

May 04, 2009

Dear 1CM Families,

There are many professionals working with teachers in every Wellesley public school. Recently, we've invited Mrs. Smith and Mrs. McGregor into 1CM to teach lessons and work with students.

Mrs. Smith is one of the math coordinators for Wellesley elementary schools. She works with teachers implementing the revised Investigations curriculum. Mrs. Smith meets with all first grade teachers at Hunnewell prior to beginning each unit. We reflect on delivered lessons and are introduced to the next unit. Mrs. Smith offered to come into the classroom to teach a few lessons. She visited with us last Wednesday and will come again this Wednesday. This is not only great for your child, but also great for the professional development of your child's teachers!

Mrs. McGregor is the Literacy Specialist for both Hunnewell and Upham schools. She oversees our literacy curriculum as well as the Reading Intervention program. We invited Mrs. McGregor into 1CM to show her the newly reorganized Classroom Library. Your child worked very hard to help organize, label and practice using the new system! One section of the library is dedicated to leveled reading. The books are organized by general level but are not assigned a specific number. We asked Mrs. McGregor if she could help us find a resource which lists titles and levels of beginning readers to help students self select "Just Right" books. Her suggestion was to keep the books generally organized but refrain from being so specific with the leveling process. Instead, Mrs. McGregor offered to come in and work with students over the next few weeks to help them self select their own reading material.

This sounds extremely similar to the conversations we had with parents during conferences. Now you know, although we were tempted to mark each book so students could be independent in self selecting, we are practicing what we preach! This learning process will take time and, although students will continue this work in second grade, they are getting a very good start working with Mrs. McGregor!

In Science, we continue to work on investigating the parts of birds. Students worked to discover more information about a bird's feathers, beak and feet. This week we'll talk about nests and eggs.

Complimenting these lessons are the eggs which are resting comfortably in our classroom incubators. All three 1st grade classrooms have incubators loaded with chick eggs. Mrs. Crosier and Mrs. Kay (Hunnewell parents) are the project managers. They come in every day, even over the weekend, to check on the temperature and humidity level of the incubators. Mrs. Crosier and Mrs. Kay came into the classroom last week to introduce the incubator and to discuss the process. This week, the 'chick moms' will come back into the classroom to wick the eggs. They will take groups of four students into a dark room. A special flashlight will be used to show students two eggs. One egg will be developing and one will not be developing. Students will have the opportunity to compare

what they are seeing in the two eggs and generate ideas about what will happen to each egg in the future.

Part of our school wide, Hunnewell Cares, program includes each class taking on a project in the community. Based on each grade, the community project could take place in school, within the town of Wellesley, within the state of Massachusetts, or in another part of the world. 1CM will join the other first grade classrooms in thanking community workers in Wellesley. We will be making cards and walking them over to the Wellesley Public Library on May 13. Please be sure you send in the permission slip for your child. Thank you

This coming Friday, May 08, first graders will welcome the Wing Master to Hunnewell school. This presenter is such a treat! He brings birds of prey, our next bird focus, to the school and talks about each bird as he holds them on his arm or presents them in an enclosure.

Last Monday, we welcomed author Grace Lin to Hunnewell school. She worked with the first graders to review how a book is created and published. She went through the whole process including the editor, the creative director and the publisher, to show students how many people are behind each book in a library or in a store. She then read one of her books and answered questions from students.

We are truly grateful for the wonderful presenters and work involved in creating these fantastic programs for our students. Just like a book, behind all of these programs stand the hard work and commitment of Hunnewell parents. Thank you!

Questions to ask your child

- With whom do you sit at your table? (students have been reassigned)
- What happened to Gill? (He wiggled down the drain)
- What did you do to help organize the Classroom Library? (Sort books by alphabetical order and place stickers on the back of every book to help us know where to put books back on the shelves)
- Do you remember what Grace Lin's book was about? (Ugly Vegetables)
- What kind of birds did the Wing Master bring?
- What is a bird of prey?
- What is your responsibility while the incubator is in the classroom? (Keep hands and bodies off the cart, watch for an unplugged cord and tell a teacher if you notice anything wrong with either the cord or the water bottle attached to the incubator)
- What did you see when you looked inside the chick egg?
- What did Mrs. McGregor say about picking a "Just Right" book from the classroom library?
- Who is Ms. Berens? (High School student visiting 1CM)

Have a wonderful week,
Mrs. Cannon and Mrs. Mulholland