



September							2013
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
29	30						



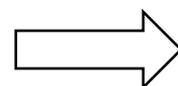
Dear Parents,

In our Daily 5/CAFE (**C**omprehension, **A**ccuracy, **F**luency, and **E**xpanding Vocabulary) classroom, my students are members of a vibrant learning community. They learn in authentic ways by regularly participating in Read to Self, Work on Writing, Read to Someone, Listen to Reading, and Word Work. Wouldn't it be wonderful for your family to re-create this same type of creative and fun learning community at home? Well, you can!

One aspect of third-grade homework is a monthly at-home "reading" calendar. Since I believe that choice is so important and want to make this reading practice more than just recording minutes, I would like your child and you to use the virtual, fillable literacy calendar found in the Canvas learning management system instead and choose among these literacy activities for home fun with reading and writing. Using the calendar is simple:

- ✓ Choose a literacy activity to do each weekday or weeknight, Monday through Thursday. Your child can also fill in the calendar Friday through Sunday, which will be counted as extra-credit days. For example, if your child misses completing a literacy activity on Thursday because of a special evening event, they can make up for it by completing an activity on an extra-credit day.
- ✓ Once your child has spent at least 20 minutes on a literacy activity for the day (though they can choose to do more, of course!), just have them put the corresponding code in the date box on the calendar. For example, if your child chooses to do independent reading or Read to Self, they'll type an *R* for "Reading" in the date box.
- ✓ Not only does your child have literacy choices, but they will also get to see if there is a preferred way to participate in authentic literacy practice. Conversely, your child can also discover a practice they might want to try that they haven't attempted yet.
- ✓ At the end of the month, I would like your child to go to their Google Doc and write a sentence or two about their literacy experience for the month by completing the sentence starter *During the month of _____, I really enjoyed working on _____ because _____.*
- ✓ Last, please look over this literacy calendar with your child and talk about what you have both noticed about their Daily 5 practice. Please remind your child to turn in their literacy calendar on the due date listed on the calendar (usually the last day of the month).

If you want to seek out options for meaningful homework that enhances family time while helping your child complete their monthly literacy calendar, here are some ideas for family-friendly ways to make authentic learning experiences part of your child's home life:



Home Fun That Promotes Independent Reading (*Calendar Code = R*)

You can use these ideas to foster your child's interest in independent reading:

1. Find out what kinds of books your child likes to read.
2. Plan a weekly trip to the public library for the whole family.
3. Obtain individual public library cards for each family member.
4. Learn about the I-PICK method to help children choose good-fit books. Your child has been taught this method in class.
5. Subscribe to a children's magazine to share as a family.
6. Establish a family togetherness time to encourage nightly reading.
7. Model interest in literacy by reading side by side with your child.
8. Talk about well-loved books that your child and you have enjoyed as youngsters.
9. Help your child research nonfiction topics that interest them.
10. Have your child read about places that the family might visit.

Home Fun That Promotes Writing (*Calendar Code = W*)

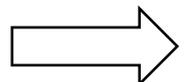
You can use these ideas to encourage your child to write at home:

1. Set up a writing table with a variety of pencils, markers, and papers.
2. Ask your child to help create a weekly or monthly family newsletter.
3. Have your child write lists for upcoming visits to the grocery store.
4. Help your child create stories or books about family experiences.
5. Place a note in your child's lunchbox or backpack and invite them to respond.
6. Give your child a clipboard and pencil and send them on a word hunt around the house.
7. Involve your child in writing a nightly message on a family message whiteboard such as "Today, we had pasta for dinner."
8. Take photos of a family activity and ask your child to write about the pictures.
9. Interest your child in meteorology and ask them to write about the weather each day.
10. Encourage your child to write letters and cards to grandparents and other relatives.

Home Fun That Promotes Read to Someone (*Calendar Code = RS*)

You can use these ideas to give your child the opportunity to read to someone at home:

1. Act as an individual reading partner for your child.
2. Encourage siblings to have fun reading to each other.
3. Invite visitors to be Read to Someone partners with your child.
4. Take turns reading the frames of a newspaper comic strip with your child.
5. Learn about and attend special events such as Read to the Dog at the library.
6. Arrange for your child to tape-record themselves reading a favorite story.
7. Gather books of jokes and riddles for your child to read to family members.
8. Have your child read recipes out loud during meal preparation or baking.
9. Participate in a family reader's theater performance with your child.
10. Ask your child to read you a bedtime story for a fun role reversal.



Home Fun That Promotes Listen to Reading (*Calendar Code = L*)

You can use these ideas to give your child the opportunity to listen to reading:

1. Schedule a nightly read-aloud of a child-selected bedtime story.
2. Have children's books on tape/CD/cell phone available for longer car rides.
3. Set up a corner of the house with a tape recorder and books on tape.
4. Tape-record nursery rhymes or poems for your child to read along with.
5. Invite a mystery reader (relative, neighbor, or babysitter) to share a story.
6. Find out how to download children's e-books from the local library.
7. Invite your child to follow along with song lyrics as they listen to music.
8. Register your child for weekly story time sessions at the local library.
9. Use different character voices as you read your child their favorite stories.
10. Plan a poetry night and read fun poems aloud to your child.

Home Fun That Promotes Word Work (*Calendar Code = WW*)

You can use the following ideas to give your child the opportunity to do Word Work at home:

1. Make a simple Word Work area at home with shells, beads, clay, and magnetic letters.
2. Ask your child to write messages to family members using Word Work materials.
3. Invite your child to collect interesting words on a home word wall.
4. Have your child use magnetic letters on any metal surface to write their names, words, sentences, and more.
5. Have fun with interesting words by doing a children's crossword puzzle together as a family.
6. On a regular basis, play popular word games that help your child expand their vocabulary.
7. Challenge your child to find certain types of words (compounds, words with a certain prefix or suffix, and so on) in a newspaper or a magazine.
8. Look up an unknown word in a print dictionary or show how to find the definition in an online dictionary.
9. Write an interesting word for each day of the month on the family calendar; encourage your child to use the featured word in speaking or writing on that day.
10. Keep a jar of overused words written on slips of paper; pull one out and encourage your child to substitute more interesting words for it. For example, your child could make substitutions for overused words such as *nice*, *said*, *good*, and *went*.

Again, my main goal with the monthly literacy calendar is to encourage your child and you to practice authentic ways of "playing with" and practicing literacy skills at home. If you come up with a new and creative way to practice one of these literacy skills, please share it with me so that I can share it with the rest of the class. Ideally, the above lists will grow over the course of the year!

Thank you so much for your support at home!
Mrs. Byington