

November 1, 2013

Dear Parents,

The month of October came and went so quickly. The children enjoyed preparing for Grandparents and Special Adult Day. It was a perfect way to talk about manners. Hopefully, you notice wonderful manners at home, as we do here at school.

Religion: We talked about God as our Father who loves us unconditionally. We discussed that we are loved by our family and friends, even before we were born. We heard the bible story about Jesus is the Good Shepherd and cares for each of us. Our new religion series this year focuses on Bible Stories. Your child will be hearing many more wonderful stories from the bible.

Reading: The reading series really encourages the children to read sentences. They have learned 8 Star Words: **I, have, is, the, to, little, am, a.** We have also worked with word families for: **"at" (pat, hat, cat...)** and **"am" (Pam, jam, tam...)**. They have been introduced to nouns (person, place or thing). We have talked about "characters" in the story and the "setting" of the story. A great "at home project" is to give them a highlighter and encourage them to highlight Star Words in magazines and newspapers. They love finding words they know how to read! A little boy came and said, "Mrs. Critell, I saw Star Words in the book at church!" I am very proud of what they have accomplished. Please save the "take home readables" to reread and sound the words out.

Phonics: The children continue to identify Upper and lower case letters of the alphabet. We also review the sound of each letter everyday. I know many of you enjoyed hearing them read the alphabet book we made when they took it home. We have learned the sounds of the following letters: **Mm Tt Aa Ss Pp** and hear them at the beginning, middle and end of words. We spend much time doing rhyming words, hearing the middle and ending sounds. The children have also learned to form these letters correctly.

Math: The children have been busy learning how to graph objects, using picture graphs as well as bar graphs. We have learned about the various patterns and extending the patterns. This is always a favorite unit for the children. We have talked about "tally marks" as we keep track of the quietest table for the week and days in school. Many of the children will have fun counting their Halloween candy. Wow, think the dentists will be busy in town! We encourage you to donate any "unwanted" candy to the Sojourner House. The bin is outside the office. Please continue to work with identifying, printing and counting to 20.

Social Studies/Science: We are fortunate that the Canfield Fire Department was able to come several times to UPSK to educate the children on fire safety. They do an excellent program reminding the children to practice fire safety in their homes. I know all of you checked your batteries in you smoke detectors! We learned all about the growth of the pumpkin and that they do grow on the ground! The class carved two pumpkins and learned many descriptive words about the inside of the pumpkins. They had fun counting how many seeds they could get out in one try! We then carved the pumpkin and roasted pumpkin seeds, yummy!

We continue to talk about kind manners, kind words and keeping our hands to ourselves. It has been challenging for them to learn to raise their hands and **to wait their turn and not interrupt**. I ask that you encourage the children to not interrupt adults and children. Our class rule: "Unless you smell smoke or you are going to throw up, you may not interrupt!" We focus on the positive approach with discipline. If a child says an unkind word about someone, they need to tell us 2 kind things about the person. We have a wonderful class and all the children have kind hearts! I encourage them to believe in themselves and one another. The following quote is what I try to live by and develop with the children I teach: **"We do not believe in ourselves until someone reveals that what is deep inside us valuable, worth listening to, worthy of your trust, sacred to our touch. Once we believe in ourselves we can risk curiosity, wonder, spontaneous delight, or any experience that reveals the human spirit."** e.e.cummings

Mrs. Miller and I want to thank you for your support and generosity this year. I especially thank you for the many prayers and the support you demonstrated during Mrs. Miller's illness. We are happy to have Mrs. Miller back and thank Mrs. Assion for rising to the occasion to be with us almost everyday. We had an awesome Halloween party thanks to the great treats and help from the "party moms." I look forward to conferences with you on November 6th. It gives me the opportunity to share with you all the great things your child does at school. May these days bring you joy, thanks for sharing your little joys with us!

Sincerely,


Mrs. Mary Ann Critell

P.S. Thank you for the many gift cards and items for our theme basket for our theme basket for the Craft Show. Also, thank you to those who have sent in "wrappings, decorations, cookie tins and plates for the Bake Sale Booth at the Craft Show. Since I am the chairperson, I REALLY appreciate your generosity. We will soon be asking for BAKED DONATIONS for the Bake Sale.

KEEP THE BOX TOPS COMING.....