

Mtn. View

presents



The Pre-K Scribbler



We will begin focusing more on literacy concepts as we get back into our daily routine. Concepts will include letter recognition and letter/ sound associations, as these are important concepts within the Kindergarten Curriculum. In doing so, we use a program called Zoo-Phonics, which incorporates learning into fun and play.

Allow me to introduce Zeke the Zebra. Zeke the Zebra represents the letter Z. There are twenty-six animals, including Zeke the Zebra, that makes up the Zoo-Phonics Zoo. Each animal is associated with one letter of the alphabet. These characters are going to be helping the children learn letter sounds. Beginning this week, and continuing throughout the remainder of the school year, the children will be introduced to all the animals

that live in the Zoo-Phonics Zoo. Children are typically drawn to meeting the animals, learning the motions associated with the animals, and most importantly, the sound that each animal, or letter, makes.

The program, as I just mentioned, is called Zoo-Phonics. It is an exciting program that introduces letter sounds through animals. The configuration of each letter is remembered in association with an animal, whose sound comes through the initial letter of each animal's name. This helps the children hear and discriminate the sounds of language and be able to demonstrate knowledge of the alphabet.

I anticipate that the children will be excited about beginning to learn about the animals and the associated sounds. This will play an important part in their language development, as being able to

recognize letter sounds is one of the first stages of reading and writing.

In your child's red folder, you should find a paper (back and front) entitled, The Zoo-phonics "Cast of Characters" and Associated Body Signals. This copy is for you and your child to practice at home the sounds and motions we are learning in the classroom. Please do not be alarmed that your child will not be talking about and reciting the letters and sounds in alphabetic order. The letters will be introduced in small increments according to their phonemic sound, rather than alphabetical order. This will help the children to began understanding and forming sound patterns and eventually words. You can find the specific letters that we are learning each week listed on the Monthly Activity Calendar for each month, now through the remainder of the school year. If you have questions, please let me know.

Zoo-Phonics

January Issue

Teachers:

Mrs. Darnell & Ms. Brown

Contact Information:

Room #- 696-3529

Mrs. Darnell's E-mail:

darnellcl@wilkes.k12.nc.us

Important Dates to Remember:

- January 15th- Happy 5th birthday, Trinity!
- January 15th- 18th- No School for Students
- January 19th- Scholastic Book Orders Due
- January 25th- Happy 5th birthday, Isabella!

Letter Learning

Learning the names of alphabet letters- like all early learning- is done best in the context of what is meaningful to young children.

Many children first learn the initial letter of their own name, which has a great deal of meaning and importance to them. For the child who loves Jello, J may be an important letter, while the child who knows that Daddy works at the Texaco station may begin to notice the letter T.

Some children learn to read without knowing the names of letters or the sounds associated with them. But research shows that for most children, associating names and sounds with the alphabet comes before conventional reading.

However, this finding does not mean that letter sounds should be drilled into young children. There are far more effective and enjoyable ways for children to learn about letters. For instance, children enjoy labeling items that they choose. Sound out the name of the object together to determine which initial letter to use, then cut out big letters from magazines or newspapers and invite the child to tape them on items that she wants to label.

At home or out together, point out letters and words that are likely to be of special interest to your child. Try simple activities such as reading logos of favorite foods and stores, identifying street signs, writing grocery lists together, and playing with magnetic letters on the refrigerator door while singing the alphabet song. Remember, children learn through play.

Entering the World of Words

Print surrounds us. In our homes we have mail, newspapers, magazines, books, and various boxes and cans of food. When we drive down the highway, we encounter traffic signs, billboards, and signs that identify stores. At the grocery store we see advertising and logos.

Children begin to make sense of this print in their environment very early in life. Any parent who has driven down the street and heard their toddler cry out, "French fries!" or "Stop, Mommy!" knows that the child is finding meaning in that big M that signals a certain fast-food restaurant.

Children often recognize the name of the grocery store or drug store where they go with their parents to shop. When children's attention is called to the logo and the name of the store is shown to them, they are likely to remember it.

The same is true of a child's favorite foods. Toddlers can tell Fruit-Loops from Cheerios. Initially, children use the logo for clues as to what the words say; they, for instance, will occasionally "read" the word Crest as toothpaste. This is normal when children are first learning to make sense of the print they see.

Parents can begin making children aware of environmental print very early on. In doing so, they help their children establish important reading skills.

Volunteers Needed!!

Prior to the break, our Pre-K program, here at Mtn. View, was awarded a grant to make some improvements to our playground. The grant was entitled Shape NC, which focus on promoting health and physical wellness. In our submission request, we requested this money in order to purchase new materials for our students to use during our outdoor playtime.

One idea we have, specifically, is to purchase lumber and build a deck around the tree on our playground to be used as a stage. Being that we are teachers, and have limited construction knowledge, we are in need of some expert assistance. We are needing individuals to assist with drawing up our plans, to scale, to create a list of needed materials to be purchased, and of course, assistance with building the deck once materials are received.

If you, or anyone that you may know, would be interested in assisting with this project, please let me know. We must submit our materials list very soon in order for them to be ordered and delivered, so we will need to be moving quickly on getting the plans drawn up and the materials list created. Once the materials are received, I will send more information home about the date(s) we will plan to meet to work on building.

We appreciate any information and/ or willingness to assist with this process that you are able to give. Remember, this is for the benefit of the children!

Collecting Environmental Print



As we begin to focus more on letters and print, we would like to ask for your help to collect samples. To do so, please send any examples of environmental print that you come across. We will add the pieces to our display collection that we will create in the coming week and we will continue to expand on it throughout the remainder of the school year. Environmental print consists of labels, signs, and logos that are easily recognizable. These items can be found in your home and do not require any additional cost to you. Examples would include soup labels, cereal boxes, packaging materials, bags, cartons, fast-food containers, etc. **HINT** Many toy packages display wonderful examples of environmental print. As you may still be cleaning up and organizing after Christmas, please save package labels to send to school with your child. We will use these items to help us as we work on learning letter names and letter sound associations- the beginning stages of reading for young children. Please send in manageable-sized signs and labels that will fit into your child's black folder or book bag. Any and all pieces you and your child find will be accepted at any time and added to our collection, but we would like to ask that you give an extra effort to finding

pieces that begin with the specific letters we will be working on each week in class. Please check the monthly activity calendars for information about the letter(s) we will be working on at specific periods throughout the rest of the school year. As always, if you have any questions, please let us know. Thank you for assisting us with this exciting project!

