

Danbury Elementary Newsletter



December 16, 2016
Volume 12, Issue 16

des.sau4.org
Ann Holloran, Principal

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Do you often wonder why your students, especially in grades K-2, come home with photocopied paper books? Does it seem like some children are “natural readers” while others struggle and reading needs to be explicitly taught? What is the difference between these decodable readers and picture books?

Decodable readers are books that have controlled text. Decodable books are books that contain only phonetic elements that the student has already learned and basic sight words. For example, a child at the beginning stages of reading who has learned the short vowel sounds could decode simple words like hat, bed, and pig, but might have difficulty decoding words like see and owl. A student at a higher reading level might be reading a decodable book with vowel teams like AI or OA and be able to decode more complex words like snail and goal.

Selecting books can be tricky as publishers will often call books a beginning book or decodable book but only half the words in the book are decodable. In reading, we want children to feel and be successful as they read. We do not want students to become frustrated and start to guess at words. We want students to use their knowledge of phonics and their word analysis skills to decode unfamiliar words. As they are able to figure out every word in a book, they feel successful, which in turn helps them to build fluency and develop good reading strategies.

Example text from a decodable reader: “Ted got his red cap back. The red cap had a rip in it. It was not a big rip. Ted can fix his red cap.” Example text from a picture book: “On Friday he ate through five oranges, but he was still hungry. On Saturday he ate through one piece of chocolate cake, one ice-cream cone, one pickle, one slice of Swiss cheese, one slice of salami...” As you can see, there is a large difference in the word selection and phonics rules within these two texts.

What should I do as a parent? Every night, have your child read to you and spend some time reading to your child. Incorporate both decodable readers and picture books into your nightly routine. Have your child read the decodable books and celebrate his/her success! Together, enjoy the picture books from authors like Mo Willems, Mary Lyn Ray and Marty Kelley. Even as your child gets older, spend time together, snuggled under a blanket, reading chapter books like Tuck Everlasting and Where the Mountain Meets the Moon. Reading at home not only can positively impact your child’s academic success, but also develop a special and lasting bond between a child and parent.

If you would like more information or assistance in selecting books for your child, please reach out to your child’s classroom teacher and our ICT teacher, Pam Plankey. Our town’s library is open Wednesdays from 1:00-6:00 p.m. and Saturdays 10:00a.m-3:00 p.m.

Have a great weekend reading!

Winter Activity Program Prep

The DES Winter Activity Program will begin the week we return from Holiday Break on Wednesday, January 4th. As we get ready, please note:

- Students are to be picked up at **4:00pm** at the mountain on Wednesdays. Adults must come inside to sign out the student.
- Wear layers and be prepared for the weather!
- If you would like to ski in addition to the program, Ragged is gifting our students with season passes. Passes may be picked up at the Service Desk and do not include the cost of rentals.
- Students do not need to bring passes with them on Wednesdays, as our school program uses paper tickets.
- If students bring their equipment with them to school, each item must be labeled with name.
- Adult chaperones must already be registered as a volunteer with the SAU, including fingerprinted.
- Students are expected to ski the entire time, from 2-4pm, *not* entering the lodge.

Second Grade Stars

It is good to be back in 2nd grade. The kids have been working hard on their transition from Mrs. B who did a wonderful job! Even though it has only been 3 weeks, we have been busy.

We have been working on listening to all directions without interrupting the teachers or other students. This has been a challenge since everyone has so much to say, but we are definitely improving! Because of this hard work, we have started a Picturing Writing project where everyone has painted three pictures of an animal, researched facts about their animal, and will move onto writing an acrostic poem. I can't wait to see these books put together and hear the class present!

In math, we have moved to smaller groups to get the most out of our math block as possible. Each day, the kids move in groups of 4 through three stations. One station is with me where we go over the main lesson of the day. The second station is where they complete the application problem with their group. The third station is an internet based program called Zearn which is linked to Eureka math to give them extra practice and learn various strategies when solving a problem.

When we come back to school in January, I will give each student a poem to memorize for Prize Speaking! The poems get longer each grade, and will require more practice to memorize. We will also be looking for expression when reading their poems. The students will have time each day to practice in school, but it is also important and helpful to practice the poem at home as well!

I hope everyone has a wonderful winter break!
Mrs. Barbour



Lunch Menu Dec 19-23, 2016



Monday

Hot Dog
Carrot Sticks
Garden Salad
Fresh Fruit

Tuesday

Breaded Cheese Sticks
Broccoli Florets
Garden Salad
Fresh Fruit

Wednesday

Chicken Fajitas
Baked Beans
Garden Salad
Fresh Fruit

Thursday

Spaghetti with Meat Sauce
Bread Stick
Garden Salad
Fresh Fruit

Friday

Homemade Pizza
Carrot Sticks
Garden Salad
Fresh Fruit

Breakfast \$1.25 (reduced \$.30)

Lunch \$2.75 (reduced \$.40)

Milk \$.35

This facility is operated in accordance with the USDA policy, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, disability, religion, or national origin.

For Art's Sake!

Our DES artists have been very busy learning how to use space creatively. There have been many discoveries and discussions on how different perspectives and 2D space can change the way we look at our art. We have been experimenting with folding, cutting, and gluing paper to achieve fabulous 3D results!

Fifth grade art masters recently created strikingly bold "sunburst" paper sculptures. The designs "lift" right off of the flat 2D base! Squares of brightly colored paper was folded, origami style, and glued into different patterns. Now, we are about to finish 3D forest fir trees by folding, gluing, and cutting paper loops that have become the branches. The base is a cylinder shape that is surrounded by these branches. Sculpture "in the round" is what it is called! They are full and beautiful.

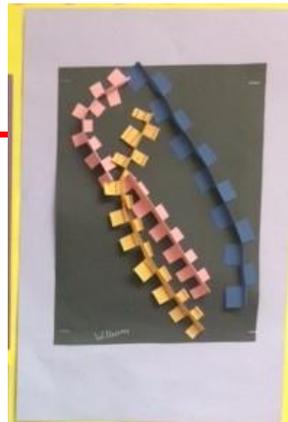
Third and fourth grade artists are concentrating on unique uses of materials. Our current project "zooms" in a close-up look (space) of branches on a fir tree. We are creating ornaments with foil and metallic markers that give the illusion of a 3D sphere. Discussions on the basic circle and how it can appear to become a "sphere" by the way we curve our designs have been on-going. They are beginning to understand the value of what "process" is in art. Look for a 3D element that actually pops off the base of these wonderful creations!

Second grade artists had fun making little dancing holiday figures in motion and are now onto their current project. They're in the midst of finishing a jolly Santa portrait with 3D elements. They curled paper to make the beard. The results are astonishing! (wink!)

First grade and kindergarten artists have been busy! This awesome group created Rudolph, keeping in mind the space in which they had to create him. We reviewed background space and how to keep a happy balance between the subject and the surrounding space. We are well on our way to learning how to fill our art space- making every bit count!

All in all, it has been a busy time of year, learning and making our art. We have channeled our artistic energy into great works of art! Bravo!!!

Ms. Plante-Renaud



Holiday Celebration Thursday, December 22nd



12:30pm Sing-Along

Everyone is invited to join us to sing seasonal favorites and celebrate.

1:30pm PTO Adult Cookie Swap

Something new this year! If adults would like, they may bring a dozen plated cookies with them to the Sing-Along and join in the swap afterwards. Bring a dozen, leave with a dozen!

