

Dear Parents,

Highlights from this week to discuss with your child:

1. We are over half-way through our new novel study: *Gooseberry Park* by Cynthia Rylant. Ask your child: Where is Stumpy? How will the animals find Stumpy? What would you do if you saw a bat in your house? Which animal in our story do you think is the smartest? Why? All the characters in *Gooseberry Park* are very endearing. Take a special trip to the library to check out all the other books Cynthia Rylant is writing. I have said it before but it is worth repeating: If you want a child to improve reading skills, do not spend your time decoding words, spend your time searching for exciting, funny, and intriguing stories. First we find stories worth decoding. Then your child will beg you to help decode the words.

2. I no longer add vocabulary words to our wall because every day the students are adding words. Some of these new words are from *Gooseberry Park*, some are from our play, and some are from our studies. (Gig, obsolete, canine, feline, choreography, peered, instinct, onomatopoeia, glistening, treacherous) On the way home from school each day, pick a vocabulary word and make up a story using that word as often as possible. If you end up with a really good story, submit the idea to Ronald Dahl's Imaginormous Challenge!

3. Renowned author Ronald Dahl is promoting creativity and writing: "Welcome to Roald Dahl's Imaginormous Challenge – starring Willy Wonka! Here, a 100-word story idea could win an extraordinary once-in-a-lifetime prize! Wonka – the world's most famous chocolate maker – is embarking on a nationwide search for FIVE brilliant story ideas from children around the United States. The winning story ideas, with a little help from some of Wonka's most esteemed companions, will be transformed into creations beyond anyone's wildest dreams..." Sounds like a fun challenge. Students can write as many imaginative story ideas as they want. The contest runs through May 1st. We will be entering some of our ideas here at school but the opportunities for growing your imagination are endless. Go ahead and enter as many as you want from home. Let's keep this book writing trend going strong!

<https://www.imaginormouschallenge.com/teachers/?linkId=49113423>

4. This coming Wednesday we will walk to the Des Plaines History Center to take a tour of the Kinder House. (Located on the corner we pass as we walk to the park) This lesson of life 100 years ago will include a very special demonstration of the evolution of music through the years. Of course, showcasing Jazz, to help us prepare for our upcoming gig. We do not need any chaperones but you are welcome to join us. We will be leaving at 11:45 and returning at 1 pm.

5. Your child's play lines came home in the backpack on Wednesday. Keep these in a safe place to practice often. By this coming Monday your child should be able to easily read all the words in his/her lines. I included the line before so you can cue them in. Thank you in advance for all your help in making this play a memorable and fitting grand finale to a spectacular year.

The students will wear black pants (black sweat pants, black jeans, or black leggings for girls) and **plain** white t-shirts. We will be painting on whiskers and a cat nose and also wearing cat ears. We will have a dress rehearsal a week before the play.

Your partner in education, Mrs. Teresa Pape 😊

"If you can't explain it to a six year old, you don't understand it yourself." – Albert Einstein