

DMS 5th Grade Newsletter

Friday, August 22, 2014

Important Dates

September 1 - No School (Labor Day)
September 17 - Magazine Sales Kick-off
September 18 - School pictures
September 26 - Homecoming!

Preventing the Growth of the Lost & Found Table

We highly suggest that you put your child's name on all jackets, sweatshirts, hats, lunch boxes, etc. that come to school. This will assist us in getting the items back to their owners.

A la carte

Decorah Middle School students are allowed to purchase extra items with their lunches. Students have been encouraged to have conversations with their parents about if and how often they may make such purchases. Don't hesitate to call the school if you have questions about this option.

Early Outs

With the change in the school calendar this year, there should be fewer early outs, but in the event of bad weather, early dismissal is still a possibility. Please have a discussion with your child about any changes in the way your child goes home in the event of an early dismissal.

Academic Opportunity (AO)

At Decorah Middle School, homework is to practice, review, or apply knowledge from classes. Students are expected to come prepared for any class, which means having assignments done on time. If a student is missing an assignment, he or she will be assigned to Academic Opportunity. In the event of a late assignment, the student would be directed to call home to make arrangements to stay after school that day or the next to complete the work. The completion of this work will be communicated by the supervising teacher in the student's planner.



What We Are Learning:

Science with Mr. Peterson - This week we set up our science notebooks and learned that science is both a body of knowledge (things we know) and a process (how to find out more!) We read On a Beam of Light, a picture biography of Albert Einstein that emphasizes the importance of questions over answers. Next week we will practice asking science-based questions about the natural world.

Math with Mrs. Halweg - This week in math we took some time to familiarize ourselves with the student reference book. If you would like your student to have a copy of the student reference book at home, so they don't have to haul theirs back and forth from school each time, please have them let me know. I will check one out to them for the school year and will collect it from them in May. Starting next week you can expect your student to have a piece of math homework most nights to practice the skills we are working on in class.

Social Studies with Mr. Kelley - This week in social studies we previewed the textbook and became familiar with the important structural components such as the glossary, index, and map sections. Our first chapter in our curriculum is called "Geography of the United States". We will study various physical features and geographical terms as a foundation for explaining how our physical surroundings affect our lives and are vital to the study of history.

Reading and Writing: Mr. Peterson - In writing we set up our system for organizing our writing and talked about the writing process. I shared some personal memoirs from writers I like. Next week we will begin to draft "small moment" stories so we can learn more about each other and so I can better know the children as writers.

In reading we set up our reading notebooks and talked about how to find good fit books. We also explored our classroom library. Next week I will explain the **40 Book Challenge** (more information on the website). I will listen to the children read so I can know them better as readers. We will also begin our study of informational texts, looking at the structure and language of good descriptive writing.

I have a classroom blog where I will begin to write posts about what happens in our classroom. Last year many parents signed up to get updates set directly to your inbox and participate in conversations about our learning. Please consider signing up! Our blog lives here: