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# Room Nineteen Hartik Tribune

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## Here We Go

Welcome to the first newsletter of the school year. Every Friday, you can count on this arriving with your child. Please read this newsletter with your child at some point over every weekend. (My preference, actually, is for your child to read this ALOUD to you.) When you have finished reading this together, sign the bottom and return the tear-off (or the whole sheet, if you don't have any need for it) to school every Monday.

It's always exciting to begin a new year. Fresh faces, plenty of energy, and so many wonderful experiences ahead. I think we had a good week and got off to a good start in many areas. The primary focus for me in this first week is to get to know your child a little better. We spend the bulk of our time together building a classroom community. We learned more about each other as individuals, but also talked about how we're going to function as a group. The groundwork we lay this week will benefit us throughout the year.

So, what did we actually do? On Wednesday, the kids learned about their Writer's Notebook. This will be a great resource for them during the year, serving as both a repository for ideas and strategies, as well as a place for reflection and growth. I read aloud the first section of Ralph Fletcher's book, *A Writer's Notebook*, just to give the class an idea of what their notebook *could* look like. Each one will reflect the character of the student.

For math, I gave the class a short diagnostic test on Wednesday afternoon. I use this piece every fall to give me a baseline on where the students come into the room from a computational standpoint. I then use this information to structure Morning Work. Morning Work in my classroom almost always consists of independent, individual math work. I tailor each child's work to his/her abilities, allowing me flexibility with each child – providing practice, review or challenge.

## What Else?

We also worked on collaborative stories, based on the unique experiences I asked each student to think about. Yesterday, we discussed the qualities of good students and condensed our long list into some shorter rules we all plan to abide by. When it came to what makes someone a good teacher, I went through each item and explained to the class how I hope to fulfill their expectations of me. Together, we understand the partnership that will transpire in this room. I will do everything in my power to help them grow, mature and learn. But how far they're able to go depends on them meeting me halfway!

Next week, more regular routines will be unveiled. We'll start using the assignment notebook, there will be homework, and we'll jump into regular math lessons. As well, our study of the Maya civilization will begin. There will be spelling, too. In a four-day week, I'm not sure how much will unfold and I will certainly try not to overwhelm the class! It might not be until the next week that we begin our first class novel.

I will be going into much more depth about classroom procedures, policies and the curriculum at Go-to-School Night on Thursday, September 24<sup>th</sup>. In the meantime, as your child adjusts to the increased demands of 4<sup>th</sup>-grade, don't hesitate to get in touch with me. My email address is at the top of this newsletter, and our website is listed there, too. That should be a great resource for you and your child.

## Looking Ahead

- NU FOOTBALL – Get \$13 tickets for Saturday's game by calling 847-491-CATS by 5 pm Friday. Give them the offer code of NUNSD, for North Shore Community Day.
- Have a great three-day weekend.

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My child, \_\_\_\_\_, and I have read this week's newsletter.

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Signature

Date