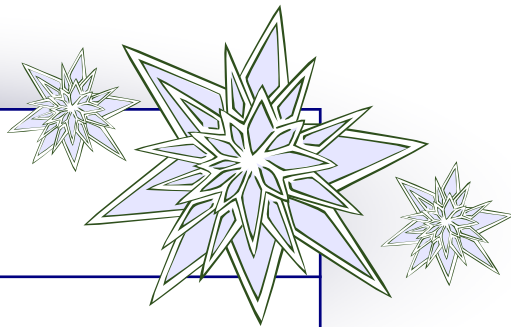


# January 2012

Robert D. Wilson Elementary

## EARLY INTERVENTION



### Can Pictures Help Children With Autism?

By Kevin Stuckey, M.Ed.,  
CCC-SLP  
Super Duper Handy  
Handouts #189

Children with autism often have difficulty focusing on tasks, adapting to changes in routine, and expressing themselves in an effective manner. Pictures may help them improve their communication by providing a visual image for their feelings, thoughts, wants, or needs. When a child uses, or is

shown, pictures of routines/schedules, transitions may be easier since the child can see what is happening now and what comes next. Overall, using pictures for communication can help increase a child's memory skills, understanding of the world, and social communication abilities.

### Why are pictures important for communication?

- Pictures are especially meaningful to children with autism because pictures

can help them to express themselves more easily.

- Pictures relating to the child's environment provide opportunities for functional (everyday) communication.
- Pictures (in combination with written words) can help build language and vocabulary skills.
- Picture communication can help minimize behavioral problems by providing a consistent way to communicate requests.



### First Snow

by Mary Louise Allen

Snow makes whiteness  
where it falls  
The bushes look like popcorn balls  
And places where I always play  
Look like somewhere else  
today



*Tell me and I'll forget, Show me and I may not remember, Involve me and I will understand.*

-Chinese Proverb

We have introduced each letter of the alphabet. We will continue

## PREKINDERGARTEN

reintroducing the letters and their sounds. Please join us in reviewing them at home.

During January we will begin to create a numeral book and introduce numerals 0-10.

Our literacy activities will include learning and acting out nursery rhymes, listening to and discussing fairy tales; identifying favorite characters in the stories. Please ask your children about the stories we are reading and have them re-enact some nursery rhymes for you at home.

Keep reading to your children. Read lots of different kinds of books.

Reread their favorite books, children love repetition. Read predictable books. Your children will begin to recognize the repeated words and will like saying them with you. Ask your children what they think will happen next in the story. Talk about the stories you read. Ask about your children's favorite parts. Help your children relate the story to something in their life.

These fun and simple activities will promote literacy with your children. Story time can be more than simply reading a book.

## AUTISTIC SUPPORT

We will be working our fine motor skills and making bird feeders for Robert D. Wilson's courtyard! We will be using pinecones, peanut butter and seeds to make them. We will hang them up on the trees outside where we can see them through our classroom window! Every day we'll study our bird visitors and record our findings in our Classroom Observation Journals!



# KINDERGARTEN

Kindergarten has begun using strategies and lessons from the Kid Writing program as part of our language arts instruction. Kid Writing is a systematic approach to phonics and writing that addresses teaching and learning strategies from kindergarten writing standards for Pennsylvania.

Children see and use print in many places in their lives. We try to incorporate these different types of writing into the classroom within activities such as writing letters, reporting on story events or using speech bubbles. The children can use the classroom resources (word wall, number/color words etc.) to help them spell out words. If a

word they want to use is not available in the room the children use their phonics skills (letter/sound associations) and stretching to sound out the word and write it the best they can. This is referred to as “kid writing”. The more they write, the more developed their sound skills become which enhances not only their writing skills but also their reading skills.

Have the children use these newly emerging skills at home by having them write notes to family members, help write a grocery list or report about a special event. The key is to get them excited about writing for many different reasons.

In math the children are eagerly counting up to the 100<sup>th</sup> day of school. We have been counting by ones and tens and will soon start counting by fives to get us to this very special day!



Jackets and sweaters,  
Stockings and boots  
Snug hats and mittens,  
Warm woolen suits

All bundled up and ready  
to go  
Out of the house to play  
in the snow

Although I feel clumsy in  
all of these clothes  
I am so happy whenever  
it snows!

Second grade students have been working hard to memorize addition facts using addends zero through nine. We practice every day in Rocket Math. Our target goal is to have learned all the addition facts by the middle of the year, as reported on second quarter report cards. We then have the remainder of the year to learn subtraction facts.

Memorizing the basic facts does take time and effort on the part of the student and whomever helps with practice at home, but the rewards are worth it. Parents may have noticed

## FIRST GRADE

First grade students have been working hard to accurately read real and make-believe consonant-vowel-consonant words like **cat** or **tas**. Our goal is to master reading single real or nonsense words in three seconds or less.

Students are presented with a list of words. At first the students are asked to sound out the letters and blend the sounds to make words. As the skill is mastered students are asked to read entire words. This in-

volves the student looking at the list of words and reading them without sounding them out anymore.

We use nonsense words to determine if your children know the most common sound for letters, (letter-sound correspondence) and sequences of letter sounds comprising frequent words and spelling patterns. The students will use this skill when reading longer more challenging words like **fan tas tic**.

## SECOND GRADE

that the difficulty of our math work is increasing. We have spent many days learning to add and subtract with double digit numbers that require regrouping. We will be applying this skill with word problems, money, and measurement as the year goes on. Students who know their basic facts can turn their focus toward the problem solving aspects of math lessons without stopping to count each time facts are needed to solve a problem. Advanced math often involves multiple steps to arrive at the answer. Learning basic facts can help make one part of the process easier

for our children.

There are numerous ways to practice and memorize math facts. Repetition is often the most successful method for many children. Board games which use dice are a fun way to add numbers one through six. The website First in Math has several games which use math facts in an engaging way that our students enjoy. Some children like flash cards. How can you provide practice for your child at home ?



"I just can't do math!"

Be honest. Have you ever said that? Have you heard that statement from your child? Here's help.

At home, the best way to help your child learn to love math is to play with numbers, and to frequently point out the various ways in which math makes our lives easier. By working with tangible objects, and counting, sorting, estimating, measuring, looking for patterns, and solving real-life problems, children learn to think in mathe-

## THIRD GRADE

matical terms, without worrying whether or not they're "smart enough" to do math.

### Try these activities:

1) Challenge him/her to guess at things, and then find the answers. Examples: How many M&M's are in your snack bag? How many minutes do you think it will take to clear off the table after dinner? Which of these cups do you think will hold more juice?

2) Have your child compare things: Which is heavier – a cookie or 10 chocolate chips? Who do you think is taller, mom or dad? Which carrot is longer?

3) Talk about how you use math when: balancing your checkbook, paying cashiers, changing bills for coins, setting a budget, depositing money, buying gifts, etc.

4) Have your child set the table (counting and sorting the sets of plates, napkins, cups, and silverware).

**Enjoy thinking mathematically with your child!!!**

## FOURTH GRADE

As we start 2012, please remember to continue practicing math facts every day. Fourth grade students are expected to be finished with multiplication Rocket Math by the end of the second marking period. Also, fill out reading logs every day. We are trying to move our cars in our Reader's Cup!

Some important reading skills we will be working on this month are drawing conclusions, comparing and contrasting, and summarizing. Drawing conclusions helps

students figure out things that the author did not come right out and tell them. It keeps us thinking about the story. Comparing and contrasting helps us notice similarities and differences within a story or between two stories. When we summarize, we have to remember to tell only the most important ideas from a story. Being a careful reader is important to summarizing. We remind our students to use their reading strategies to understand what they are reading and to help their summaries.

In social studies class students have been learning about the colony of Pennsylvania. Students will learn about William Penn and how new settlements changed the lives of Native Americans.

Where did you get that little red nose?

Jack Frost touched it, I suppose. He touched it once, he touched it twice.

Poor little nose, it's as cold as ice

## FIFTH GRADE

Fifth grade students are currently working towards mastering the use of story elements to enhance comprehension. It is very important for our children to understand the concepts of: character, setting, plot, conflict, resolution, and theme. Our biggest struggle is with theme.

Theme is how the students relate a story to a universal idea. A common example of theme is "Don't judge a book by it's cover." You can

discuss theme with not only novels, but with television programs as well. As you watch shows, cartoons or even listen to music can you relate the event to a universal theme such as: *triumph over adversity*, *love conquers all*, *good versus evil* or *coming of age*?



# TITLE 1

Welcome to 2012!!! With the New Year come resolutions to improve ourselves. Making an effort to read every night with our children is a great resolution for the New Year! Learning to read is an important goal and skill for life. It gives confidence to children when they read successfully. Beginning readers are developing reading strategies such as reading left to right, pausing at each word, and making a return sweep to the next line. Students develop self-monitoring skills and realize when words don't make sense. Children use beginning letters, familiar rhyming parts, and other letter-sound clues to figure out words. Students are also cross-checking to see that the words they read make sense in the sentence and have sounds to match the letters they see. Picture clues also help determine what the new words might be. Here are some things you can say when listening to your children read:

Let's look at what you said here. Does that word make sense?

Does the word on the page look like what you said?

What word starts with that letter and would make sense here?

Can you sound out the word and think of what word makes sense?

Can you get any clues from the picture?

Good job! How did you figure that word out?

Always remember to call attention to and praise the successful use of good strategies.

Happy Reading!



## LEARNING SUPPORT

***Welcome to 2012! This month, we are focusing on being fluent readers. Remember, it's not always about how fast you can read, but that you read accurately. Be aware of substitutions and omissions when reading. Continue practicing reading passages nightly...practice WILL make perfect!***

