



Gehlen Gazette



What's Happening



October 2, 2009

*Forest Hills
Lutheran
School*

Dear Parents,

Time is flying by in first grade. It's October already and we have felt the shift in the weather with cooler, occasionally wet days.

The week began with excitement as we welcomed two new members of our class—a pair of African Dwarf Frogs. We learned about this type of frog and compared it to other frogs we've seen. Our responsibility chart added the job of "veterinarian" and this person feeds our frog friends twice a week. We are having fun observing their behavior, noticing times when they're still and others when they're quite active. We also used the frog theme in Writer's Workshop when we practiced writing simple sentences. Feel free to come take a look at our class pets!

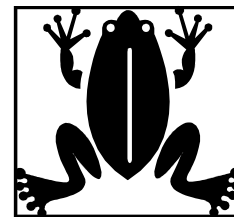
Throughout the year our class will be experiencing the works of specific authors and illustrators during Author Study units. Although we celebrate author collections all the time in an informal way, our Author Studies will have us look more closely at how a particular author gets his/her inspiration, how he/she prepares to write/illustrate and the techniques he/she uses to create their work. Our first author of the year is Gail Gibbons, who is well known for her non-fiction picture books. We read, *Frogs*, and saw her technique of incorporating information in her illustrations by labeling. We also visited her website to learn more about her. You can do this at home by going to www.gailgibbons.com.

Daily Five expanded once again this week. We have done a wonderful job adding the Read to Someone component and so began "Word Work." During this

time, students are using a variety of materials to practice the spellings of high frequency words. Each first grader has an individualized list of words he/she is working on. Students' knowledge of these words will be assessed frequently and new words will be given when they are needed. I am very excited to try a new enhancement to this Word Work experience. Coming home today is your child's first word list of 6 high frequency words and one "choice" word. This is a word your child has chosen either from their own interest area or a content area from school. If you have access to a computer, there is a WONDERFUL website where your child can type in their list of words and play all sorts of learning games. To do this, go to www.SpellingCity.com and have fun! Another fun way to practice these words at home is to create the words using spaghetti noodles, Cheerios, pipe-cleaners, a shallow pan of salt, markers, toothpicks, or whatever you can find to make practice fun.

In math we started Unit 2 and used our number grids to play "Rolling for 50." We also learned how to play "Two-Fisted Penny Addition." Most exciting though, was adding calculators to our Tool Kits. Our homework days started off great. Thanks for your help. The Home Links are intended to be a simple practice of what we're learning in class as well as a way of keeping you informed of what we're doing.

Have a fabulous weekend!
—Mrs. Gehlen



Sharing Assignment: "Night Observations"

Next week we will begin a "Nighttime" unit and as a lead in assignment, your child will need to spend some time observing the nighttime. As you observe with your child, talk together about the look of the sky. What is it like at twilight? What sounds do you hear? What changes do you observe at night? Your first grader will need to record their observations with either a labeled picture or simple sentences, and give a short, oral story about his/her experience. Make this a family time and have fun!

