



*Created by Kirby Shultz*

# Weekly Updates and Newsletters

Newsletters are a way to communicate on a regular basis with families. Newsletters and updates should be delivered to families on a regularly scheduled interval (every week, every two weeks, once a month, etc.) and should include timely and relevant information about the classroom and school.

When creating a classroom newsletter it is important to note:

- 1) What is the purpose of your newsletter (to share upcoming dates, content that has been taught or will be taught, at-home practice ideas, or developmental resources are possibilities)
- 2) How will the newsletter be delivered to families (electronically or hard copy)
- 3) What language implications should you consider when communicating with families and determine the text to visual ratio you would like your document to be
- 4) How will you personalize the newsletter so that families connect and value the information provided?

In this artifact, screenshots are provided from the teacher's newsletter with a description of the rationale and purpose of each section used on the website.

## Teachers

- Ask families their preferred method of contact and let them know you'll share academic updates this way
- Identify the purpose for your classroom newsletter
- Identify the frequency that your classroom newsletter will be shared
- Obtain photo permission from your students' families
- Share with families your purpose and expectations for the use of the classroom newsletter
- Personalize the classroom newsletter with photographs of students, student work, and shout-outs to celebrate the work students and their families have done
- Decide on a consistent format
- Consider other school staff that may want to/be relevant to add contributions
- Build student excitement/buy-in about sharing the newsletter with their family

## School Leaders

- You can support teachers by providing them with electronic and/or soft copy versions (PDFs) of school information and updates that they can include in the classroom newsletter
  - Communicate the importance of school and home communication in whole school communications
  - Encourage families to regularly view class newsletters as they provide tools for learning that families can implement at home
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# Newsletter Text Samples: Teacher Directed Communication

## Ms. Shultz's Second Grade Newsletter

April 7<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
Volume 1, Issue 26

Your Email Address  
Your Classroom Website Address

### What We Learned This Week!

#### Upcoming Events

- April 8<sup>th</sup> PTA Meeting 6 pm Cafeteria
- April 13<sup>th</sup> -April 17<sup>th</sup> Spring Break
- DCPS Unit Assessments  
4/21- ELA  
4/22- Math  
4/23- Makeup testing

This week in literacy we completed a mini author study of Tomie DePaola and some of the folktales he has written. We studied the characters in the text and practiced how to describe characters using traits and examples from the text. To strengthen students' ability to cite examples from the text we practiced recording direct quotes as well as paraphrasing. The books we read included: The Mysterious Giant of Barletta, The Legend of the Indian Paintbrush, and Jaimie O'Rourke and the Big Potato. This week we will practice reading fiction and non-fiction passages and identifying the main idea of specific paragraphs. This will support students in reading and comprehending longer passages of text.

In math, we continued to practice identifying the number of faces, edges, and vertices of 3D shapes and we practiced

shapes. Students then had to work backwards to brainstorm the different combinations of 2D shapes that could be used to match the number of angles provided. This week we will be studying line plots and we will practice collecting and analyzing the data. We will continue to practice our 3 minute math fluency on Thursdays as well.

In Science, we will learn about different types of water including: ponds, rivers, lakes, oceans, waterfalls, and streams. Students will use their knowledge of landforms to support beginning map reading skills this week.

In writing, we drafted and revised our versions of The Three Little Pigs. Students used their writing rubric to self-assess their own writing and they also

- April 21<sup>st</sup> Chipotle Fundraiser
- May 1<sup>st</sup> APTT
- May 22<sup>nd</sup> Screen on the Green
- May 25<sup>th</sup> Memorial Day: No School
- June 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> Spring Musical Performance
- June 10<sup>th</sup> Spring Art Show

identifying angles in 2D shapes. We worked on solving word problems in which we were given a number of angles and a number of 2D

shared their work with myself and other students to receive feedback that they may implement when writing their final draft this week.

### General Announcements

- Due to the short week, we will send home a spring break **homework** packet later this week for students to work on and return after break.
- **Report cards** will be sent home after spring break. A note about report cards: Students are being evaluated on where they are now in relation to end of year grade level standards and skills. Over the course of the year, these standards and skills will be revisited in order to deepen understanding and extend knowledge, thereby moving students closer to mastery. As a reminder, a 3 is meeting grade level expectations and a 4 means mastering grade level content and extensions.
- **DCPS ELA and Math Unit Assessments** will be given the week after spring break. The district uses these assessments to measure students' mastery of skills that have been taught during the course of the recent literacy and math units.
- **Make Up Days:** Due to the snow days we have accumulated this year, there is a need to make up two days in the academic calendar. Therefore the following changes will take place: Monday, May 18, which was a parent/teacher conference day is now a full instructional day for students. Our APTT Meetings will be held on May 1 rather than May 18. Thursday, June 18, which was a half-day for students, will now be a full instructional day. Friday, June 19 will now be a half-day for students and will be the last day of school.



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**Heading:** Use a consistent clear title that shares which classroom and staff this newsletter is coming from. Include the date, your contact information, and the website address of your classroom website (if you have one).

## Ms. Shultz's Second Grade Newsletter

April 7<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
Volume 1, Issue 26Your Email Address  
Your Classroom Website Address

**Classroom Content Update:** When describing the classroom content being taught include sample text names, rationale for why content is being taught, and sample at-home practice activities to support in-class learning.

### What We Learned This Week!

<p>This week in literacy we completed a mini author study of <u>Tomie DePaola</u> and some of the folktales he has written. We studied the characters in the text and practiced how to describe characters using traits and examples from the text. To strengthen students' ability to cite examples from the text we practiced recording direct quotes as well as paraphrasing. The books we read included: <u>The Mysterious Giant of Barletta</u>, <u>The Legend of the Indian Paintbrush</u>, and <u>Jaimie O'Rourke and the Big Potato</u>. This week we will practice reading fiction and non-fiction passages and identifying the main idea of specific paragraphs. This will support students in reading and comprehending longer passages of text.</p> <p>In math, we continued to practice identifying the number of faces, edges, and vertices of 3D shapes and we practiced identifying angles in 2D shapes. We worked on solving word problems in which we were given a number of angles and a number of 2D</p>	<p>shapes. Students then had to work backwards to brainstorm the different combinations of 2D shapes that could be used to match the number of angles provided. This week we will be studying line plots and we will practice collecting and analyzing the data. We will continue to practice our 3 minute math fluency on Thursdays as well.</p> <p>In Science, we will learn about different types of water including: ponds, rivers, lakes, oceans, waterfalls, and streams. Students will use their knowledge of landforms to support beginning map reading skills this week.</p> <p>In writing, we drafted and revised our versions of <u>The Three Little Pigs</u>. Students used their writing rubric to self-assess their own writing and they also shared their work with <u>myself</u> and other students to receive feedback that they may implement when writing their final draft this week.</p>
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**General Announcements:** Upcoming events that require a greater level of explanation should be listed under General Announcements.

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## Newsletter Samples: Student Directed Communication

Included below is a sample of a newsletter that relies more heavily on student led communication and input, rather than solely teacher directed communication.

**Ms. Shultz's 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Newsletter**  
**Email/Class Website Address**

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**COMING SOON!**

- April 8<sup>th</sup> PTA Meeting 6 pm, Cafeteria
- April 13<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> Spring Break

**THIS WEEK'S STUDIES**

- Literacy: Identifying Main Idea of a Paragraph
- Math: Creating & Interpreting Line Plots
- Science: Water and Landforms
- Writing: Final drafting of folktales

**At-Home Practice Activity**  
**Create a Line Plot:**

1. Have your student count & record the number of windows in each room of your home
2. Create a title for the line plot
3. Draw a horizontal line and label each room on the axis
4. Uses X's to mark the number of windows above the listed room
5. Ask which room has the most/least windows?



**Conversation Starters!**  
Ask your student to describe the different forms of water we discussed this week and to compare and contrast their features!

**Why are this Week's Learning Topics Important?**

- Literacy: Reading fiction and non-fiction passages and identifying the main idea of specific paragraphs, supports students in reading and comprehending longer passages of text.
- Math: Using line plots, supports students' ability to collect and analyze the frequency of data
- Science: Learning about landforms and water supports students' ability to describe and understand the world around them
- Writing: Creating final drafts supports students in publishing and sharing a piece of polished writing

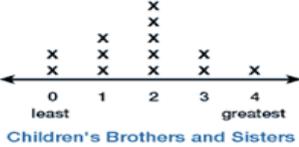


**Student Shout-Out!**  
Fantastic work to Kiyia and Sean who used the figurative language skills we learned about in class to write their own piece of poetry during writing centers this week!

**April 7-10<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

Brothers and Sisters	Number of Children
0	
1	
2	
3	
4	

A Note from Our Students!



Children's Brothers and Sisters

**Heading:** Use a consistent clear title that shares which classroom and staff this newsletter is coming from. Include the date, your contact information, and the website address of your classroom website (if you have one).

**Ms. Shultz's 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Newsletter**

**Email/Class Website Address**

**Classroom Content Update:** When describing the classroom content being taught include sample text names, rationale for why content is being taught, and sample at-home practice activities to support in-class learning.



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**Coming Soon and This Week's Studies:** List upcoming events that are happening in the immediate future. Use This Week's Studies to summarize briefly the learning topics that students will be studying this coming week.

<b>COMING SOON!</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• April 8<sup>th</sup> PTA Meeting 6 pm, Cafeteria</li> <li>• April 13<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> Spring Break</li> </ul>
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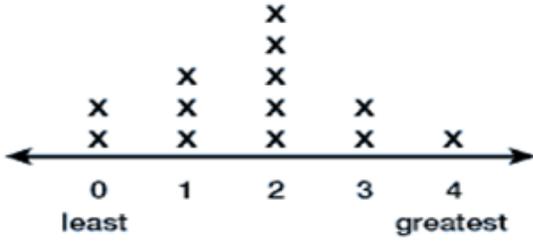
**At-Home Practice Suggestions and Student Updates:** Student updates can be written by a group of students and can describe activities, something exciting that happened in class this week, or another suggestion for an activity to practice at home. Visuals can be included to assist in parents' understanding of at-home practice activities.

**At-Home Practice Activity**  
**Create a Line Plot:**

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0	
1	
2	
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4	



Children's Brothers and Sisters

**Student Shout-Outs:** Use this portion of the newsletter to share news of students' achievements!



Student Shout-Out!

Fantastic work to Kiya and Sean who used the figurative language skills we learned about in class to write their own piece of poetry during writing centers this week!

April 7-10<sup>th</sup>, 2015