

Dear Parents,

Welcome back from spring break! I hope everyone had a fun and relaxing week. We started this week discussing what we did over break and writing about it in our journals. Some of the stories shared: “I did nothing,” “I fought with my brothers,” “I went to a hotel and swam in a pool” and “I went on a cruise.”

I had the wonderful opportunity to go to Marco Island, FL. While I was there I spent a lot of time picking up shells at the beach. My original intention was to bring one back for each of the students. By the end of the week I had collected enough to fill three gallon sized ziploc bags! I decided to let the students pick which ones they wanted and then tried to come up with a fair way to go about it. I categorized the shells into three types and put them on three trays. I drew sticks with the students’ names on them and let them pick from the first tray one by one. For the second tray I went from the last name I had chosen back to the first. For the third tray I started in the middle and worked my way out from there. I wasn’t sure how it was going to work but was so impressed with how the students responded. There were no complaints, no impatience, no whining, no tears, no trading, no negative comments or comparisons, and no drama. They showed maturity way beyond their brief years and conducted themselves in ways many adults could take a lesson from.

We are still working on our Scholastic class book and have to finish it next week in order to get it in with enough time to publish it and get it back to us before school ends. I have forms turned in from about half the class but need to have a completed form from each family. Scholastic will not accept our book to publish without the forms. You don’t have to order a book but you do need to fill out a form. Please let me know if you need a new form. The students have been working very hard on their pages, both writing and illustrating. This is the most challenging writing assignment I have asked them to do and I am proud of them for their perseverance. I know they will be so proud and excited when it is completed and they can see the final result.

We met this week with our buddies from Ms. Dionysia for Sight Word Bingo. We split up the groups and had half in our room and half in Ms. Dionysia's room. It was a lot of fun and we kept calling words until everyone had filled their bingo cards. The older students did a great job of encouraging the younger students to try their best, make educated guesses, and not worry about making mistakes. Next week we will be celebrating National Grilled Cheese Day with Ms. Alexandra's class and using our math and science skills to cook grilled cheese sandwiches together. Ms. Dionysia generously offered to donate bread that is allergy-safe for all of our students.

This week we checked out several novels from the library to choose between for our next novel study. The librarian gave me some suggestions and included a few of her favorites. I will give the students a synopsis of each and we will vote. Some of the contenders: *James and the Giant Peach*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *Stuart Little*, *Fantastic Mr. Fox*, and *Boxcar Children*.

Some of the books we read aloud this week: *Unicorn Named Sparkle*, *Easter Cat*, *Teacher Cat*, *Ninjabread Man*, *Good Morning Grizzle Grump*, *If You Ever Want to Bring a Piano to the Beach*, *Don't!*

I sent home a Scholastic book order that will be due next Wednesday, April 11. I also gave each student a coupon from Scholastic that is good for a free book worth \$5 or less with a purchase of \$5.

Have a wonderful long weekend and Happy Easter to those who are celebrating this weekend.

Ms. Leslie