

Southdown Stuff Winter Edition

Southdown Primary School • 125 Browns Road • Huntington, NY • 11743 •
(631) 673-2080 • Hours: 9:20am — 3:40pm • Winter 2016

Message from the Principal

Dear Southdown Families,

Welcome back from the February recess. I hope that you and your family had a chance to rest, relax, and enjoy some time off. We had a wonderful first 100 days of school at Southdown. The Kindergarten students enjoyed celebrating the 100th day. Their teachers were dressed in their 100th day apparel. It was so nice to see the students and their teachers have such a good time with the festivities.

As I reflect on the first 100 days of school, I continue to be thankful to serve as principal of this wonderful building. We have incredibly talented, nurturing, and dedicated teachers. The children light up our hallways and classrooms with their smiles each and every day. I also feel fortunate to have the support of such a committed PTA and parent base. Here at Southdown we truly recognize that education is a partnership between the school and home. We are happy that so many of our parents share that belief.

We were lucky to have Mrs. Carino, parent and published author, spend time with each and every class in our building. She taught students the ins and outs of the writing process. She also donated two of her published books to every child in our school. Working with Mrs. Carino was a fantastic opportunity for your children to learn from a real published author.

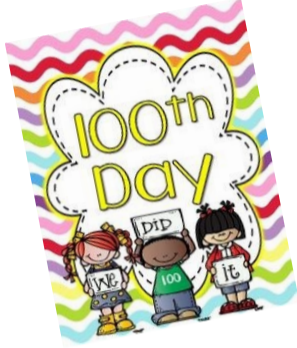
Hopefully the worst of the winter is behind us. I plan to send the children out for recess as long as the weather permits. Please continue to send your child in with a jacket. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

My door is always open. I also encourage you to keep in contact with your child's teacher.

Sincerely,
Scott Oshrin



Kindergarten



100 Days of Learning
100 Days of Fun!
100 Days of Kindergarten
Preparing for Grade One!



Kindness month taught us how to be **Bucket Fillers** to our friends at Southdown and families at home

Independent learning centers for literacy and math are up and running

Numbers to ten can be represented in so many ways

December and January brought different forms of precipitation for us to observe during our Weather unit in science

Equal means *the same*, we learned this playing a game

Reading on our own by blending the letter sounds we know

Geometric shapes can be found in the world around us

Animal parents take care of their babies

Reading with Parents for **PARP** is a special time to share

Trip to see **Frosty** brought us so much fun

Everyone putting words together to write sentences that match our pictures

New topics to look forward to include:

We will celebrate the 100th Day of School in February

Learning teen numbers to 20

Exploring *Forces and Motion*

Using the *Scientific Method* to answer a question

First Grade



First Graders are improving fluency!

We are working to improve our fluency with reading and math facts.

Reading Fluency is the ability to read a text accurately, quickly, and with expression. Fluency is important because it provides a bridge between word recognition and comprehension. Readers who have not yet developed fluency read slowly, word by word. Their oral reading is choppy. We have been practicing fluency when reading. Fluent readers read aloud effortlessly and with expression. Their reading sounds natural, as if they are speaking. Rereading provides your child an opportunity to become a more fluent reader. Your child should practice re-reading aloud texts that are reasonably easy for them - that is, texts containing mostly words that they know or can decode easily.

Ways to practice Reading Fluency:

1. Echo Reading: Have kids track the words with their finger as a parent reads a passage aloud. Then have your child read it. Have the child, match their voice to yours. By reading effortlessly and with expression, you are modeling for your child how a fluent reader should sound while reading.
2. Repeated Readings: Have your child read their favorite books and poems over and over again. Practice getting smoother and reading with expression.
3. Challenge your child to beat his own reading record through repeated readings of the same passage. Time your child's readings in seconds, and your child will really be amazed at the time difference! Make a special reading medal to award your child's accomplishment.
4. Readers Theater: Have your child recite or act out a poem or a play.

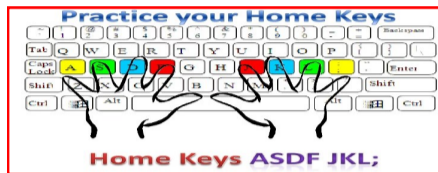
Research has shown that long-term success in mathematics is closely tied to strong number sense, including fluency with basic facts. The sooner your child becomes fluent with her or his addition and subtraction facts from 1-10, the better!

In order for students to become fluent with their basic facts, they need to develop strategies that move beyond counting. We have been practicing adding and subtracting at school and we are asking that you spend 5-10 minutes a night practicing math facts with your child. If your child has mastered his/her facts from 1-10, he/she can begin working on facts to 20 and improving his/her speed.

Ways to Practice Math Fact Fluency:

1. Play math games: Research has shown that math games help students learn their facts because students receive immediate feedback and repetition with correct answers and games are highly motivating.
2. Flash Cards: You can purchase premade sets or students can help make their own.
3. Websites for practice: With adult help, students can practice facts using internet websites.

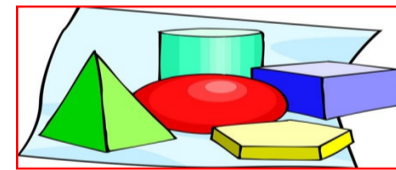
Second Grade



Welcome to Winter! Second graders have been very busy! The students have been learning about adding and subtracting numbers to 1,000. We were happy to see many families join us for Math Night, when the children rotated through rooms of fun math activities and games. There were lots of smiles! Our boys and girls have also been busy learning keyboarding skills in the computer lab. Soon, they will come home with a poem they typed themselves- even adding clip art on their own! The children are very proud of their typing skills. Social Studies has us all learning about economics. We have identified needs and wants, goods and services, and we are even practicing spending and saving techniques with a budget! Your children may want to earn income doing chores around the house. Don't miss an opportunity to have the trash taken out by your child!

We look forward to an "early" Spring full of lots of learning and fun with our 2nd grade students.

Third Grade



It has been a great start to 2016. The third graders have been enjoying many hands on activities in science. We are exploring balancing and weighing objects as well as the topic of density and mass through sinking and floating. We are looking forward to applying the scientific method into our classroom science projects for the science fair.

We have jumped into our geometry unit working with square units to compare the area of various polygons. Keep a look out for the Math Newsletter for more information!

In Language Arts, we are reading and analyzing texts across various genres in order to strengthen the skills necessary to grow as successful readers and writers. We have focused on comparing and contrasting, sequencing, cause and effect, as well as author's purpose.

We look forward to a wonderful Spring filled with exploration and learning.

Fourth Grade



It's been an exciting few months for our fourth graders with many fun learning opportunities!

We had our Market Day in December with quite a few creative and unique booths to shop at. The students loved using their hard-earned "Southdown Bucks" to play games, join in on a raffle, or purchase hand-made jewelry, books and other fun items from their classmates.

Our trip to Sagamore Hill was a huge success! The students enjoyed an interesting tour through Teddy Roosevelt's home as well as participating in a fun scavenger hunt in the museum. They were full of questions and intrigued by all the information they learned about this wonderful former president who once lived right down the road from us. We knew the trip was a success when we heard many of the children saying, "That was the best trip ever!" on our way home!

The fourth graders will be putting an emphasis on science in the coming months. We have been using some exciting new books and materials in our classrooms and will be starting to work on our class science fair project in the next few weeks. Each fourth grader is expected to also do an individual project at home, so we will be sending home information about our science fair very soon. Now would be a good time to start thinking about a fun and interesting experiment to work on with your child!

Library

Hello Readers,

The students at Southdown Primary School are busy recording reading minutes for the annual Parents as Reading Partners (PARP) program. Set aside a special time to share the wonder of books with your child.

After a kickoff highlighting guest readers, the classes were fortunate to have a resident author visit them in library class. Mrs. Carino, a Southdown parent, conducted a writing activity with the children focusing on "what I want to be when I grow up". Mrs. Carino will return at the end of PARP and treat the students to an assembly highlighting her books.

Mrs. Medina-Jaundes, from the Huntington Public Library visited with kindergarten students. She discussed the benefits of a library card. Those cards were distributed this week to some very happy children. In the future, we hope to streamline the application process, and make cards available to all Southdown students. There are many wonderful resources available on the website, including eBooks, Common Core homework help, and free databases to utilize for research projects. If your child does not have a library card, do not hesitate to contact me.

Until next time, keep reading!

Mrs. Tietjen, SLMS



Speech



Practicing Language Skills in the Car

Prepared By: Shelley Stockner, MA, CCC/SLP and Sarah Macaluso, MA, CCC/SLP

The car is a great place to practice speech/language skills and strategies. Take advantage of time spent in the car by playing some fun, language-based games. Long rides in the car can be fun and educational! Playing games during long trips is a great way to expand and reinforce language skills.

Here are a few ideas:

Categories: To play this game, one player chooses a category, such as "animals." Every player takes a turn naming an item in the category. If a player repeats a word or is unable to name a word in the category, he/she is out. Play continues until one player remains and wins the game. To make this task more complex, have the child add more descriptive words to the category (e.g., animals with tails, animals that live in the zoo) or name animals alphabetically (e.g., aardvark, bear, cat, dog, etc.).

Rhyme Time: To practice phonological awareness skills, children can practice creating rhymes for things they see from the car window or in the environment around them. For example, if a child chooses the word "tree," other players must name some rhyming words (e.g., knee, see, me). The player who gives the most rhymes is the winner!

Cities and Syllables: As you pass through different towns, cities, or states, children can practice counting the number of syllables in that city or state's name. For example, when passing through Idaho, the child counts or claps out three syllables. A variation of this game: a parent chooses a particular number of syllables. Players look for words in the environment (e.g., road signs, billboards) that contain the specified number of syllables. Each player earns a point for finding a word. The player with the most points wins!

Guess It: Players take turns describing familiar items or objects (e.g., car, apple, baby). The first player chooses an object and gives three clues to describe it. All of the other players take turns guessing what the first player is describing (e.g., it is a fruit; it can be red or green; it grows on a tree). If no players guess correctly, the first player provides another clue about the object. The player who correctly identifies the mystery object earns a point and chooses the next word to describe.

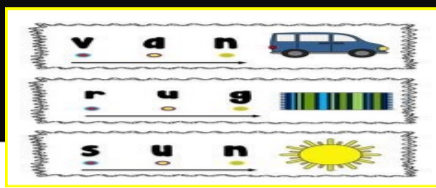
Showtime: Choose age-appropriate DVDs to show children in the car. At the end of the film, have the child retell the story to another person in the car. The story should include characters, settings, chronological events, and a conclusion. Encourage the child to produce a story with a beginning, middle, and end.

Physical Education

Family Fitness Night



Winter can be a long season with children cooped up inside during the cold, short days! Therefore, the Southdown Physical Education Staff is preparing for the 1st annual Family Health and Fitness Night. Kindergarten-2nd grade students and their families are invited to join us on February 23rd and the 3rd-4th grade students and family members are scheduled to participate on February 24th. Both events will take place from 7pm-8pm. The night will be divided into two sessions. The first session will highlight fitness and nutrition featuring aerobic dance and healthy snacks, while the second event will give your children an opportunity to demonstrate their volleying skills in a fun, cooperative family activity. So lace up your sneakers and get ready to be a role model of health and fitness for your child!



ENL



One of the easiest, most enjoyable, and cheapest ways to help your child with school is to read with him or her. Children of all ages - not just the little ones - enjoy being read to. After all, don't many adults listen to audiobooks? You can also take turns reading with your child, or have your child read to you. The point is for you both to have fun, so the two of you will look forward to spending this time together.

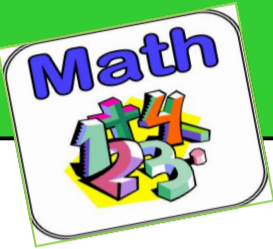
If you're more comfortable reading in a language other than English, go right ahead and do so! Your child will still be developing his literacy skills, which your child can also apply when reading in English. Knowing two languages is a great asset.

Whether you read, your child reads, or some combination, take time to look at the pictures first so he/she can better understand the story. Remember, reading is all about making meaning of the words. Looking at the pictures and talking about what's happening in the story will develop oral language. Remember how your baby first learned to listen, then talk, and finally learned to read and write? Listening to language comes before speaking it, and speaking it comes before reading and writing. This means that making sense of the story by discussing the pictures will aid reading comprehension. Talking about the story will also develop vocabulary. When your child reads the words, matching the pictures to the words will help your child figure out any words he/she might not know. Especially for beginning or struggling readers, using the pictures is an important reading strategy - it's normal, not cheating! If your child does not know a word, you can ask: "Think about the story. What makes sense?". Then you can also ask, "Does it look right?" and "Does it sound right?" (Do the letters and sounds match the word you are thinking of?)

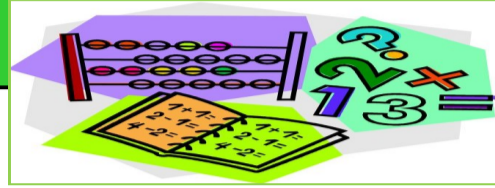
By all means, discuss the story - but keep it light so it doesn't turn into a chore. Some ideas: You can talk about your favorite character, or whether or not you agree with how he solved the problem in the story. What was your favorite part and why? Do you like the illustrations? What makes them special?

Finally, keep in mind that your child's listening level is higher than what he/she can read on his own. This means you can read books to your child that would be too difficult for him/her to read independently.

Happy reading!



RTI (Math)



Make Math Fun II

Check out my E-board for other fun games to play.

Mrs. Cicio

Guess If You Can

Grades K-5

What to do:

Let your child think of a number between a stated range of numbers while you try to guess the number by asking questions. Here is a sample conversation:

Child: I am thinking of a number between 1 and 100.

Parent: Is it more than 50?

Child: No.

Parent: Is it an even number?

Child: No.

Parent: Is it more than 20 but less than 40?

Child: Yes.

Parent: Can you reach it by starting at zero and counting by 3's?

Child: Yes.

(At this stage, your child could be thinking of 21, 27, 33, or 39.)

Figure out the answers to your own questions.

After you have guessed your child's number, let your child guess a number from you by asking similar questions.



Parent Pointer



It is important to help children develop an understanding of the characteristics and meanings of numbers.



Art



Happy Winter!

Art classes at Southdown are busy as always. Mrs. Morea's Kindergarten just finished learning about Claude Monet and will next start learning how to draw a tiger and study the art of Henri Rousseau. First grade has been working hard on Romare Bearden portraits, and are almost finished! Second grade has been studying Picasso and will next begin talking about landscapes, tints and shades. Fourth grade will begin working on awesome sculptures based on the delicious art of Wayne Thiebaud. All work will come home in a portfolio in June!

In Mrs. Plesent's Kindergarten art classes students are learning about Claude Monet. Snow is in our future since the first graders have started their winter landscapes. Second grade classes are learning about complementary colors. The third grade classes have started Georgia O'Keeffe flowers. Finally, the fourth graders are making a wild flower landscape. Soon we will be using magazines so any donations would be wonderful.

Artfully yours,
Mrs. Morea and Mrs. Plesent



Mental Health Team



We read a very interesting article regarding parenting!! We would like to share some salient points with our Southdown families. Dr. Leonard Sax, a family physician, psychologist, and author wants parents to know that they are "raising kids wrong." Dr. Sax said a parent's job is to teach children right from wrong, teach them the meaning of life and keep their children safe. "In doing that job, you are going to do a lot of things a child won't approve of and not understand," he said. According to Sax, parents should focus on helping children develop skills such as self-control, humility and conscientiousness, meaning they think of people other than themselves. Parents are spending more time with their children than any previous generation. But instead of spending time at the dinner table, this generation is spending the time shuttling children from one activity to the next or doing their homework for them. "It doesn't help to spend more time with kids if they are spending it in the wrong ways," Sax said. In his book, Sax cites numerous research studies that found that a lack of parental authority is why obesity is on the rise, why more kids are on anti-anxiety and attention deficit disorder medication, why children have a culture of disrespect, seem fragile, and why American children no longer lead the world in education.

Dr. Sax offers some solutions:

1. Have family meals at home and make it a top priority.
2. Take screens out of the bedroom.
3. Put screens in public places and limit how they are used.
4. Teach humility.
5. Have an alliance between the school and you.
6. Parent what your child does!!

Happy Parenting!!

Linda Kohan, LMSW and Melody Renick, MS Ed.



Reading



Tips From the Reading Teachers

In alignment with the Common Core State Standards, students should read a true balance of informational and literary texts, both at home and at school. We decided to address this shift, by sharing information relating to the **genre** of Historical Fiction.

Historical Fiction

A fictional story with real and imaginary characters that takes place during a time in history.

Before, during, and after reading texts related to Historical Fiction, you may want to target the following vocabulary terms when reading with your child at home:

period/era
figure
history
effect
event
society



Here are some titles of Historical Fiction books that you can read to your child at home:

- Abe Lincoln's Hat (Martha Brenner)**
- The Other Side (Jacqueline Woodson)**
- The Drinking Gourd (Jeanette Winter)**
- Molly's Pilgrim (Barbara Cohen)**
- Meet Kaya: An American Girl (Janet Shaw)**



Music



The Southdown music staff was so excited and proud of how the students did at Winter Song Fest. All of the students worked really hard and performed well. We are also looking forward to an exciting few months in the music room.

K - Our students are starting to learn how to read basic rhythms and build a foundation of general music concepts like tempo (speed) and dynamics (volume). We will be bringing home our own first compositions to share with you soon.

1 - We are so excited to start playing the xylophones and other classroom instruments! We are also starting to read notes off the music staff to help us learn the letters we need to play on the instruments. Ask us what word we use to figure out the notes in the spaces of the music staff.

2 - Rounding out our melodic note reading, we are adding two new notes soon and learning how to read the names of the notes that live on the lines of the music staff.

3 - RECORDERS! All the work we have been doing on note reading will come in handy as we are starting to play recorders. Your 3rd grader should also have come home with an application for the instrumental music program and we hope they will choose to participate in that amazing program for next year.

4 - We are learning a bunch of new rhythms and notes on our recorders. Our chorus classes are also starting to learn some new songs for the spring concert.

Band- Our band program hit the ground off and running in January! Ms. Castaneda has put a monthly practice sheet in each band student's binder. On that practice sheet we record new music terms and vocabulary that we learn, tips from Ms. Castaneda to improve our playing, and our assignments to practice at home. You should be asked by your student after EACH night that they practice for a signature on that practice sheet. Your student should aim to get 5 practice signatures from you each week. There will be weeks they get more and weeks they get less, but consistent practice pays off! We started working on a brand new energetic song called "G Force Five!" Ask your child to play it for you and for them to show you their expertise of counting notes and rests. Also, if you have not done so already, please sign up for Ms. Castaneda's Remind Text alerts for band updates and possible weather cancellations of rehearsals! Text @sdjeband to 81010.

Orchestra- The orchestra has started learning the set of selections that will be performed at the Spring Concert which are: Twinkle---Melody and Variation; Funky Blues, Fiddlin' Tune and Soul Strings. We are still considering one more modern song---students are asked to write their suggestions. One of the songs that was suggested is Uptown Funk. We should try to decide on a final song by the end of February. Also extra practices will be held on Tuesdays from 3:30-4:30 for those interested and are able to have a ride back home. Keep up the great work and please attend orchestra rehearsals at STEM.



I hope you enjoyed reading
the Southdown Stuff!

