

December 2023

First Grade Paw Prints

Dominion Trail Elementary School

<https://www.lcps.org/dominiontrail>

First Grade Teacher Favorites! We love books! Here are some of our winter favorites!

Mrs. Roth [The Mitten](#) by Jan Brett

Mrs. Manning [The Snowy Day](#) by Ezra Jack Keats

Mrs. Hellstrom [Owl Moon](#) by Jane Yolen

Mrs. Gearing [How the Grinch Stole Christmas](#)

Reading Workshop/Phonics

We have begun our non-fiction reading unit. The students are enjoying adding non-fiction titles to their book sacks. Please continue to read over the winter break! Keep in mind that a child's listening level is well above his reading level. Reading aloud to your child is a wonderful way to expand their vocabulary, not to mention an opportunity to snuggle and stay warm in the winter. As we have mentioned before, if a child has HEARD a word, it is MUCH easier to decode a word. Our UFLI lessons are increasing in difficulty. Your support at home each week makes a big difference. We love hearing how the students are practicing the focus phonics skills and "rolling and reading" with you at home.

Writing Workshop

During Writing Workshop in December, we are working on "How-To" writing. You can support this learning at home! Ask your child what steps they follow in the evening to get ready for bed. (or getting ready for school, setting the table, etc.) Encourage time-order words such as *first*, *then next*, *finally*. Then act out what they have told you. Did they skip any steps? Did you know that these steps they are following can be called an algorithm? (We have learned about algorithms in our computer science lessons!)

Math

In Math, we are continuing our unit in Geometry. We are learning about shapes and their attributes. Some amazing critical thinking occurs as we find different ways to sort the shapes based on their attributes. Can you sort items at home? Ask your child to sort a group of objects (buttons, crayons, etc.) and then guess what attribute or attributes they sorted by!

Social Science

We are enjoying our study of traditions and cultures. The students enjoy sharing information about their own family's traditions. We are learning to listen to one another. Being a good listener AND being a good sharer of information are both important skills.

Science

Our recent science unit has given us a new appreciation for plants. We have enjoyed learning about all the parts of a plant that we can eat! It was particularly fun to see how water travels up a stem during our science investigations.

Does your child have a public library card? Use the link below to check it out! <https://library.loudoun.gov>



Upcoming Events

Winter Classroom Party

*Friday, Dec. 15 1:45-2:30 (more information to follow from your child's teacher)

Winter Break

*December 21 – January 2

*January 2 – First day back after winter break

Homework Notebook

We hope you and your first grader are enjoying the homework notebook. We have enjoyed hearing from students about activities they have completed from the calendar.

Social/Emotional Learning

We are enjoying our morning SEL lessons. In Unit 2, we have discussed how we can pay attention to our emotions. We have shared about things we worry about and what is in our control and what is out of our control. Most recently we have been learning about some "calm down" strategies. Ask your child which calm down strategies they like to use.

Just for Fun!

[December Song](#) This is a wonderful song! It tells about many holidays in December, it helps us spell December, and it teaches us about the Winter Solstice!

First Grade is Magic!