



January 2012 Parent Newsletter

Mrs. Librandi

January was a cold & snowy month! We celebrated Martin Luther King Day and the children really did a wonderful job understanding his contribution to equality. Our IALAC theme for January was having a positive attitude.

Reading

We continue to work very hard in reading. During our Foundations lessons, we are now learning more welded sounds: the ng and nk families. The ng family includes words that have an ang, ing, ong, ung in them and the nk family has words with ank, ink, onk, unk. (The key words for ng: fang, ring, song, lung; the key nk words: bank, pink, honk, junk.) The children are also learning a new syllable type, vowel-consonant-e (v-c-e). The key words are safe, Pete, pine, home, mule, and rule. (The e at the end is silent and the e tells the vowel to say its own name- it's the long vowel sound.) They have also learned about bonus letters (f, l, s, z) and the suffix "s", as you already know from their homework packets.

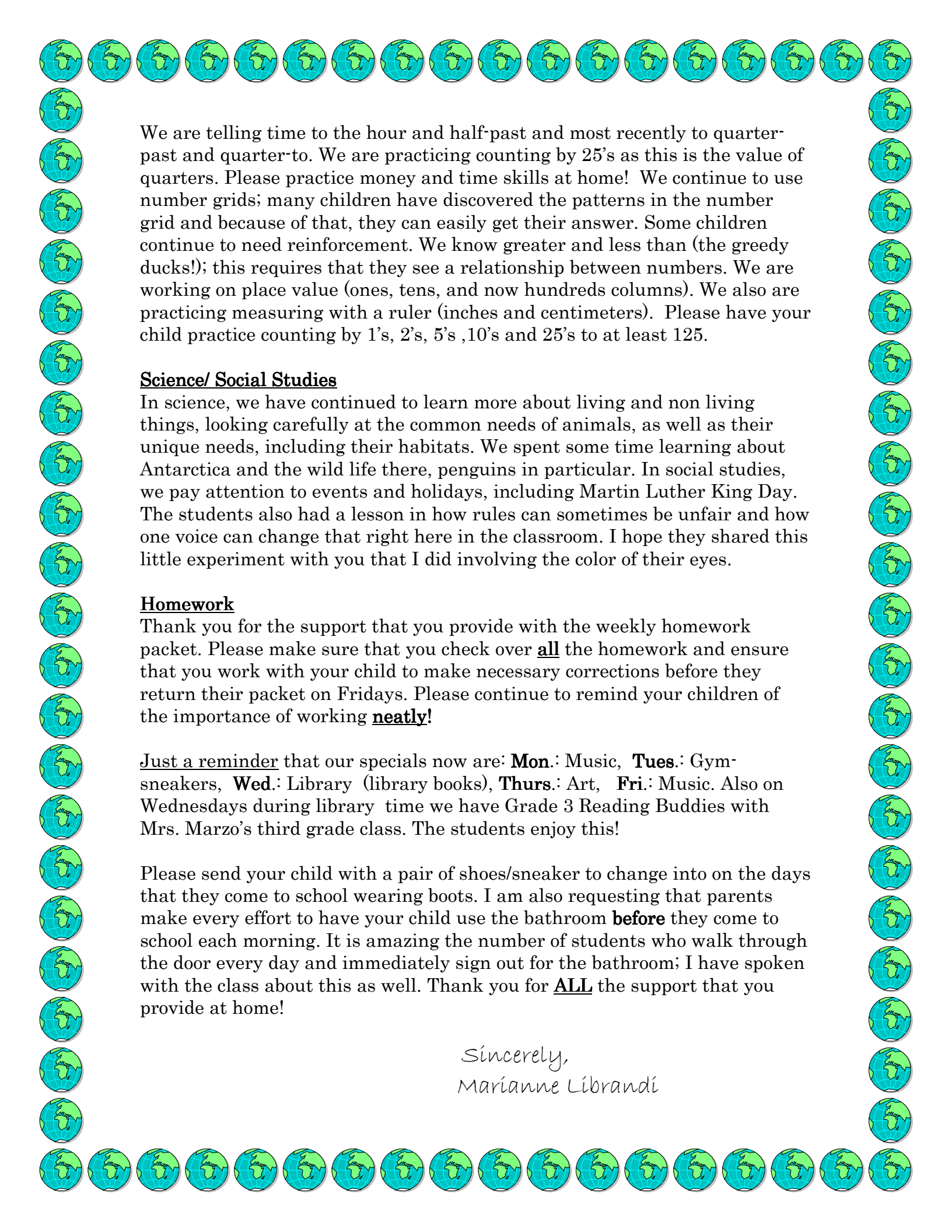
I know that I write this in every newsletter, but it bears repeating! Please continue to practice reading sight words with your child nightly. If your child can read all 5 sets with ease, please have them practice spelling a few words a night. This will give them fluency in their writing. I am finding that some children know their sight words on the colored cards in their bags, **however** they do not recognize the same sight words in the stories they are reading, and often get stuck on the very sight words that they should know.

Writers' Workshop

We are writing more and more, and in addition to the mechanics (capital letters, punctuation marks, finger spaces, good letter formation) I am asking the students to be rereading each sentence after they write to ensure that it makes sense. Students are also learning to challenge themselves and find synonyms for words, so that they are not overly using words like good or happy. I am requiring them to provide details (adjectives and other describing words) so that there is some depth to their writing. Everyone seems to be progressing in the writing process when I look back in their journals to September, some more than others. Writing is hard work and they are using their word walls at their tables that have sight words and they are sounding out words they don't know.

Math

We count money (penny, nickel, dime) during daily calendar and we add a penny a day, then we EXCHANGE 10 pennies for a dime. Children are going to be spending more time on money and coin exchanges, where they take coins and exchange them-keeping the same value. Example: \$0.42- NNNNDDPP- (8 coins) but showing it using fewer coins DDDDPP- (6 coins).



We are telling time to the hour and half-past and most recently to quarter-past and quarter-to. We are practicing counting by 25's as this is the value of quarters. Please practice money and time skills at home! We continue to use number grids; many children have discovered the patterns in the number grid and because of that, they can easily get their answer. Some children continue to need reinforcement. We know greater and less than (the greedy ducks!); this requires that they see a relationship between numbers. We are working on place value (ones, tens, and now hundreds columns). We also are practicing measuring with a ruler (inches and centimeters). Please have your child practice counting by 1's, 2's, 5's, 10's and 25's to at least 125.

Science/ Social Studies

In science, we have continued to learn more about living and non living things, looking carefully at the common needs of animals, as well as their unique needs, including their habitats. We spent some time learning about Antarctica and the wild life there, penguins in particular. In social studies, we pay attention to events and holidays, including Martin Luther King Day. The students also had a lesson in how rules can sometimes be unfair and how one voice can change that right here in the classroom. I hope they shared this little experiment with you that I did involving the color of their eyes.

Homework

Thank you for the support that you provide with the weekly homework packet. Please make sure that you check over **all** the homework and ensure that you work with your child to make necessary corrections before they return their packet on Fridays. Please continue to remind your children of the importance of working **neatly!**

Just a reminder that our specials now are: **Mon.:** Music, **Tues.:** Gym-sneakers, **Wed.:** Library (library books), **Thurs.:** Art, **Fri.:** Music. Also on Wednesdays during library time we have Grade 3 Reading Buddies with Mrs. Marzo's third grade class. The students enjoy this!

Please send your child with a pair of shoes/sneaker to change into on the days that they come to school wearing boots. I am also requesting that parents make every effort to have your child use the bathroom **before** they come to school each morning. It is amazing the number of students who walk through the door every day and immediately sign out for the bathroom; I have spoken with the class about this as well. Thank you for **ALL** the support that you provide at home!

*Sincerely,
Marianne Librandi*