

Dear Parents,

Starting the week of November 6, we will begin to have an event called *Friday Happenings*. This is part of our language arts program that meets district standards for oral language and is enjoyed by all students.

*Friday Happenings* has many facets. Its focus is writing and speaking through participation. Students will learn to organize their thoughts, express themselves in a clear and concise manner, increase their speaking vocabulary, develop a degree of comfort speaking in front of an audience and achieve a feeling of confidence. This may be the only time a student has the complete and total attention of every member of our class. Each child benefits from this activity. The presenter develops many necessary life skills and the audience gets to know the speaker better and thereby appreciates the unique qualities that each brings to the group as a whole.

*Friday Happenings* improves listening abilities. Students in the audience learn to listen for facts, humorous comments, figurative language, logical story progression, and correct grammar.

Your child will create a two-minute speech to go along with the topic for the week. They will then present the speech in front of the class every other Friday. Your child should practice the presentation, either in front of a mirror or an audience (you) with a timer. Eye contact is very important, as is the two-minute time expectation.

To start the year, your child should write out the complete story using note cards or paper. Later in the year, they will be encouraged to give speeches using Power Point (Please note, this will be taught as part of our regular computer class, you will not need to teach your child how to do this). Students will also be encouraged to use any other visual aids they wish and will have complete use of the white board, table, television, VCR, DVD, computer, and document camera. Some of the grading criteria for *Friday Happenings* are:

- Length of presentation
- Eye contact with the audience
- Creativity of the visual
- Voice, facial, and body expression
- Vocabulary
- Grammar
- Ability to project voice

*Friday Happenings* is a one to two-week long homework project that should be worked on each night throughout the week. Do not wait until Thursday night to begin the assignment. **No class time will be given to create visuals or speeches.** Though students may at first be reluctant to speak in front of their class, they will quickly learn to speak in front of others with ease. This is sure to be a fun learning experience for all.

Thank you,

Please see reverse for complete *Friday Happenings* schedule.

- 11/6 Unexplained phenomenon or superstition, including background or meaning eg. UFOs, ghosts, Loch Ness, Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> (1-17)
- 11/13 Unexplained phenomenon or superstition, including background or meaning eg. UFOs, ghosts, Loch Ness, Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> (18-33)
- 11/20 No school – conference week**
- 12/4 Media influence on society - eg. commercials, holiday ads, news agencies, television, etc. (1-17)
- 12/11 Media influence on society - eg. commercials, holiday ads, news agencies, television, etc. (18-33)
- 12/18 No Speech – Minimum Day**
- 1/8 Why it is important for people to volunteer (1-17)
- 1/15 Why it is important for people to volunteer (18-33)
- 1/22 Why dogs are better than cats, or vice versa (1-17)
- 1/29 Why dogs are better than cats, or vice versa (18-33)
- 2/5 An interesting person or hero (1-17)
- 2/12 An interesting person or hero (18-33)
- 2/19 History of a certain sport or pop culture item eg. soccer, fashion, hula hoop, music (1-17)
- 2/26 History of a certain sport or pop culture item eg. soccer, fashion, hula hoop, music (18-33)
- 3/5 Your choice:  
**Persuasive:** That there is life on other planets  
**Information:** Astronomy topic of your choice (1-17)
- 3/10 (W) Your choice:  
**Persuasive:** That there is life on other planets  
**Information:** Astronomy topic of your choice (18-33)
- 3/19 Ecology topic, can be persuasive or informational eg. conservation, pollution, consumer waste, endangered species, oceans, littering, deforestation (1-17)
- 3/26 Ecology topic, can be persuasive or informational eg. conservation, pollution, consumer waste, endangered species, oceans, littering, deforestation (18-33)
- 4/16 Funniest childhood memory (1-17)
- 4/23 Funniest childhood memory (18-33)
- 5/7 How to make every day fun (1-17)
- 5/14 How to make every day fun (18-33)
- 5/21 Dream vacation (1-17)
- 5/28 Dream vacation (18-33)