The Fifth Grade Experience

Mrs. Spencer’s Class

2014-2015

**Classroom Expectations**

Students are expected to be *prompt, prepared, positive, productive, and polite*. These five expectations will set the framework for the school year.

**Positive Reinforcement**

Verbal Praise: Everyone likes to hear such things as “Great Job!” and “I am proud of you!” God has made each of these students with amazing strengths and abilities and I love telling them how special they are.

Tickets: When students are following the classroom rules and/or behaving as they should, they can be rewarded with a ticket.  Students may cash in their tickets for small & large prizes: candy, snacks, stickers, toys, games, a coke pass, show & tell time, computer time, homework pass, or a class game.

Bingo Board: There will also be a bingo board in the classroom. When the students are caught doing excellent work, they will be able to write their name on the bingo board. When the board is full, letter/number combinations will be drawn and the students will receive prizes!

Birthdays: We love celebrating birthdays with our students. Please bring in a treat to share such as cupcakes or cookies and let us sing and share a special moment with the birthday child during our afternoon snack. If your child has a summer birthday, we can celebrate their ½ birthday or have a pretend birthday any day of the year. It is always helpful for the teachers to know ahead of time if you will be sending in treats so we may plan accordingly. Please plan for 30 treats, as we like to celebrate their birthdays with all the 5th graders! Birthday party invitations may not be passed out in class to individual students. If the entire class is invited, we may send home invitations in their backpacks.

Negative Reinforcement: Unfortunately, positive reinforcement is not always successful.  When students choose not to respond to the above strategies, warnings are given and privileges such as free time or recess will be taken away. Parents may need to be contacted and a meeting with the principal may also be helpful.

**Academics**

Attendance: Please be sure your child is attending class every day. Much is gained by the classroom experience of working with their classmates and hearing direction from teachers. Any time a student is absent, be sure to call the office. You have two days per absence to make up any missing work.

Assignment Notebooks Students will record their daily assignments in their agenda each morning. At the end of the day we check off the items we have completed and turned in, and highlight or circle any items that need to be completed at home. I will sign the notebooks and record any late or missing work and mention any concerns or accomplishments that your student may have had that day. Parents should read their **notebooks each night and sign them** after discussing with their child. This is a great way to keep up with what we are learning in class and can be used to foster communication between you and your child. This is also an easy way to communicate with me as you jot down any questions or concerns you may have in the notebook. As I sign agendas in the afternoon, students whose parents signed their notebook the night before will be rewarded with a ticket!

Weekly Folders: A maroon colored folder will be sent home every Monday with your child. It will contain a weekly newsletter (current Bible & Spelling words, upcoming dates and reminders, topics of study for each subject, etc.) and all work completed the previous week. It is a great idea to look over graded papers with your child and plan a time to rework or go over any items missed. Parents are to sign the contact sheet in the folder. This confirms you have received and reviewed the contents and is another way to keep the parent-teacher communication flowing!

Late Policy: Any homework that is turned in after 8:30 will receive a 10% deduction of points. Late assignments will continue to lose 10% a day. Assignments are given for the benefit of the student. The more they do, the more they learn, the better they will retain the information long term! It is really hard for a student to keep up with today’s work and yesterday’s work too, so it is best to stay current.

Online Grades: Every parent is given a code in which they may access Ren Web classroom management system. When you log in, you enter a secure network where you may view your child’s grades. Grades are typically entered into the computer within a week of when they were collected. This is a great way to monitor your child’s progress and note areas where they may need extra practice. It is highly recommended that you use this option of communication.

Homework: As students get older, the focus becomes less on “assigned” homework such as reading quizzes and math worksheets. Though these assignments will still be given, the focus should shift to activities that will prepare them for upcoming tests and long-term learning. Students should work on their spelling contract several nights a week in order to be ready for their Wednesday spelling test. Reading and quizzing themselves over their science flashcards and history study guide are excellent ways to keep the information fresh in their minds. Reviewing the weekly Bible verse for at least five minutes a night is a must for retention. The amount of material to be remembered is too much to try to learn the night before a test. Reviewing everyday goes a long way! Reading should also be done as often as possible. Students should read things they enjoy and find interesting!

Book Reports: Book reports will be assigned periodically. This is work that must be done outside of class time. Students will be asked to present their report in different ways throughout the year. Explanations of these assignments will be sent home in their weekly folders. If questions come up, please contact Mrs. Spencer!

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| http://www.mrcoley.com/images/bluemarble.gif   **Don’t Ask, Expect.** Do not ask your child if they have homework. This often portrays the hidden opinion that a) you shouldn’t have homework; b) you don’t want them to have homework. Plan on them having homework, and if nothing is assigned, suggest activities that would help them (study spelling, read science cards, read a book, write a letter, etc.)  http://www.mrcoley.com/images/bluemarble.gif   **Set a schedule**.  While this can be flexible, it's a good idea tohttp://www.mrcoley.com/images/clock.gif have a set time when students do their homework.  Many students need a little time to unwind after school before tackling their homework, but doing it too close to bed time may be difficult due to fatigue.  Find what works best for your child.  http://www.mrcoley.com/images/bluemarble.gif   **Provide a home study center for your child** with adequate lighthttp://www.mrcoley.com/images/lamp.gif and few distractions.  Doing homework in front of the television is typically not a good idea.  Paper, pens, markers, etc., should also be readily available.  http://www.mrcoley.com/images/bluemarble.gif   **Be available when your child is doing homework**, so that you can answer questions if there is confusion.  If possible, it is better for you to be in another room, so you are easily accessible and yet not a distraction.  http://www.mrcoley.com/images/bluemarble.gif   **Don't do the homework for your child**.  While help is encouraged, I don't expect perfect work all the time.  Seeing the pattern of errors is often helpful to me.  http://www.mrcoley.com/images/bluemarble.gif   **Check homework for completion**.  While students should behttp://www.mrcoley.com/images/checkmark.gif responsible to complete their own assignments, you looking over what they've done a) keeps you informed of what your child is studying, b) provides the sometimes necessary reminder to complete the work, and c) shows that you care about what your child is working on.  http://www.mrcoley.com/images/bluemarble.gif   **Praise your child** for his or her diligent work, as well as for accomplishment.  Tips adapted from an article in *Parent Journal, Autumn 1994* |