

# Robert D. Wilson Elementary

## November

### EARLY INTERVENTION



#### Reading and Telling Stories: A Great Way to Develop Imagination and Language Skills

By Kelly Faulkenberry Cheek, M.S.P,  
CCC-SLP

Super Duper Handy Handouts Number 29

Strengthen Holiday Language Skills at Home.



A great way to spend quality time with your children, and strengthen language skills at the same time, is by reading and telling stories together. Let your children **predict** the characters' actions and **describe** the pictures using **nouns, verbs, and adjectives**. Encourage your children to tell you their feelings about the book (i.e. Was it scary, fun, or funny?) Also, ask your children to retell the story while adding your own ideas and giving clues to the **sequence** of events. Tell stories to your children to allow them to build their **imagination** skills. Children love to hear stories about their parents and other close family members. Tell them funny stories about what

they did when they were little, such as their first birthday, their first word, or when they first learned to talk. Allow your children to **add to these stories** with real memories or make-believe. To bond with your child and strengthen their language skills, make this a part of your bedtime ritual.



### PRE-KINDERGARTEN

We would like to share with you some proven ideas from research for parents for "A Child Becomes a Reader" by Armbruster, Lehr & Osborn.

#### Talk and Listen

- When you do something together – eating, shopping, taking a walk, visiting a relative – talk about it.
- Take your child to new places and introduce him/her to new experiences. Talk about new, interesting and unusual things you see and do.
- Teach your child the meaning of new words. Say the name of things around the house. Label and talk about things in pictures. Explain, in

simple ways, how to use familiar objects and how they work.

- Help your child follow directions. Use short, clear sentences to tell him what you want him to do.
- Play with words. Have fun with tongue twisters and nonsense rhymes.

#### Read Together

- Keep reading to your child. Read him/her a lot of different kinds of books. Re-read the favorite books.
- Read predictable books. Your child will begin to recognize the repeated words and phrases and have fun saying them with you.
- Read poetry and other rhyming books to your child. When reading a familiar

rhyme, stop before a rhyming word and ask your child to provide the word.

- Ask your child what she thinks will happen next in the story. Get excited when he/she finds out whether her/ his guess was right.
- Talk about books. Ask about favorite parts. Help your child relate the story to his/her own life. Answer his/her questions about characters and events.
- Build a library or book collection for your child. Suggest that people give books to your child as a gift.

Next month we will provide some research on teaching your children about print and letters.



# KINDERGARTEN

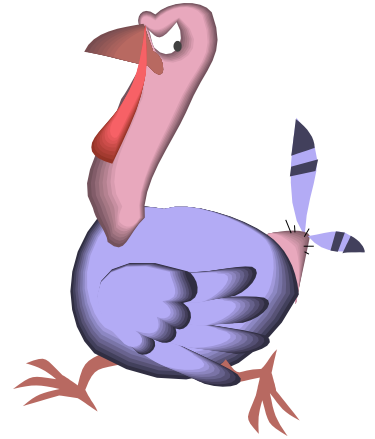
With Thanksgiving around the corner, kindergarten has been learning about Pilgrims, Native Americans and the First Thanksgiving. We are also focusing on people, places and things that make our own lives special.

In reading, the children have been matching letters to the appropriate sounds. They have been using these skills to sound out two and three sound words, focusing on words with the short /a/ sound such as cat and map. The children have been using their emerging reading skills to read stories to them-

selves, the teacher and each other. Let them show off their reading abilities by reading the stories sent home to family members.

In math, we are working on counting to and identifying numbers up to twenty. The teen numbers have been tricky for some of us. If you see your child is having trouble, practice these numbers both in and out of order. Use fun or edible counters such as cheerios or m&m's to keep your child's interest. We have also begun counting groups of ten up to 100.

Enjoy your Thanksgiving and holiday break.



*T* hanks for time to be together,  
turkey, talk, and tangy weather.

*H* for harvest stored away, home,  
and hearth, and holiday.

*A* for autumn's frosty art, and  
abundance in the heart.

*N* for neighbors, and November,  
nice things, new things to  
remember.

*K* for kitchen, kettles' croon, kith  
and kin expected soon.

*S* for sizzles, sights, and sounds, and  
something special that about.

*That spells THANKS for joy in  
living and a jolly good  
Thanksgiving.*

- Aileen Fisher, *All in a Word*

## FIRST GRADE

Our students were really busy during the month of October. They were screened for dental and vision problems, and were busy working on units on Fire Prevention, Columbus Day, and Halloween. The Halloween parade is always a special treat for the children because they get to see the high school band all

decked out in their costumes.

During the month of November the students are working on long vowels, digraphs, contractions, compound words and initial blends.

In math, we are working on improving our addition and subtraction facts and making progress

with Mastering Math Facts.

We also will be learning about the first Thanksgiving and working on Thanksgiving Day activities.

We would like to wish everyone a happy and healthy Thanksgiving!

## SECOND GRADE

Second grade students have been signed up for an exciting math adventure online. Each child can personally access the website "First in Math" and choose from a variety of math puzzles and activities designed to encourage interest in math and opportunity to practice skills and concepts. The website can be accessed from school or from any home computer with internet capability. Each child brought home unique password information so that progress in the math activities can be tracked. Each day, a "Player of the Day" recognition is given to the child who achieved the highest score for the previous day.

"First in Math" is a terrific way to practice those math facts which are on the daily Rocket Math quiz. The website has many ways to practice addition and subtraction. It also has problem solving and logic puzzles. You can find something for everyone by checking out the variety of games!

# THIRD GRADE

October was another busy month for the third grade students. A program was presented to our students by the local fire department. The children were reminded about what to do in case of an emergency or fire. The volunteer firemen also discussed the importance of installing fire alarms throughout the house. Remember the battery in each fire alarm should be changed every six months. R.D. Wilson students also had the joy of attending our book fair held in October.

The children are continuing their formal cursive handwriting lessons. Cursive handwriting is a new skill that requires lots of practice. As we continue to practice in the classroom we ask that you also practice at home.

We have started our second theme, "What A Team!" in reading. This theme explores ways that people and animals can work together to accomplish goals. The children discover that cooperation can make the difference in relationships. They are able to apply that concept to their own lives.

Mathematics is progressing. The children are continuing to work on their math facts. We are also working on subtraction with regrouping. Problem solving and written explanations for problems are a part of our math lessons.

The children have completed the water unit. They have done activities about volume and weight. They also experimented with the concept of size and weight versus sink and float. What is the relationship between the two?

We are learning about ways to stay healthy. The children have completed the "Second Step Program" in health. Our children have learned about empathy, conflicting feelings, active listening, and accepting differences. The skills that we are learning promote a healthy environment here at RDW and also help our students outside of school.

During social studies we are learning about the different communities in our country. It tells us about the different landforms, natural resources, and human resources that makes each community so unique but yet the same.

The children and teachers would like to wish everyone "Happy Thanksgiving".

# FOURTH GRADE

## What We Have Been Doing:

- *Science:* We are conducting experiments with water.
- *Social studies:* We are discovering why each part of Pennsylvania is unique as we study regions.
- *Health:* We are learning about the effects of alcohol so we are prepared to make good decisions.
- *Reading:* We are reading stories about cooperation in Theme two.

- *Math:* We are multiplying and dividing.
- *Writing:* We are organizing and writing five paragraph essays.

## What You Can Do At Home:

Encourage your child to practice multiplication facts for a few minutes each night. Ideas: Learn one new fact a night. Write it repeatedly. Say it aloud repeatedly. Before you know it, you will have mastered all of the facts! All 4<sup>th</sup> grader students must master their multiplication facts by the end of the second marking period.

Ensure that your child reads nightly for 15 - 30 minutes. Record the reading on the reading log, which needs to be handed in at the end of the marking period.

Review with your child frequently. Science, social studies, and health tests in fourth grade are not open book; it is necessary for students to study.

# FIFTH GRADE

Fifth grade is currently finishing up their first unit in reading. We have explored in detail the narrative elements of fiction. Our next reading unit will focus on non-fiction and the skills needed to interpret and comprehend that reading material.

In math students will be learning about the addition and subtraction of decimals. Keep those grocery receipts for practice with these real-life skills.



November

## Thanksgiving - Anonymous

The year has turned its circle,  
The seasons come and go.  
The harvest all is gathered in  
And chilly north winds blow.  
Orchards have shared their treasures,  
The fields, their yellow grain,  
So open wide the doorway -  
Thanksgiving comes again!



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# AUTISTIC SUPPORT

I have had a lot of parents ask me about different activities they can do with their children at home to help support what we do in school. I found the following on-line at <http://www.livestrong.com/article/77765-fine-motor-activities-autism/>. All of these activities are very simple, and most of them are things you can make at home! These activities will help your children strengthen their fine motor skills and prepare them for drawing, handwriting, and so many other things!

"The best fine-motor activities for children with autism will be developmentally "just right" so that they are both challenging and successful. Because many children with autism have decreased strength, muscle tone and coordination, learning to manipulate objects can be a struggle. However, given structured training with fun and motivational activities, many children with autism will develop the fine-motor skills to write, do arts and crafts and manipulate toys.

## Squeezing Activities:

Toys and activities that involve squeezing not only build hand and finger strength, but they also provide the sensory stimulation that children with autism seek. Show your child how to use play dough or putty to roll snake coils, squeeze it inside a garlic press or pinch off little pieces to make "blueberries." Squeezing clothespins to hang doll clothes or connect matching playing cards also strengthens the fingers. Older children may enjoy the sensory feedback offered by squeezing hole punchers and pushing down on staplers. One hand-strengthening game is called "Feeding Hungry Harry." Cut a slit in a tennis ball; this will be the mouth. Next, draw the eyes and nose. Children can squeeze the ball to open Harry's mouth while feeding him pennies.

## Electronic Toys:

Electronic toys offer sensory feedback. There are ring stacks that make music and flash lights upon completion and puzzles that play songs when a shape fits in an opening correctly. These activities provide immediate feedback so that the child knows he did something successfully. Many electronic toys also speak when the correct button is pushed. These toys teach concepts, such as letter recognition, and the fine-motor control to use the index finger.

## Developing Pencil Grasp:

Young children can prepare for writing by drawing lines, circles and letters on a tray covered with whipped cream or shaving cream. Toys that require grasping a stylus to "draw" on a magnetic board help develop the grasp required to control a pencil. Preschool-aged children should use the large cone-shaped crayons that fit inside the whole hand. Older children might enjoy using a motorized pen that provides sensory stimulation when used to make wiggly lines.

## Adapting Activities:

Children with autism, like all children, will become quickly discouraged when they're unsuccessful with activities that require eye-hand coordination, such as lacing boards and stringing beads. Homemade activities are easier to use than those commercially available. Cut three or four large (1 inch in diameter) holes along the perimeter of a piece of cardboard. This "lacing board" has larger and fewer holes than the ones sold in stores. And instead of stringing beads, use container lids with holes cut out of the centers and replace flimsy string with cord."

# LEARNING SUPPORT

The students have been increasing their progress in the learning support classroom on the SRA Corrective Reading Program. They have been working in the Word Attack Skills, Reading Mastery, and Decoding Strategies books. They complete one and two minute timed readings after each lesson to improve their reading fluency. The students monitor their progress in the back of their workbooks. They have been improving their skills in phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, reading fluency, and reading comprehension. The students practice reading their stories at home and one minute fluency boxes, so they continue to increase reading rate, fluency, and vocabulary. Parents support at home is very helpful.

In spelling, the students continue to work in their SRA Spelling books. They've been learning various pronunciation, meaning, conventions, and proofreading strategies. Their weekly tests consists of core words, review words, and challenge words.

They also take a context sentences post-test.

In writing, the students have been working in SRA Reasoning and Writing. They have been improving on writing complete sentences using correct capitalization and punctuation and will be starting on writing paragraphs. They also complete timed writing prompts bi-monthly.

In mathematics, the students are working in the Saxon Mathematics program. The different areas they are working on are writing numbers 1 to 100, single digit addition and subtraction facts, multi-digit addition and subtraction with and without regrouping, multiplication, division, fractions, measurement, perfect squares, reading problems, identifying ordinal positions, reading graphs, time/money, continuing shape patterns and much more. Fact and written assessments are given after every 5 lessons. They also take test preparation

and practice tests. Math probes are administered bi-monthly. They need to continue to get support at home on completing their Saxon Math homework assignments. Parents, keep up the good work!

In November is Veterans Day. They will learn that it was once called Armistice Day and it is dedicated to the cause of world peace and the heroes of all wars. Activities, such as, word finds, word puzzles, reading comprehension worksheets will also be completed during the month.

From the learning support classroom, we wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

