**Math Workshop**

In math, we are continuing to develop our understanding of multiplication and division. Students are learning how to balance equations by applying their skills. They need to understand the difference between an expression (3 x 5) and an equation (3 x 5 = 15). They are finding the unknown number in both multiplication and division equations. They use variables to represent the unknown factor, product, dividend, divisor or quotient. These variables can be a letter, symbol or even shape. Students are now applying these concepts in both single-step and multi-step word problems. They need to be able to solve for the unknown. Students must be able to choose from the four operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division) to successfully solve multi-step word problems. They are also expected to show their work and to be able to explain their chosen strategy.

Sample problems that your third grader is working on:

1. Choose the number that best completes the equation.

3 x 8 = \_\_\_\_\_\_ x (2 +6) a) 24 b) 8 c) 3 d) 12

1. Mrs. Ware bought 3 balls of yarn and 6 ribbons. The ribbon cost 4 cents and the yarn cost 7 cents. How much money did Mrs. Ware spend in all?

**Please help your child to practice their multiplication facts!** Each Thursday we take a short multiplication fact quiz. Even studying flash cards for just 5 minutes each night can be helpful!

**Reader’s Workshop**

This is our last week for Book Series in Reader’s Workshop. Students have spent a lot of time learning to compare and contrast characters, settings and the plots of various texts. This week we are focused on the theme in fiction texts. Students must be able to explain the theme of a text with supporting details and examples from the text. Students will also compare and contrast the themes in a variety of books.

At the end of the week, students will compare and contrast several fiction elements at one (characters, setting, plot, theme).

As we begin our Objects in the Sky science unit, we will be moving into informational texts!

**Writer’s Workshop**

Our children have been very opinionated and we love it! They are learning to share their thinking and their ideas using the power of persuasion. Our social studies unit has provided a lot of opportunities to explain different perspectives and how people and ideas have changed over time. Be sure to have your child expand upon their ideas and opinions at home. They should be able to offer at least 2 or 3 reasons to back up their opinion.

**Word Study**

Several students did not take their long and short ‘o’ spelling patterns quiz before the Thanksgiving break. Students have two copies of their spelling words, one to keep at school and one to keep in their homework folder. Please help your child practice spelling their words. If they have not taken their quiz, they will take it this week! During the week of December 9th, we will work on our next pattern, long and short ‘i’ spelling patterns.

Below is great online resource for spelling practice. You can use the resource online or download the App! Students can practice with their own word lists. Remember the goal is not memorization. They should be able to apply these patterns in reading and writing.

<http://www.spellingcity.com/>

**Science & Social Studies**

This week we are wrapping up our study of Wake County and the changes that have taken place in North Carolina over time. We have looked at:

* How transportation in North Carolina has changed over time
* Considering the varying perspective of colonial settlers and native Americans and what impact they had on each other
* Civil rights
* How the development of RTP has impacted Wake County

Our next Science unit of study is called Objects in the Sky. We are so excite to begin this unit with Star Lab, a portable planetarium that we will be borrowing from Wake County for a week! The children will be bringing home a moon calendar to track the changes in the night sky. They will be learning about constellations, the sun, shadows and even the planets. It will be out of this world ☺

**Scores and More Scores**

As many of you know, there is a new Read to Achieve law. Over the last few weeks you have received several sets of scores about your child’s reading. They took the Case 21 Wake County quarter 1 assessment at the end of October. They also took the Beginning of Year Reading Assessment (BOG) in September. Many of you probably have many questions and are wondering how to help your students. Please know that we are working on setting up a parent information session regarding the new Read to Achieve Law. Until then, a few trends we are noticing in the data:

* **Reading stamina needs to improve.**
  + Make sure that your child is reading nightly. Students will be expected to read about 7 passages on the end of grade test. This is a LONG time for your 8 or 9-year old to sit. They will be prepared, but they need practice sitting, focusing, reading and comprehending. This means they can sit in a quiet space and read independently for an extended period of time. If this is difficult for your child, use a timer and each week add a few more minutes.
* **Students need to read a variety of texts.** 
  + We all gravitate towards one genre or type of book. However, students will be expected to read a fiction text, analyze a poem, answer questions about an informational article, etc. Please help your child by giving them opportunities to read a variety of texts!

**Important Upcoming Dates:**

* Monday, December 2nd: Winter Food Drive begins
* Wednesday, December 4th: Preliminary Spelling Bee Test (for students who signed up)
* Thursday & Friday, December 5th and 6th: Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS)
* Thursday, December 5th: PTA Executive Board Meeting (6:30)
* Thursday, December 12th:
  + Winter Thanks
  + Wiley Band Holiday Concert – 7:00
* Friday, December 13th – Science Stations (need parent volunteers - email coming!)
* December 23rd – January 1st Winter Break