

Note to Parents, 9/30/2011

Ms. Moore's Homeroom, section 43: Hello, everyone! I hope your child's start to the 2011-2012 school year has been a good one! The Reading/Language Arts section and the Social Studies section of my Note to Parents pertains to students in my homeroom, as well as to students in Mr. Karver's homeroom.

Please be sure to keep your copy of the 4th Grade Parent Survival Guide in a safe place all year long.

I enjoyed seeing so many of you on Back to School Night. I hope you found the information presented that night to be helpful. Thank you for completing the index card about your child. I appreciate your input.

Friday Folders: Please remember to remove, review, and file the papers that come home in your child's Friday Folder. Your child's folder needs to be initialled by you, and then it needs to be returned to me on the first day of the following week. From time to time you may notice incomplete papers in your child's folder. Please have your child complete any unfinished work over the weekend. S/he may return it to me via the folder. If your child wants to improve a score on a graded class work paper, s/he is welcome to rework the task and return it to me to be re-graded.

Assignment Books: I use rubber stamps to stamp your child's assignment book block once she/he has recorded their homework correctly. If you are ever in doubt as to what your child has to do for homework, please check her/his assignment book.

Homework Return: Students in section 43 (Moore's homeroom class) hand in their Spelling notebooks and Literature Response Log notebooks in each day by placing their books on the big table in the classroom. Students in section 41 (Karver's homeroom class) place their Spelling notebooks and Literature Response Log notebooks into the labelled white baskets that are in Mr. Karver's room. The baskets are then brought to my classroom during homeroom. All work in these notebooks gets graded during my planning time (1st period and the lunch/recess time). It is VERY IMPORTANT that the children turn their books in promptly each morning. There are twenty-seven students in both Mr. Karver's homeroom and in my homeroom, so I can't chase people down to nag them about their books. The children must take responsibility for turning in their homework notebooks each morning AND for bringing home their graded notebooks each afternoon.

Literature Response Homework, 43 & 41: Instructions for how to do the nightly Literature Response homework are glued to the inside cover of your child's Literature Response Log. A page of ideas for entries is glued to the inside of the back cover of the Log. You will notice that your child has an entry for the book Riptide. This was a practice entry that we completed in class on 8/29/2011. This practice entry does not count as a homework entry. You will also notice that I sometimes ask questions of your child rather than just making a comment. The children are expected to answer my questions. Thanks!

Spelling Homework, 43 & 41: Spelling homework began on Tuesday, September 6th. The weekly list consists of fifteen (15) words. Students are welcome to work ahead of time on their spelling assignments if they have other after school activities to do, but I expect to receive your child's spelling

notebook EVERYDAY Tuesday through Friday so that it can be graded. You will notice that I will write comments in the spelling journals, and I will circle words that are spelled incorrectly. Students are expected to correct their spelling assignments. The typical spelling homework activity schedule will be as follows-

Monday- write each word three times in cursive for practice. Concentrate on using your best handwriting.

Tuesday- write the meaning of each word (we will always begin this work in class on Tuesdays).

Wednesday- Use each word in a sentence that makes sense.

Thursday- Write words in alphabetical order and STUDY for the Friday test.

A copy of the spelling homework procedures is glued to the inside cover of your child's spelling notebook. I would also encourage students to use the clever methods that they used in third grade to practice their words (writing their words with shaving cream in the bathroom, using colored pencils to write out their word list, snapping on vowels and clapping on consonants as they orally spell their words for you, etc.). If you have a question about your child's homework assignments, please refer to her/his assignment book.

FIELD TRIP NEWS: Our trip to Flag Ponds and Jefferson Patterson Park was fantastic, especially because we left the majority of the rain back in Chevy Chase that day. A special thanks to all of our chaperons: Mr. Baniak, Mrs. Blair, Mrs. Davis, and Mr. McMahon. You all were terrific!

Reading/Language Arts, 43 & 41: All summer Roald Dahl fantasy projects were due on 9/16/11. Your child gave an oral presentation of her/his book project in class, and grade slips were sent home in the Friday Folders. The children will be reading an autobiography for their November book project. The children are welcome to begin reading an autobiography now, and they can use their reading as the subject of their Literature Response Log entries. The November book project is due on 11/29/2011. A list of 4th grade friendly autobiographies will go home soon.

In the meantime, the children have to memorize a poem from the orange October poetry sheet that went home on 9/22/2011. Poetry presentations are due on 10/25/11. Children are encouraged to use vocal expressions and gestures to enhance their presentation.

Our current read aloud book is Matilda by Roald Dahl. In addition to focusing on the fantasy genre, we have been doing a lot of non-fiction reading using social studies materials and Weekly Reader magazine.

The October Author-of-the-Month is Priscilla Cummings.

D.O.L. quizzes are administered on Fridays this year. Each child has a soft cover black and white composition book labelled "Morning Work" that they use for their grammar exercises each morning. Help your child to study by providing her/him with a quiet space in your home. If you are looking for a book to help your child with the grammar concepts that we will cover this year, try Eats, Shoots & Leaves: Why, Commas Really Do Make a Difference! by Lynne Truss. This is the children's version of the author's New York Times bestseller. You can use this funny little book to help your child to understand why sometimes the Panda says, "No!".

Social Studies, 43 & 41: The children did a quick review of map skills, and we also reviewed the natural geographic features and regions of Maryland. We have been working with a Maryland Historical Society education trunk called "Maryland Indians." The children will be using artifacts and facsimiles of primary source documents that relate to both the Paleo-Indians of our region and the Piscataway people. I highly recommend taking your child to the National Museum of the American Indian to see the exhibit Return to a Native Place. The exhibit was curated by my friend Gabi Tayac. The children used Gabi's book, Meet Naiche, to learn more about Maryland's Piscataway people. Here's the description of the exhibit from the NMAI web site-

Return to a Native Place: Algonquian Peoples of the Chesapeake
Ongoing NMAI on the National Mall, Washington, DC

Meet the Native peoples of the Chesapeake Bay region-what is now Washington, D.C., Maryland, Virginia, and Delaware-through photographs, maps, ceremonial and everyday objects, and interactives. This compact exhibition educates visitors on the continued Native presence in the region, and provides an overview of the history and events from the 1600s to the present that have impacted the lives of the Nanticoke, Powhatan, and Piscataway tribes. The exhibition was curated by Gabrielle Tayac, Ph.D. (Piscataway).

Family Field Trips: Now that the children have been to Jefferson Patterson Park, you may want to consider going to Historic Saint Mary's City, Historic London Town, and Sotterley Plantation as a family. Both HSMC and HLC have community archaeology days when children and their families can help excavate a site. www.stmaryscity.org/
www.historiclondontown.org/
www.sotterley.com/

Math 5 with Mr. Mack: In math class we are nearing the end of Unit 1. Please look for a review packet and practice test coming home in homework for the week of October 3. We will be beginning the Unit Test on Thursday or Friday of the week. We will be reviewing all week in class and going over each problem type in detail. Progress reports in math were sent home Friday September 30. Please sign and return them to Mr. Mack. Any questions about the reports should be directed to Mr. Mack via email at chad_a_mack@mcpsmd.org.

After a slow start the students are really beginning to perform very well in class! Take a look below at how each class is doing as a group! We have hit a bit of a roadblock with our basic multiplication facts as of late. Please spend some time working on the 6-9 tables with your child. We did very well with the 1-5s but many students are not comfortable with these larger facts. Learning them will make math much easier for your child.

Math 5 Class Average:	Mack/Karver 88% B+	Moore/Cichetti 89% B+
Math 5 Homework Completion:	Mack/Karver 93% A	Moore/Cichetti 98% A+
Mad Minute Multiplication Facts:	Mack/Karver 89% B+	Moore/Cichetti 89% B+

Math 4 with Mr. Karver: This month in math we are covering place value, mode/median/mean and graphing. We are also doing some additional review work on subtraction and addition. Summer Fun has influenced a few on regrouping/borrowing (-: We will have our Unit test in October.

Science with Mr. Karver: In Science we are studying living things. We are taking notes in our journals on animal cells and plant cells. We also have broken ground on our eco-systems. We have started making our terrarium and will soon be making the aquarium that connects. Keep sending those clear two liter bottles. Exciting stuff as always!!!!

Homework Completion, 43 & 41: Students are expected to complete all of their homework each night. The percentages listed below tell how many students in sections 43 and 41 completed all of their homework. Each day the children record their assignments in their assignment notebooks. If you have questions about what your child is expected to do, please refer to her/his assignment book and to your copy of the 4th Grade Parent Survival Guide. Children ARE EXPECTED TO CORRECT ALL WORK that is marked as incorrect in both their spelling notebook and their Literature Response Log. If your child made up an assignment or got missing parent initials on a Literature Response Log entry, please flag the page(s) with a sticky note so that they get credit for the work. Thanks!

Homework Completion Statistics:

	Section 43	Section 41
Lit. Response, 8/29	100% completed	89% completed
Lit. Response, 8/30	100% completed	89% completed
Lit. Response, 8/31	96% completed	81% completed
Lit. Response, 9/1	96% completed	81% completed
Lit. Response/Spelling, 9/6	78% completed	81% completed
Lit. Response/Spelling, 9/7	74% completed	93% completed
Lit. Response/Spelling, 9/8	93% completed	81% completed
Lit. Response/Spelling, 9/12	78% completed	85% completed
Lit. Response/Spelling, 9/13	85% completed	81% completed
Lit. Response/Spelling, 9/14	93% completed	74% completed
Lit. Response/Spelling, 9/15	85% completed	78% completed
Lit. Response/Spelling, 9/19	85% completed	81% completed
Lit. Response/Spelling, 9/20	85% completed	89% completed
Lit. Response/Spelling, 9/21	78% completed	85% completed
Lit. Response/Spelling, 9/22	89% completed	78% completed
Lit. Response/Spelling, 9/26	85% completed	85% completed
Lit. Response/Spelling, 9/27	85% completed	67% completed