speaking voice. Ask them about the plots and characters. Get them to re-tell the stories to you with details pulled from the text. Push them to make predictions and ask what their thinking is.

Please treat these books gently, as you would public library books. You might designate a special book spot so you can keep track of them at home easily. Any damaged books will need to be replaced.

Please return all borrowed books NEXT Wednesday in the folder. Going forward, we will only release more books to each student if they return the ones they borrowed from the previous week with their protective folder.

For my visual learners, the schedule will look something like this:)

Tuesday: new books sent home

Wednesday: old books returned

Tuesday: new books sent home

Wednesday: old books returned

Ask Me: Tell me a math story that matches an equation like $\square - 7 = 4$

In Number Corner, first graders are practicing how to solve equations with missing numbers. They have been learning how to use number trees to help solve these unknowns, read equations and determine what real-life stories could match. For example, when students read $\square - 2 = 3$, they came up with sentences like: "There were some bats in a tree. If 2 bats flew away and there were only 3 left, then how many bats were in the tree to start with?" We encourage you to tell math stories at home to help them see how math plays out in their everyday lives.

In math workshop we played many games including '50 or Bust' to practice place value, automaticity with adding 10 and some more, skip counting by 10s, and writing equations vertically.

Important Updates and Reminders:

-We encourage you and your kiddos to participate in local volunteer Opportunities in honor of MLK Day of Service.

-No School Monday, Jan. 17th: no school/no camp

-Do you have 1-gallon plastic milk jugs to donate? We are hoping to use them for projects related to our nocturnal animal study. We will need 15 for my class and another 15 for Sarah's. Please clean them and send them in if you have some to share!

-Covid Safety Plan: Park Day updated the Park Day School COVID Safety Plan to reflect our current protocols and the newest guidance from the California Department of Public Health and Alameda County Public Health Department. Please refer to it with any questions about our protocols and what to do in the case of an exposure or a positive case. Note that in some cases our protocols are more strict than those recommended by the County. As we have shared before, please keep your student home if they have any symptoms of COVID, and please notify the office if your student tests positive for COVID.

-Students and staff are required to wear disposable KN95s/N95 OR double masks. Students may double mask with a surgical mask with a cloth mask on top. No fabric masks with filters of any kind are allowed at this time as we are not checking masks. In the morning, please make sure to tie the ear elastics so they properly fit your child's face, including the 2-3 extras that they have in their backpacks. Twisting them is not working across the board.

-At-Home Learning: If more than 15% of a class has COVID or has been exposed to COVID, we will begin temporary distance learning at home. With that, information about Zoom and SeeSaw is provided in our Resource Hub. Be on the lookout for an email from Park with more information about the school's plan for remote learning.

-Check out our Resource Hub for logins to Lexia (recommended 15 minutes 3 times a week), DreamBox (recommended 15-20 minutes 3 times a week), and Foundations Home connections. Please note: Some families have asked for resources for at home. Lexia, Dreambox, and Foundations Home Connections are resources that you can do/use with your child at home NOT that you have to do with your child at home. New in the Hub is a slideshow for how to log into SeeSaw.

[Friday, Jan 14 at 10:21 PM]

Hello Families,

I updated our weekly post to fix some errors. Please take a look on parent square.

Have a great weekend,

Monica