

awESome news



FROM THE DESKS OF

Ms. GENSEL & MRS. SHAH

With fall in full swing, we are pleased to report that our students have entered this new season fueled with a continued desire to achieve and remain actively engaged in learning new things.

In this season of giving thanks, we would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for sharing your children with us. It is their smiles, their comments, and their presence that makes coming to school each day so very easy.

Happy
Thanks
giving

November Dates to Remember

November 5th
SINGLE SESSION
Parent Teacher Conferences

November 6th
SCHOOL CLOSED
Parent Conferences

November 7th
SCHOOL CLOSED
NJEA Teachers' Convention

November 8th
SCHOOL CLOSED
NJEA Teachers' Convention

November 11th
No Inclusion Preschool

November 18th-21st
PTO Thanksgiving Thoughtfulness

November 21st
PTO Meeting at BCMS
Understanding New Literacy Standards

November 23rd
PTO Gift Wrap Fundraiser
Pick-Up at BCMS 9am-12pm

November 27th
SINGLE SESSION
Thanksgiving Eve

November 28th
SCHOOL CLOSED
Thanksgiving Recess

NEWS FROM THE COUNSELOR'S CORNER...

Following our Kick off for Character Week in September, Whiton School recognized several important celebrations.

During the Week of Respect (10/7-10/11), students and staff enjoyed a magical assembly that focused on respect and creating a bully-free environment. Mrs. Ryan visited each classroom to present lessons about how to address conflicts peacefully and discussed the important, and sometimes confusing, difference between normal conflict and bullying. Each classroom was asked to focus Morning Meetings on similar themes and to decorate Peace posters that reflected what they learned about respect, peace and getting along with others. Special respect-themed morning announcements helped to set the tone each day.

School Violence Awareness Week (10/21-10/25) began with students and staff dressed in white as a symbol of peace. Special morning announcements and focused Morning Meetings again helped to set the tone for the week. All students received glow-in-the-dark pencils that reflected positive messages about getting along, including, "It's cool to be kind!"

On October 23, Whiton was decorated in red ribbons and banners, while staff and students wore red to celebrate Red Ribbon Week. Throughout the remainder of the week, students and staff wore red ribbons and listened to special morning announcements. In their classrooms, students and teachers discussed the importance of making positive choices and living a healthy life. A culminating school-wide activity resulted in Red Ribbon Pledge posters displayed in the hallways through October 31. As we joined together in recognition of these special events, there was truly a sense of school spirit and community!



Written by: Maggie Ryan





News from Mrs. Dooley's Class

Happy Fall from Mrs. Dooley's 3rd grade class! We are falling into great routines as we wrap up the second month of school. The students are blossoming into amazing writers. Currently, we are working on narrative stories. The students really enjoyed adding similes to their stories as well as exciting leads and solid endings. We have also been writing Halloween stories inspired by a book we got at the Book Fair. *Creepy Carrots* is a picture book about a bunny that is haunted by carrots. Each student chose an object that would haunt their main character. We have acorns chasing after squirrels and even Hershey bars on the loose...WATCH OUT!

We have begun guided reading and each group is working on various reading strategies with their novels. Our class is reading: *The Mouse and the Motorcycle*, *The Stories Julian Tells* and *Bunnicula*. First we began by previewing each book and making predictions based on illustrations, the title, the blurb and chapter titles. The students couldn't wait to begin their books. Most recently the students have been identifying conflict in their stories and giving text evidence to support their thinking.

In math, we are beginning to practice our multiplication facts. First the students took a 5 minute test on all the facts. Each week after we retake the test every student is making a graph to chart their progress. This week we all took the timed test a second time and everyone was thrilled with their improvement! We began focusing on the 0s and 1s facts. Although they are easy I have been reminding the students not to get tricked and make a tiny mistake. Everyone is looking forward to beginning the 2s with a "Schoolhouse Rock" video and song next week!

Our scientists have been exploring motion and design with k'nex vehicles. Each small group created a standard vehicle using a technical drawing. In our most recent experiment the students tested the effects of rubber band energy. Most of them predicted that the more times we wound a rubber band around the axel the further the car would move. All of the students experienced this in their experiments and it shows in their data they collected.

I am so pleased with the leaps and bounds the students have made in such a short time. We are looking forward to a fun and productive school year!

WE ARE AUTHORS!

Mrs. Francescone's First Grade class has been working hard on getting their *Personal Narratives* ready for publishing. Since the beginning of the school year, the children have been learning that "writers are thinkers" and they use strategies for generating writing ideas. They have learned to add details to their sketches to give the reader more information, and to become "word solvers" and take risks when spelling an unfamiliar word. More recently, they have been working diligently on writing conventions and producing writing that is "easy to read" by readers. The children are in the midst of choosing one of their writing pieces to publish. They are very eager to share their masterpieces and put them on display.



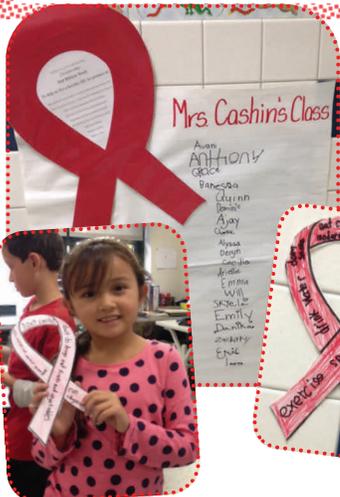
In addition, these first graders have also been enjoying "Building their Reading Muscles" in Readers Workshop. They have learned that *Readers are Thinkers* too! Students have learned that there are many different purposes and strategies for reading and re-reading books. The children have really enjoyed the time spent partner reading and have delved into practicing many different ways that partners can talk about books to share what they have read. They enjoy encouraging and helping one another read! We are looking forward to the next Reading Unit: *When Readers Get Stuck!*



Red Ribbon Week

By Mrs. Cashin

Red Ribbon Week is the oldest and largest drug prevention campaign in the country and was celebrated October 21-29th this year. At Whiton, we focus on making healthy choices. During Morning Meeting we signed a pledge to show our promise to take care of ourselves. In Health, we brainstormed ways we can be healthy, such as eating fruits and vegetables, exercising, and getting enough sleep. Students then wrote down healthy choices on a ribbon. They are on display outside of our classroom and remind us to live healthfully.



What is an Audiologist? By Randi Venturini

Lauren Westermann will tell you, "they are doctors that help you hear." According to JT Cunningham, "...they do tests to see how good you can hear." Deryn Watts would add..."I go to NYC to see my audiologists. Mapping, programs my cochlear implants. They hook my cochlear implants to the computers." Audiologists are professionals who specialize in evaluating, diagnosing, and treating people with hearing loss." It looks like Lauren, Deryn, and JT are right on track!!

October is National Audiology Awareness month and the hearing impaired students here at Whiton have been honing their hearing and listening, skills and knowledge. Since the start of school, students have taught classmates about the equipment they use in their classrooms on a daily basis and what its like to have a hearing loss. They have learned about the steps of hearing, the parts of the ear, and much more. Stop by room A-7 and feel free to grab an informational packet or two and see what great work our hearing impaired students have been doing!



Whiton's Safety Patrol
is doing an excellent
job of helping to keep
Whiton safe!
Thank you
Safety Patrol!

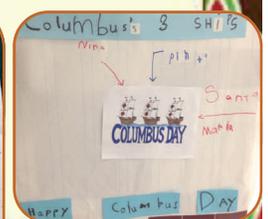
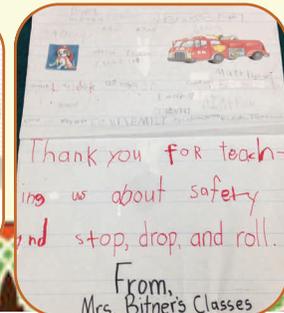
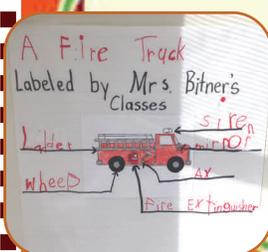


news from Mrs. Bitner's class

Mrs. Bitner's Classes have been sailing along in Kindergarten and are excited about the journeys they are making toward reading and writing. After listening to a story about Christopher Columbus, students contributed to labeling pictures of the 3 ships Columbus sailed on. Since each student is in a different place in their literacy development, Mrs. Bitner used that information to determine how each student would help to write the labeling words. Children would either gain experience with letter identification, beginning sound, ending sound, or most challenging, medial sounds. This guided practice where students "share the marker" with the teacher is called Interactive Writing.

Firefighters from Neshanic's Fire Department also visited the Kindergarteners to teach about fire safety. We practiced two more Interactive Writing pieces: labeling the parts of a fire truck and a thank you card to our Firefighters who took the day to share about fire safety with us!

Next week's Interactive Writing, we will be making a Halloween Class Book using Kindergarten sight words. Spooktacular fun!



Fluency is Fundamental! Improving Fluency in Young readers By Mrs. Cecchini

What is fluency and why is it important? The National Reading Panel (2000) states that: fluency is the ability to read text with speed, accuracy and proper expression. Fluent readers have the ability to recognize words automatically, read aloud effortlessly and with expression. They do not have to concentrate on decoding and can therefore focus on comprehension.

Fluency does not guarantee the reader full comprehension: but comprehension is difficult without fluency. Students can concentrate on comprehension when they are not slowed down by trying to decode unfamiliar words. They will be able to interpret, analyze, draw conclusions and infer meaning from the texts.

Teachers are the guiding force to help their students become more fluent readers: thereby helping to improve confidence in themselves. They can model fluent reading for their students. Read alouds, buddy reading, building sight word knowledge, literacy centers and reader's theater are a few of the many strategies used to help accomplish this goal.

A Chinese proverb says, "A book is like a garden carried in the pocket." Helping a child to become a fluent reader is one way to tend that garden and help it flourish!