

Dear Parents,

Highlights from this week to discuss with your child:

1. We have almost finished our novel study, *Gooseberry Park* by Cynthia Rylant. Fortunately, Cynthia Rylant wrote a sequel to *Gooseberry Park*. We will be starting our new adventure next week. Just like we watch our favorite movies more than once, reading books over and over can turn a book into a family memory that will be talked about for years to come. Rereading a good book will also help build vocabulary, strengthen visualization skills, model proper grammar, and turn books into good friends. Try this...go to the library and pick up *Gooseberry Park* and let your child catch you reading it. The reaction will be priceless! (Be careful to pick up the first book in the series, the sequel is not as good if you haven't already fallen in love with the characters from the first book.)

2. New vocabulary words: Bach, Beethoven, Blues, Jazz, century, saxophone, clarinet, flute, piccolo, harmonica, technology, and curiosity. You may be surprised how often your family will stumble across these words if you keep an eye out for them. When it happens, enjoy the surprise!

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**. 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 Wednesday we walked to the Des Plaines History Center to take a tour of the Kinder House. This lesson of life 100 years ago included a very special demonstration of the evolution of music through the years. We started with Bach (400 years ago), then Beethoven (300 years ago), and onto Blues (100 years ago) which transformed into Jazz using syncopation. We finished playing the game "Jazz or Not Jazz."

Try having a night of fun using only items we would have if we lived 100 years ago. No TV, No tablet, No games on the phone, no microwave, etc... Being creative enough to make our own fun is a powerful life skill. When our children reach high school age, do we really want them to look to others to tell them what is fun and acceptable? Depending on a screen for stimulation and entertainment takes zero creativity, zero communication, zero collaboration, and zero critical thinking skills. If a child complains about one single night without screen time that is a huge indication that there is way too much screen time. Have some real fun this weekend!

5. We are working on our play: adding choreography, adding expression, and trying to stay in unison to the beat of the music. It is fun to see our skit grow, transform, and become "Ours."

By Monday, May 7th, all the speaking lines should **be memorized**. 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. It is not too early to get excited about our BIG SHOW. As soon as you have your child's pants and shirt have him/her try it on and run through the song. A few students are a little concerned about not being able to find plain black pants with a plain white t-shirt. They may want to bring in the outfit to show me. This shows organization, assertiveness, and attention to detail. Let's put any fears to rest. We will be painting on whiskers and a cat nose at the church right before the program and also wearing cat ears. Our ears already arrived. They fit, they are fuzzy...everybody wants to be a cat!!! The ears will stay here at school for rehearsals and I will bring them to the program. After the program, your child can keep his/her cat ears as a souvenir of our one-of-a-kind original jazz gig! 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