



# The Siegel Stars

## September 2016

### What's Happening?

Welcome to the first edition of the Siegel Stars! My goal will be to send a newsletter on or about the beginning of every month to keep you updated on classroom happenings. It has been an exciting first month of school! Our new third grade family is really getting into the swing of things. They are adjusting to new friends, new surroundings, and new routines. Each day your child is learning appropriate ways to interact with his/her classmates and learn new concepts in a fun, hands-on way!

### Readers' Workshop

We are beginning Readers' Workshop with a Launching Unit. In this unit we are becoming familiar with workshop routines and practicing to build reading stamina. Our 3<sup>rd</sup> grade readers are learning how to self-assess and make goals for themselves. We are also picking up from 2<sup>nd</sup> grade to learn comprehension strategies such as Inferring, Visualizing and Asking Questions. By the end of the unit we will have learned to work in strong partnerships so we can effectively read and learn from other readers.

#### **What can you do at home?**

Read to or with your child EVERY night. Share the reading pages and stop every now and then and ask, "What do you understand about what you read so far?" We call that "**Checking for Understanding**." They should be able to tell you the "who" and the "what" in the story. If there is a breakdown in Comprehension, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade readers know to go back and reread until they understand.

Great Article about helping your child at home with reading!

<http://www.cultofpedagogy.com/reading-homework-tips-for-parents/>

### Buzz Words for September

**Stamina:** We build our stamina in reading when we practice reading a little bit everyday than increase it the next time. We've also talked about the need to build stamina for classroom routines and procedures.

**Schema:** It's like a file folder in your brain. It's all the "stuff" you know that makes you who you are.

**Equal groups:** groups that have the same number of objects in each group.

**Product:** when you multiply two numbers the answer is the product

### **Math**

Unit 1 and Unit 2 are focused on students learning to use different strategies for multiplying and dividing. We learn how multiplication and division and related and how to use math drawings and equations to represent real world math problems.

The Unit is organized so basic facts are introduced and practiced from easiest to hardest: 5s, 2s, 9s, 10s, 3s, 4s, 1s, and 0s. The harder facts 6s, 7s, and 8s are introduced and practiced in Unit 2.

#### **How Can You Help at Home?**

The research tells us that the kids should work on 1 fact at a time and that learning multiplication and division together make the process more meaningful and faster. Practicing multiplication facts with your child so they can quickly recall them will help to strengthen their skills. Make it fun! Quiz them before dinner with flash cards. Time them and challenge them to beat their record!

# Writer's Workshop

Over the course of the school year the students will learn to use writing as a way of offering and supporting opinions, demonstrating understanding of the subjects they are studying and conveying real and imagined experiences and events. The writing instruction emphasizes growth in writing overtime with lessons built around building writing stamina, learning how to navigate through the process of writing, building and utilizing writing partnerships and developing increased independence and self-reliance. The curriculum is also designed to meet the needs of the new national Common Core Standards which, when met, prepare students with knowledge and skills needed for success in college and work.

Our first writing unit is Launching with Small Moments. The overall goal of this unit is for students to lift the level of their personal narratives to more fully engage and inform an audience. They'll learn to incorporate a repertoire of strategies to write more focused and compelling pieces. These "seasoned" young writers will utilize a storyteller's voice to show, not tell; to paint pictures in readers' minds through the use of details. They'll learn to bring the heart of a story alive!

## Seesaw

I sent an email and a personal letter home to each family inviting you to view updates to your child's Seesaw journal. Seesaw is a digital portfolio managed, for the most part by your child. With Seesaw, parents are able to view their child's portfolio through your PC or Phone device. Parents can send messages of feedback and encouragement. Please let me know if you have questions or need help signing up!

Seesaw gives parents an immediate and personalized window into their child's school day, helping to answer: "What did you do at school today?"

<http://web.seesaw.me/learn-more>

# CAFÉ Strategy: Check for Understanding

Even as an adult reader, there are times when I am reading a story and I get lost and am not sure what has happened. Fortunately, when this happens, I have strategies I use to help me understand the story. The same thing happens when children read. However, with children they often keep reading and do not realize they lost comprehension until the end of the story. They are too concerned with reading accurately, and forget to take the time to think about what they are reading. How can we help them gain comprehension? We can teach them the comprehension strategy: **check for understanding** because good readers stop frequently to check for understanding or to ask who and what.

## How can you help your child with this strategy at home?

1. When reading to your child, stop periodically and say, "Let's see if we remember what I just read. Think about **who** the story was about and **what** happened." Do this 3 or 4 times throughout the story.
2. When reading to your child, stop and have them practice checking for understanding by saying, "**I heard you say...**"
3. Ask your child the following questions:
  - Who did you just read about?
  - What just happened?
  - Was your brain talking to you while you read?
  - Do you understand what was read?
  - What do you do if you don't remember?

Thank you for your continued  
support at home!