
Room Nineteen Wartik Tribune

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One Month In

I could write “it’s hard to believe we’ve been here a month!” but it wouldn’t be accurate. I can believe it! We’re definitely hitting a rhythm in the room, as many activities and routines are becoming ingrained in the students. And with the exception of my car dying in front of Washburne this morning as I dropped something off, it was a pretty normal week.

Our math fact practice week went well, in my opinion. The class got in a good deal of time to work on their skills, both in class and for homework. The blue sheets with 132 math problems (which went home on Tuesday and Thursday) were a great barometer of their progress. Our class average at the first five-minute mark went up 20% over that two day period – from 60 problems correct to 72. When I first gave the sheet as homework (September 22nd), the students were asked to do as much as they could in fifteen minutes. The class average from that assignment was 105 correct problems. Last night’s work came in with a class average of 127 correct problems. I’m very pleased. Next week, as the class continues to practice and hone their skills, we’ll expand their knowledge through the concepts of perimeter and area of a variety of two-dimensional shapes. We’ll also learn the Maya numbering system next week!

Our Maya unit continues to dig deeper as well (no pun intended). We are at the halfway point of our *Voyage of the Mimi* series and things are getting quite interesting. Our reading of *Secrets in Stone* has not only given us great new info on Maya hieroglyphs, numbers and their calendar, but has begun matching up with some of the specific things in *Mimi*. As the book described the discovery of a king’s tomb at Palenque, the class quickly realized they knew who it was – Pacal, who had been found at the bottom of a long staircase at the Temple of the Inscriptions in the video series.

But Wait...There’s More!

Our writer’s workshop time was much more uniform this week, and went very successfully except for too many kids needing an adult to work with! I know that some of you signed up to help out during our writing time and I’ll be touching base with our room parents over the weekend to start bringing some regularity to your in-class assistance.

We tied up *Winn-Dixie* by starting to work on our own lists of ten things about someone we know/love/care about, the same way Opal learned about her mom from the preacher. Those will continue to take shape and will hopefully be embellished with many of the fun adjectives and examples that Kate DiCamilo used in the novel. We’ll take another week off in here from an official class novel and will likely pick up our next one the week after.

As I mentioned at Go to School Night, it doesn’t feel like there are enough minutes (hours) in the day. The class decided they didn’t want to start coming to school on Saturdays, so I had to find some more creative solutions. For starters, we’ve trimmed science back from an hour to forty-five minutes. By pushing recess from 2:00 to 2:15, that gives us a solid thirty minutes of productivity before recess and another big chunk of time after. It’s already making a difference. As well, some days I’m going to turn SSR into a short writer’s workshop (thirty minutes instead of sixty) to bring more writing into our week.

Looking Ahead

- FRIDAY – No school (Teacher Institute)
- Enjoy your weekend!

My child, _____, and I have read this week’s newsletter.

Signature

Date