



Connell's Corner

The Road Still Taken

It is November and 5B is still working on writing the poems for their own Poetry Book. This is taking much longer than anticipated. With ePEARL still not available, we will be producing paper copies of their poetry books that I will share with you at parent teacher interviews. Once we get past our poetry books we will start on paragraph and short story writing.

Beyond our poetry we have finished working on figures of speech (simile, metaphor, hyperbole, alliteration, and personification). Now we have moved on to developing strategies for comprehending reading passages, and will be working on developing these skills for the remainder of the school year.

Houston? Houston?

We are still experiencing some technical difficulties getting ePEARL, the electronic portfolio program that we are using up and running.

The program is now installed and I have access to set up the program (give students login names & passwords, etc.). However, we do not have the means for our students to access it yet. It is something we are currently working on, and will hopefully have resolved soon.

That said, I have played around with the program, and it is very impressive. I will keep you updated on when it will be available for the students to use. During parent teacher interviews I will make it available for parents to take a peek at to see what it is all about.

Grapheme Issue

At the end of October you should have received a Parent Report of your child's GRADE assessment that we did back in September. If you did not receive one please contact me or the office and I will make sure to get one home to you.

After looking at the GRADE results for the class I did further testing and found that every student in the class had gaps in their knowledge concerning grapheme blends (a very necessary skill to decipher words when you read them). Curious I asked that Mrs. Salvatore and Miss Pearson to test their students and they found the exact same thing.

In talking with GHSD reading specialist Lana Lane she has seen the same thing in other schools. She believes, and I agree, that while language arts program of studies has students learn their phonemes and graphemes all the way up to grade 3, there is no continuation or reinforcement in grade 4 or beyond. Therefore, since students are not continually practicing these skills, they are forgetting them, which impacts their reading comprehension skills. This could be part of the reason we see a dip in Provincial Achievement Test scores from grade 3 to grade 6 in language arts.

In ongoing discussions with Lana, we are working to provide instruction to our grade 4, 5, and 6 students to fill the gaps in their knowledge to address this issue. We are hoping that this will lead directly to an improvement in spelling, and reading instruction. I will keep you updated on our efforts.

Parent Teacher Interviews

For those parents/guardians who would like to meet with me during Parent Teacher Interviews to discuss how their child is doing in Language Arts, the office will be setting interview times separate from Mrs. Smith. Therefore when you phone the office please mention to Mrs. Jensen that your child is in 5B, and she will set you with up a time to see each of us. Lastly, interviews with me will be held in my office.

Please note that my teacher page is up and running on our school website
<http://www.greentree-school.com/>.
