

Math

Our district adopted the Go Math series three years ago. It is a challenging curriculum that really emphasizes students' understanding the "why" of math. It is exciting to see the students develop a deep understanding of different math concepts. We will do lots of hands-on activities, group and partner activities, and then also independent work. Knowing math facts is also a 4th grade goal so each student will need to spend time at home practicing their multiplication facts. Other math homework will be assigned a couple of times a week. This will not cover new concepts, but will be a review of the day's lesson. Again, if your student gets stuck they can call or e-mail me with questions.

Language Arts

Language Arts includes reading, spelling, English, and writing. Our district adopted a new Language Arts series last year. It is Scott Foresman's Reading Street. We will also use chapter books to complete book studies. I love using this technique because it gets kids so excited about reading! When your student brings their current chapter book home, feel free to read along with them—I have had some parents who loved the book as much as their student did! Each student will also have an AR goal. Students will need to read for 15 minutes at least 4 nights per week. We will have a time each day when they can read any book that they are interested in within their own level. I'm going to let the students help me create a set of incentives for meeting their AR goal each nine weeks. On Mondays we will take a spelling pre-test. Any words that the student misses will be part

of their list for that week. The other words on their list will be ones that they have spelled incorrectly in their writing or assignments or words that they just really want to learn to spell. They will have between 10 and 15 words each week. The final test over their individual lists will be on Fridays.

Science

We will do lots of experiments and several units throughout the year. Some of the units that we will study are plants, life cycles, habitats, electricity, and liquids/solids/gasses. If we are awarded the PowerPanther grant again, we will complete a unit on nutrition and physical activity complete with making our own snacks! We will use our book as a resource but it will mainly be hands-on and activity based.

Social Studies

In 4th grade we learn about the regions of the U.S. Second semester the students will learn all 50 states and capitals. We will also complete a Native American unit of study, a Colonial unit, and a Play-doh economics unit. Social studies will be activity based also.

Handwriting

We won't have a handwriting book this year. Our goal will be to use cursive in real world situations. We will use it to sign our names, write thank you notes, complete invitations, etc. Although the use of technology is becoming the primary way that

our society communicates and cursive has become less important, I still think that it is important to be able to use it when you need or want to and to be able to read it. I will not require cursive to be used exclusively—students will have a choice unless we are specifically working on using it in a real world situation.

Rules

On the first day of school the students and I will work together to create rules for our classroom in the form of learning contracts. I will send those to you in an e-mail when they are complete.

Discipline

My goal as a teacher is to create an environment where the students are so engaged in learning that discipline is rarely an issue. In the rare event where a consequence is necessary, it will be related, respectful, and reasonable. In some instances students will be required to fill out a “pink sheet”. Students also have the opportunity to earn tickets for following directions, being respectful, and following our learning contracts. They can then use those tickets each Friday to make purchases at our class store.

Student of the Week

Every couple of weeks one student in our class will be selected to be the student of the week. This student will receive a certificate and special pencil and will get to be featured on the

door of our classroom. I will ask them to complete some info. cards and to bring three or four pictures from home. They will also get to pick a day during the week to eat lunch in the classroom with me.

E-mail, Class News, and Smilebox

I will use e-mail for almost all school to home communication. Paper notes will rarely, if ever, be sent home! Feel free to e-mail me with questions or concerns also. Each Friday the students will write class news from the week. I will e-mail this to you along with an extra note from me. Students will also have their own school e-mail addresses. These will be for school use only and will allow students to e-mail me assignments, collaborate with peers, and most importantly, show you what they are learning at school. Periodically I will also send you Smileboxes. My subscription to this service is up in October so I may utilize a different program after that time. This is a program that allows me to send you pictures so that you can see what we have been doing at school. **Smilebox tip:** It works best on a desktop or laptop computer. If you watch it on your phone or iPad, it will still have the pictures and music but not the extra cool graphics!

iPads

Once again this year, your student will have their own iPad to use throughout the day. They will check it out each morning and then return it before school is out. We will incorporate our iPads into each subject and use them to create, collaborate, enhance, and reinforce.

Water bottles

Water is so important for our brains to work at their best! I will provide a bottle of water for each student at the beginning of the year that we can refill but they can also bring their own water from home. Non-colored, non-flavored water is all that they are allowed to bring to have during the day but during milk break, they can bring juice or a sports drink instead of or in addition to their milk. Please help me to encourage them to drink lots of water.

Birthdays

I like to give each student a chance to celebrate his/her birthday at school. You can send treats if you would like to help us celebrate. My birthday present to them is an extra recess for the whole class in honor of their birthday. 😊 If your child has a June or July birthday he or she can just pick any day to celebrate! Please e-mail me the day before that you would like to send treats so that we can adjust our schedule if needed.

****Special Note: Please do not send invitations to school for your child to hand out if everyone (or all of the girls or all of the boys) is not invited to the party. I understand that it is not always possible to invite everyone but to hand out invitations at school to just certain students is heartbreaking for those not included. Thank you for your understanding in this area.**

Grading Scale

100	A+
94-99	A
90-93	A-
87-89	B+
84-86	B
80-83	B-
77-79	C+
74-76	C
70-73	C-
67-69	D+
64-66	D
60-63	D-