



# FIRST GRADE NEWS



Highlands Elementary School

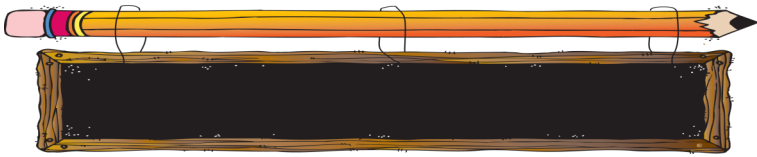
#heroeschoosekind

October 2019

## Welcome to First Grade!

We are so excited to be working with your child this year. It is going to be a year full of learning academically, emotionally, and socially. You will be amazed by how much your child will grow!

You may access this newsletter at any time on the Highlands website at <http://schools.naperville203.org/highlands/> under the "Classrooms" tab, then clicking on Grade I. Each issue will review the skills we have been learning and practicing here at school. We encourage you to use the newsletter as a tool to initiate conversation with your child about his/her school day.



- ⇒ When sending information to school, please use an envelope labeled with child's name, teacher's name, and indicate to whom it is intended (i.e. Home and School).
- ⇒ If dismissal arrangements change for your child, please send a note to inform your child's teacher. If there is a last minute dismissal change during the school day, please call the main office to ensure that teachers will be notified. **If a note or phone call is not received, your child will be sent home as usual.** Please read the Parent Handbook for bus regulations.
- ⇒ Please remember to put a healthy snack in your child's lunchbox each day. Please check to see if your child is able to open the snack by him/herself and that it can be eaten in five minutes or less.
- ⇒ Please help your child dress appropriately for the weather. We do go outside unless it is raining, so your child should be prepared with jackets, etc.
- ⇒ Please leave any toys, Pokémon cards, etc. at home to promote physical activity during outdoor recess time.

### Items to Work on at Home

1. Writing first and last name (using Zaner-Bloser)
2. Tying Shoes (this is not part of district curriculum)
3. Memorizing home address (students may have memorized this in the past, but for safety purposes, continue to check that they still know it)



Questions? Please contact your child's first grade teacher.

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### Dates to Remember:

- October 10 & 11  
Parent-Teacher Conferences
- October 31  
Fall Festival Parade and Fall Festival Party



## *Small Moments: Writing with Focus, Detail, and Dialogue*

First graders have been learning their lives are full of stories to tell. They have learned to distinguish large ideas from small moments. During this unit, first graders have enjoyed learning three ways to bring a small moment to life:

- Unfreezing characters (have them move and speak)
- Telling in itsy-bitsy steps
- Bringing the inside out (make characters think and feel)

In this unit, we will continue to work on fixing up our pieces through editing and revising. In addition, we will study mentor texts in order to learn different craft moves authors use to make their writing special.

## Grammar

First grade uses the curriculum resource, *Schoolwide Grammar*. Since grammar and conventions both play an integral part in shaping meaning when we read and write, it is important we teach the tools that help writers create texts that readers will understand. We have added mini-lessons to our writer's workshop that focus on *Text Layout*, specifically how pictures and words are placed on a page and features such as boldface print and italics. *Capitalization* lessons on how to use capital letters and *Punctuation* lessons teaching how to use question marks, exclamation points, commas, and periods. We will continue to add mini-lessons throughout our **Small Moments– Personal Narrative Writing** unit in these three grammar areas. In our next unit, **Nonfiction Chapter books**, we will implement lessons on *Parts of Speech*.



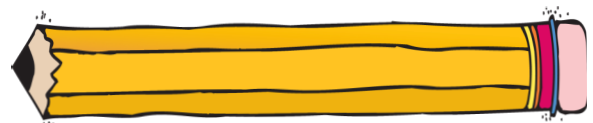
## Reading

Our first grade reading communities are up and running! We have been working on developing good habits as readers, such as selecting “just right” books, following expectations of a reading community, and participating in discussions centered around books and reading.

Together, we dove deeper into specific texts such as *Miss Smith's Incredible Storybook* by Michael Garland, *The Giants Ice Cream* by Jill Eggleton, *Hetty Heckett's Farm* by Jill Eggleton, as well as folktales and poetry. Through our reading, students have been engaging in discussions about genre, key details in text, vocabulary, and text features and structures. When we read fiction, our focus is on the story elements. When reading non-fiction, our focus is to learn new information and facts about a certain topic.

## High Frequency Words

All first graders will continue to be exposed to the 36 Heart Words, which are part of the 103 high frequency words first graders should know how to read and spell by the end of the school year. Heart Words do not follow a phonetic pattern, which means your child cannot sound them out (i.e. was & they.) These words are some of the most common words used in the English language, so it is important that students know how to read, spell and write them. You will find a complete list of the 103 High Frequency words included in this newsletter.

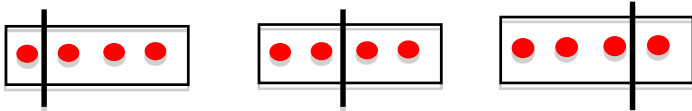


# 123

## Math

This month, lessons and activities have helped develop children's awareness of the ways numbers can be "broken apart" and "put together," and helped to build fluency in counting, grouping, and patterning. Before children can fully understand addition and subtraction, they must build a detailed knowledge of the embedded numbers.

They need to recognize that each number has other numbers "hiding" inside it.



In this example for number 4, students see partner pairs **1 and 3**, **2 and 2**, and **3 and 1**. Once students understand embedded numbers, learning activities will help them master partner pairs through number 10.

Lessons also focused on moving students away from counting to visualizing numbers in groups of 5 and 10. The goal is for students to be able to see 5 or 10, and count on from there.



## Classroom News

Our School, Family, and Community Partnership (SFCP) has created Math Backpacks for the first grade students to take home and enjoy with their families. Each week, one student will be sent home with this backpack. We ask that the backpack be returned by the following Thursday.

A furry face has appeared within the first grade halls of Highlands! Beginning this month, Alex, the dog, along with his owner, Mrs. Hoff, will listen intently to several first graders read each week. Alex has been specially trained and certified to work in hospital/school settings.

## Technology

Students have had the opportunity to learn how to use an iPad and the different apps like Seesaw. They have learned skills such as taking a photo, adding a photo to a camera roll, labeling pictures, and the voice to text feature. First graders will now be using these skills to demonstrate their learning across all the curriculum areas.

## Social Emotional



Success in school is not just about academics. It is also about knowing how to learn and how to get along with others. We have been using the *Second Step* program in first grade to teach these critical skills.

In August and September our focus has been on **Skills for Learning**. Your first grader has gained skills to help them learn including focusing their attention, careful listening, using self-talk to stay on task, and being assertive when asking for help.

Please continue to look for the *Second Step* Home Links that your child will be bringing home. These links are a great way for you to understand what your child is learning and for your first grader to show you what she/he knows.

## Helping Hands

At home, please monitor your child's pencil grip until he/she is holding the pencil the correct way. The thumb and pointer finger hold the pencil (see picture below), the remainder of the fingers are gently tucked underneath the pencil with the pencil resting on the middle finger. The long end of the pencil then gently lies on the back of the hand.



## High - Frequency First Grade List



### HEART WORDS



a	been	give	I	of	put	the	to	was	work
all	come	have	little	one	said	their	two	were	would
any	do	here	long	other	some	there	very	what	you
are	from		many			they		who	your

Short a	Short o	Short e	Short u	Short i	Long a	Long i	Long o	Long u	Long e
and	not	when	but	in	make	like	no	new	he
that	on	then	up	it	take	by	go		be
as		them	just	his	day	my	so		she
at		get	us	is			know		we
can			run	if			old		see
can				will					eat
had				him					me
has				did					
man									
am									

R-controlled	Other vowels	Digraphs	2-syllables
or			
for	boy	three	about
	good	which	before
	out	much	again
	look		
her	how	with	
after	down	this	
	our		