

Literacy Newsletter

Oakland & Owens

April 21st, 2017



Get in Touch!

Please feel free to contact us throughout the year with any questions, concerns, or celebrations you have regarding your child's literacy experience.

Ms. Oakland coakland@waukesha.k12.wi.us

Ms. Owens sowens@waukesha.k12.wi.us

You can also find us on Facebook! Join the group "Oakland & Owens Literacy" for another method to receive classroom updates, literacy newsletters, and more! This is a private group designed as an additional outlet to keep families connected to our classroom.

What Are We Learning?

Reading & Writing

Within the next week, we'll be wrapping up our current unit that focuses on crafting companion books. This unit has been an exciting blend of reading and writing. Our recent mini-lessons have centered around leveraging intentional text features, revising with elaboration and organization in mind, and editing our work to create a cohesive and polished final piece. We've been coaching students to take greater ownership in the writing process by regularly referring back to our student checklist. This is a student-friendly guide that helps students understand the criteria needed to demonstrate grade level proficiency, and it promotes honest reflection and self assessment. **Final drafts of our companion books are due on Wednesday, April 26th.**

Word Work - Words Their Way

As of this week, we've folded word work into our daily routine. Words Their Way is a differentiated K-12 word study program. Each Wednesday, students will receive a personalized lesson with a "sort" to

practice. Students will have time to practice their word work over the course of a week before taking an assessment the following Tuesday. A sort is more than just a random list of spelling words to memorize. Word study focuses on investigating words, and our sorts are all centered around words that share a common pattern. Students may have a sort that deals with common Greek and Latin roots, prefixes and suffixes, and/or within word patterns. At first glance, some sorts may seem to contain easy words; however, identifying the pattern within each word may be rather challenging. On the flip side, some words may initially look very sophisticated, but the act of sorting may be rather easy. Each sort poses a unique challenge and addresses important language elements. While spelling and handwriting are very present in our word work, the ultimate goal is to create a lasting confidence in identifying, understanding, and applying these patterns. Word study is beneficial in boosting reading comprehension, reading fluency, vocabulary development, and writing. Students are welcome to practice their word work at home, but there is no required homework involved.

Speaking & Listening

Speaking and listening skills are always present in the work we do within Literacy. Students put their speaking and listening skills to use on a daily basis as they turn and talk to share their thinking during mini lessons and also during the share time we use to conclude each class. Students recently developed triads in order to form new, consistent share groups. Our triads meet frequently to share their ideas, hold each other accountable, and to offer support or inspiration.

Grammar

Each week, students have a No Red Ink assignment that focuses on several grammar topics. Typically, new No Red Ink assignments will be given on the last day of the week (usually Fridays), and they will be due the evening of the following Thursday. This provides plenty of flexible time for students to practice each skill and to complete the connected assignments. This also allows us to utilize a small portion of class time for quizzes. Every few weeks, we review recent topic mastery through a quiz. If students retain the skill and demonstrate mastery on the quiz, they move on to new topics. If a student does not demonstrate proficiency on the quiz, they are given a short review assignment in addition to the week's new assignment.

Your child can show you their their **No Red Ink** account to share their progress with you

Hi, Candice!



Core 1

Change Class



Practice
20 points

Plural Nouns & Commonly Confused Words
6 topics

 Due in 2 days (Feb. 24)



Late Assignments



Practice
20 points

Pronouns, Antecedents, & Commonly Confused Words
5 topics

 5 days late (Feb. 17)



[View More Assignments](#)

at any time. As soon as students log in, you will see a screen that looks similar to this image. Celebrate the number of topics they've mastered, discuss their quiz average, and take notice of any late assignments. Late assignments are listed in their own section with a purple background. You may need to click "View More Assignments" to see a full list of late assignments.

Task Completion Reports & Homework

This is our fifth unit of the year, so you can expect to see classroom assignments and assessments numbered in the 500 range (ex: #552). At the end of class each day, we have a visual reminder of homework, and we've been making a conscious effort to remind students to use an assignment notebook or digital tool to manage assignments. We'd like to ask families to help us keep students on track. Our homework is almost always limited to **one No Red Ink assignment each week and the expectation that students are reading at least 20 minutes outside of class on a daily basis.** Both Ms. Oakland and Ms. Owens are available every FLEX and the full hour of Connect each day (with the exception of Monday during 2nd Connect). We're happy to work with students to clarify assignments or create a plan for completing late work.

Other Important Information

Summer School & Summer Learning

Next week, our school will be sending out letters regarding summer school recommendations. There are two areas that we may potentially recommend a student for: Reading Readiness or No Red Ink. Reading Readiness will take place as a face-to-face class held at Butler Middle School. The No Red Ink recommendation can take place at home and at a student's own pace. We are able to check in on No Red Ink digitally over the summer. Students have been given reminders about No Red Ink throughout the year, and we have discussed the Summer School recommendation in class this week. If you are looking for book recommendations for over the summer, or are interested in tapping into resources in the community, we will be sending information out in our newsletter closer to the end of the school year.