

# News From First Grade



September 10th, 2009

This has been a lovely week with the new first graders. They are pleased to be back together again, and they are playing together beautifully. We have all enjoyed being outside on these gorgeous late summer days.



On our first day together, along with learning the routines of their new classroom, the children shared their favorite books and made self-portraits of themselves with their books. Come and see them on the wall in our classroom. They especially enjoyed using pattern blocks during math time, their first art and music classes with Tr. Amy and Tr. Nessa, and a science lesson with Tr. Molly about observing like a scientist and looking closely at seashells.

On Wednesday morning we had our first writing workshop. The children are clearly experienced writers after their excellent preparation in kindergarten. You can help them generate ideas to write about by noticing interesting moments or events and suggesting them as possible topics to write about later. We have also introduced reading workshop. Once we know the children's reading levels, we will begin sending home "just right" books each night for them to read with you and record in their reading logs.

We had a good discussion of why our school is called a "Friends" school. I told them about the Quakers, or Friends, who started the school and their big ideas (testimonies) of simplicity, peace, integrity, equality, community, and stewardship. These are not first grade words, so we talked a little about what they mean in simpler language. We will keep finding ways to make connections to these big ideas throughout the year.

Homework in first grade consists of up to 15 minutes of reading each night and usually a math page. These should be completed when they come home and returned the following day. Math pages that we have completed in class will come home for you to look at together and then recycle.

You should have received a copy of our weekly schedule. We have library on Mondays, so please help your child remember to bring back any library books each Monday. While sneakers are the best choice of footwear every day, they are required for PE on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Some children still need to bring in a towel for siesta time.



Kidmail envelopes will usually come home only on Thursdays. Please check for them and send the empty envelopes back on Friday mornings. They contain notices from the school, Friends Community Organization and our classroom. We may occasionally send other notices home in your child's reading log folder.

We are fortunate to have Nan Thompson, a retired FSH teacher known to the children as "Mrs. T", volunteering during writing workshop many mornings.

We look forward to seeing you at Curriculum Night on Thursday, October 1st at 7:00. If you have any questions or concerns before then, please e-mail me at [mmorgan@friendshaverford.org](mailto:mmorgan@friendshaverford.org).

Warmly,

Marcy Morgan