

Dear Parents,

Thanks for all your wonderful support! You are a blessing to your children...and to me!

I also want to say that I am getting to know your children, even in this online format! They are proving to be funny, encouraging, and helpful to each other. Wow! If your child tends to be on the shy side, I completely understand. Maybe they could pop in at my 2:00 time just to say or share something? This is not required of course. Just thinking it might help me get to know him/her.

So, on to stuff to know for the week:

TURNING IN WORK

Your children are really starting to get in the habit of emailing me their work. I am so proud of them!

For example, for Math 1.2 I seriously received every assignment after it was graded that very day! So amazing! And, in general the math is coming in on time.

We are still getting used to turning in new subjects. Last week they were supposed to turn in Reading post-its, the Explore CA map, and the Writing Hooks. This was a little bumpier.

However, I received quick responses from reminder emails so that was awesome. We are entering the 2nd week of “real school” and it takes awhile for habits to form. I am confident the class will start turning in work consistently without reminders.

GRADING MATH ASSIGNMENTS

When to send in the math assignments has continued to be a little confusing because of the grading thing. When to send it in is immediately after we grade it. I think this is becoming more normal.

The actual grading of the assignments may still be confusing so I thought I'd clarify.

- It must be graded in red pen
- The students must put a red “star” next to EACH problem if it is correct. Some students just put stars by the section or at the top of the page, which is incorrect.
- The students must circle in red any problem that is incorrect.
- Using a “check” is not allowed as some of us think of a check as correct and some think of a check as incorrect. Because of the confusion we stick with the star and the circle.
- Some students are marking items correct when they are not correct. It's important to pay attention. I know it is so much harder online, but it is very important.

SENDING IN ASSIGNMENTS BY EMAIL

I am shuffling through hundreds of emails a day. I need to read and sort them correctly and efficiently. Because of this, please follow these guidelines:

- The subject line MUST be written in

- The subject line must say clearly what assignment is attached. For example, don't write "math." Instead write "Math 1.6." Don't write "homework." Instead write the specific assignment such as "CA Physical map."
- Please do NOT send more than one assignment per email. I am filing them carefully and need to easily access them. So, if an original email said "Math 1.2" but then it is resent with the California map, I cannot necessarily find it later when I am needing to grade it.
- When taking the picture, it is super important that I can read it in order to grade it accurately. So place the document on a table. Take the picture carefully so the whole page is included. Make sure it isn't too far away because I can't read it if it's too small. Make sure the writing is dark and written so I can read it. If pencil is difficult to make dark, a black pen for work is totally fine.

MATH FACTS

I think everyone is getting used to this routine. Hooray!

Please send the signed cover sheet with the scores either Friday evening, Saturday or Sunday. If you send it on Monday it needs to be before school begins at 8:30.

Some students have had their goal changed from 3 minutes to 2 minutes. Amazing!

Please do not change your goal until I let you know it should be changed. FYI, I will reply to the math facts email letting your child know if s/he has a new goal.

KEEPING YOU INFORMED

I am replying to student emails, letting them know what their grade was. Please check in on their emails to stay informed. In some cases, I am cc-ing parents on those emails so you can easily keep aware of homework status etc.

When something on a Google Doc gets a grade (not everything gets an actual grade – especially if it is a work in progress), I include the grade in a comment. Even without a grade you can tell by my comments how s/he did. I will write comments such as "Awesome" or "Great job!" I also will write suggestions for improvement or a specific compliment. Sometimes I will require a student to fix or redo the assignment. So checking in with these documents is also a way of staying informed.

You may always email me with questions or concerns!

LISTENING AND FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS

Let's face it. Paying attention and following directions is MUCH harder online!

Please brainstorm ways that may help. Perhaps earbuds or headphones will help block out other noises. Perhaps hanging out nearby and checking in. Sometimes squeezing a fidget item like a squishy ball while listening helps. It's not the same solution for everyone.

Let me give you an example of difficulty with listening and following directions. I did a lesson on brainstorming possible big plot problems and writing hooks to begin narratives. They were told, and shown, exactly what to write for their assignment. However, these were some of the results:

- More than a dozen students misunderstood.
- Some did not write the plot problem.

- Some did not write the hooks.
- Some did not do either and just started writing a story.
- Some did not notice the setting was supposed to be the beach.
- Some actually wrote the entire narrative! (They worked so hard and I felt really bad that they had to delete and redo this.)

One strategy that I mentioned to the students is that they could do a screen shot of what I am showing or writing on the document camera. That way they will be able to refer to it after the lesson is over.

READING ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHINS

Just a note that we meet in small groups for reading on Fridays. So it is very important that your child reads through the assigned chapter(s) and has sent me their post-its by Thursday. FYI, Wednesday is a great day to get ready for this.

STUDENT EMAILS

Overall, I think the students are doing way, way better checking their emails throughout the day. I am so impressed! Thank you for the help you are providing for this. In fact, it is now not unusual for me to get a reply to an email within 5 minutes!!!! Let's keep that up!

REMOTE SCHEDULE TWEAKED A LITTLE

Just FYI, I am still working out how all this online stuff will work best. I updated the schedule. I also wrote in the comments at the top the main highlights of what changed. Hopefully that helps. When I make changes, I throw away my old printout and print the new one. I think that is also a good idea for your child.

AGENDA

Please encourage your child to write down work due in the Lincoln Agenda sent home. I am also doing this and showing the students what I write. I think it's a good idea to monitor this and double check with the weekly assignments to make sure important stuff is not forgotten. Also, I recommend a system that shows the work was submitted. I think something like highlighting in yellow after sending something is a good idea. On the Weekly Assignments page, I tried to make it very clear this week when assignments are due.

I think that's enough for now. Clearly, I am not following through on my promise to keep it short! LOL! You are so kind and so patient! I appreciate your support and flexibility so much!

I am looking forward to another week of spending time with your amazing kids!

Stay safe,

Ruth