
WOLFTRAP

A THOUGHT-FULL
SCHOOL

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Dates to Remember

1/22	Strategies Lab Workshop	1/29-2/1	Student Holidays
1/25	SCA/Peer Mediation Meetings	2/15	President's Day Holiday
1/28	Second Grading Period Ends		

Anyone needing accommodations for a disability in order to attend or participate in these Wolftrap School activities should contact the school at 703-319-7300. Requests need to be made seven working days prior to the scheduled activity.

January 2010

Dear Families

In the past I have written about change and how challenging it can be. I have experienced change in my life once again, which is a good thing, but it has caused some initial anxiety. The change I am talking about is trying to keep up with technology. I think there may be a few of you out there who are reading this, who share this same "good" challenge and learning curve.

I wish this change were as simple as "going paperless" with our newsletters. I think I could have handled it well if it were just learning a new version of Outlook, but this change has to do with the personal way we are communicating via programs such as Facebook or individual blogs. I have listened to the positive and negative arguments for these technological advances and I have even learned to enjoy looking at a blog now and then. Specifically, since our son and his family relocated to Germany a year ago it has been a wonderful and entertaining way to keep up with "*The Blains' Adventures in Germany*" as my daughter-in-law has titled their blog. Every few weeks she has added pictures and stories of what is happening in their lives, so we have felt fairly connected to them all along. But Facebook is another story and that has been the biggest challenge and eye opener for me.

I have been invited to be a "friend" several times but have always declined feeling I just did not want to get involved in the lives of people I really did not know. In listening to people talk about all they read on Facebook, it seems like it can become an addiction. But it is the way that our younger folks are communicating and sharing every facet of their lives. This was made very clear just recently with the birth of our fifth grandchild, Collin Thomas Blain. As we anxiously awaited news about the birth, we were constantly checking our phones (2 landlines and 3 cells), email (3 different addresses), blog, Facebook, Twitter, the hospital website, and Skype – hoping for a phone call, but knowing that all of them were options.)Whoa!!!! Now my son did call us before he posted anything on Facebook so we heard all about our beautiful new grandchild the old fashioned way---person to person, and for that I am very grateful.

As I contemplate the future, I realize that I do not want to be left behind, so it is time to move into the 21st century with technology and learn to "twitter", Facebook, I Phone, and whatever else may come along. As parents, you will continue to be challenged with the new fads that your children experience and you will probably feel left behind at times also. While we do not have to "be just like our children" it is probably a good idea to understand what is happening in their lives and how the world is changing around us.

May this year be a year of new learning for all of us.

Sincerely,

Dr. Anita Blain

READING WITH YOUR CHILD

I have been so impressed with the fact that students come to Wolftrap with such amazing literacy experiences. As children get older, it is important to continue to read with them. Reading with your child gives them the opportunity to talk to you about their thinking as they read. Research shows that the more children read, the better readers they become. Help support your child by reading with them at home.

When reading with your child:

Stop periodically to discuss the story. Ask your child to tell you what is happening in the story so far and clarify any misconceptions they have.

Help them with new vocabulary. Often children can read a word, but they don't understand what its meaning. Talk about what vocabulary means and model how you figure out the meaning of new words.

Make sure they are reading a book that is a good fit. If your child is struggling through every word, the book is too hard. However, it may be a great book to read to them!

Alternate reading paragraphs or pages with your child. If your child has yet to develop the stamina to read a novel, taking turns will take some of the pressure off of reading the entire text by themselves.

Encourage them to stick with a book, even if it doesn't seem too exciting at first. As children get older, authors often take more time at the beginning of a book to set up the setting, characters, etc. It may take a couple of chapters to get deep into the plot. Encourage your child to hang in there. It will be worth it.

Share your reading life with your child. Talk to them about the kinds of books you read. Also share the different types of reading you do.

Have your child share with you the strategies they are using to problem solve unknown words and enhance comprehension. Have your child share the connections he or she is making to the text, or the questions they have while reading.

Above all, reading with your child can be a rewarding, relaxing, and positive experience for both you and your child.

Happy reading!
Marni Matyac-Dix
Reading Teacher

THANKS TO OUR GENEROUS COMMUNITY

The Wolftrap SCA and the Human Relations Committee would like to thank everyone for your generous support of our fall and winter community service projects. The canned food drive filled ten enormous boxes with canned and dry goods, which were donated to the Salvation Army for their Thanksgiving baskets. We recently received a thank you letter from the Salvation Army stating "Because of your generosity, we were able to serve 1,884 with Thanksgiving dinner. This could not have been done without your support."

The winter gear collection brought in a huge assortment of coats and other gear in great condition. The SCA sorted the donations and some of our reps and officers had the satisfaction of loading huge leaf bags of donated items into the minivan of a school counselor from Beech Tree Elementary School, in Falls Church. She sent an email last week which said, "With us living in a freezer over the 2 weeks of winter break, and this cold burst, all of the coats have been put to immediate use. Thanks again for thinking of us and huge hugs to all of your helpers!!"

This community is such a generous one, and these service experiences are invaluable for your children. As we sometimes say at Wolftrap, "Give yourselves a pat on the back!" Our next big drive will begin at the end of February, when we will collect gently used children's books for a school in South Africa. So, if you are thinning out the book shelves, please set some aside for this upcoming school event.