
Literacy Newsletter

Oakland & Owens

March 17th, 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.

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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

This week, we kicked off a brand new unit - Companion Books! This unit is a bit of a hybrid, and it folds in some of our favorite reading material. Through the month of April, we will be "majoring" in writing and "minoring" in reading. Companion books are informational texts that are written about fiction texts. For example, *Quidditch Through the Ages* is a very popular companion book based on the Harry Potter Series. This week, we've focused our learning and application time on strategies to lift the quality and diversity in our writing about reading. We've challenged students to practice this work together with a shared mentor text, and to try this same work independently within a fiction book they've already read. This fiction book will be used to inspire a companion book, and your child will work to plan, draft, and revise a book that incorporates all of the important elements of informational writing.

We continue to begin each class with at least 15-20 minutes of independent reading time. During our application time, students may dive back into small moments, specific pages, or individual scenes to investigate big ideas or topics that will appear within their companion book. The level of

excitement from students is high, and we are so excited to watch their love of reading support their work as writers!

Speaking & Listening

Speaking and listening skills are always present in the work we do within Literacy. During this unit, these skills will not be a major focus, but they will be woven into daily activities. 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. In addition to that, we will also be using some verbal rehearsal strategies that can be leveraged to plan and enhance our work as writers.

Grammar

Each week, students have a No Red Ink assignment that focuses on several grammar topics. **We've recently made some changes to assignment dates.** As of last week, new No Red Ink assignments will be given on the last day of the week (typically Fridays), and they will be due the evening of the following Thursday. This provides some additional time for students to practice each skill and 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 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. **We have another quiz coming up next week.**

Task Completion Reports & Homework

Hi, Candice!



Core 1

Change Class

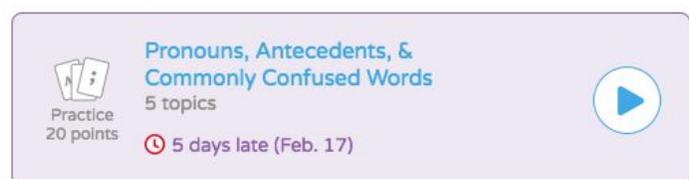


Practice 20 points

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](#)

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). Our new unit is so fresh, so students don't have many assignments or assessments to report out on yet. For this reason, we did not send out Task Completion Reports this week, but we will resume that communication next week. 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.

Continuum Updates

Last week, students took a two part summative reading assessment to conclude Unit 4. We're in the process of reviewing assessments, providing students with feedback, and updating reading continuums. These assessments will be returned to students through Google Classroom within the next week, and you will be able to see an overall proficiency score and written feedback at the bottom of #450 Reading Assessment (Part 2). This information will be within the document itself. The writing portion of the continuum will be updated again in early May when our current unit concludes with a summative writing piece.