Hello First Grade Families!

 I hope that your vacation with your student was amazing. We actually had some fairly warm weather, and by warm I mean above zero, for a couple of days, so I hope you were able to get outside and play for a while! We have been fortunate enough this week to also get outside a little bit to play and run around. The kids just need the fresh air since winter is so long around our area.

 This week we have been very busy and very productive! In ELA, we have been celebrating Read Across America. This event happens all week long and is started by a celebration of Dr. Seuss’ birthday. We completed our first Drop Everything and Read (DEAR), and the 1st grade loved it. Everyone in the entire building, including teachers, dropped everything and read for twenty minutes. It was extremely cool to witness and be a part of. We then continued to read Dr. Seuss books all week long. We used these books to start describing and thinking about characters. We thought about Horton and King Derwin in two different ways. We thought about their physical appearance, and we thought about their personality. We then talked and came up with describing words that we felt accurately depicted these characters. We even used a Dr. Seuss book to decorate our classroom door. We picked the story, Oh, The Places You Will Go! and brainstormed the different settings that we have read about in our stories. We each picked a destination, took a picture of ourselves, and then put our little pictures in some hot air balloons. We had a blast doing this, and our door looks pretty spectacular. Besides all of the literary fun that we have been having, we have also been working on identifying and learning the different s blends, how to use them to decode words, and how to actually decode new words. Our reading is really taking off, and it is amazing to see the changes that each child is experiencing.

 In Math this week, we have been working on place value. We have been learning how to use a place value chart, how to identify the number of ones and tens in a two digit number, that 10 ones and 1 ten is the same thing, and we have been working on some very intense word problems that focus on strengthening logic and problem solving strategies. The kids rise to the occasion every day, and they always remark on how fun math is, how they are learning new things, and how after practicing, they notice that it is getting easier. How great is that? We also started doing a new math experience in class. The kids work together to solve a problem set, review the work together, and then they come to the rug area where they use the Doc Cam to share their work and self-correct. One student mentioned that they felt like they were teaching one another. We talked about how working together, learning together, and self-correcting is just as important as me correcting and teaching them. It is a new experience and it is great to watch them interact and coach one another while I hop from group to group.

 In science, we learned about the fin development of our trout. We observed them, drew them, and wrote about them in our journals as well. The kids are always shocked at how quickly our trout are growing, and they love looking at the changes over the weeks. It is certainly amazing. Whenever you find yourself at GES, please come down to see our trout!

 Overall, this week was successful and great! We learned a lot of information, had some very deep conversations about characters, and had plenty of laughs like we usually do! I cannot wait for next week.

 I hope that you have a fabulous weekend!

Ms. LaCasse

**Parent Reminders:**

* Field trip permission slips due on Tuesday, March 10th, 2015
* Tracking and snowshoeing field trip on Thursday, March 12th, 2015
* Progress Reports come out Friday, March 13th, 2015
* There is no school on Friday, March 20th, 2015
* Scholastic Book Orders are due on Friday, March 27th, 2015