

Newsletter

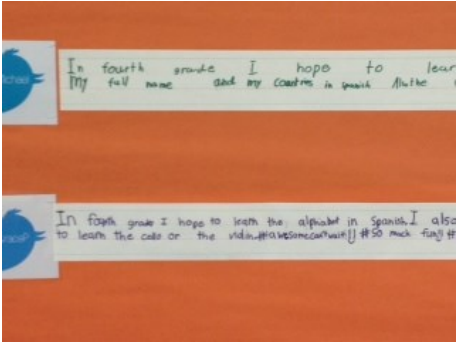
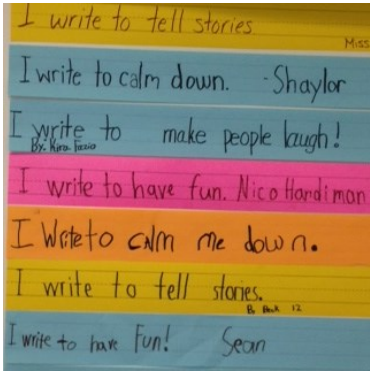
December 2014

Dear Burr Community,

I wanted to take a moment to welcome you to Burr’s December newsletter. This newsletter is a little different than previous ones in that it showcases examples of the kinds of work happening at Burr during the year. Burr’s staff works hard to create a dynamic learning environment that is student centered, rigorous, and engaging for all students. While there is nothing like spending time in our classrooms, I hope these photographs and captions gives you some insight into the work that we do here at Burr. Enjoy.

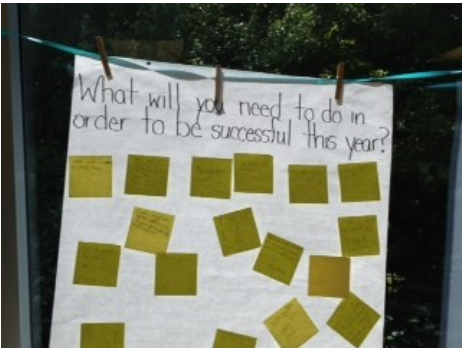
Have a terrific holiday and a happy, healthy New Year.

Warmly,
Jason



Reflection helps us understand student’s thinking and use of metacognitive strategies.

Students do a lot of goal setting throughout the year.



Writing strategies—such as six word summaries—require students to synthesize their thinking.

BURR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

We do a lot of work at Burr on CARES (cooperation, assertiveness, responsibility, empathy, and self control.) The goal of CARES is to teach students positive behaviors and help build a positive school environment.



The instructional model we use at Burr (and throughout the Fairfield Public Schools) is a workshop model. In workshop, students actively read, write, think, discuss, demonstrate, and problem solve. The teacher instructs through whole class direct instruction, small group work, and 1-1 conferring.



Independent work time

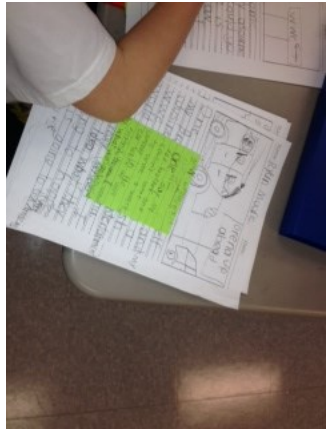
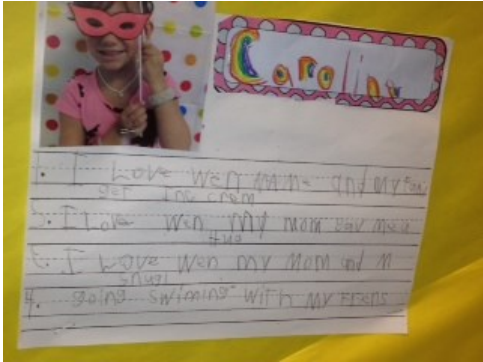


I even teach every once in a while.



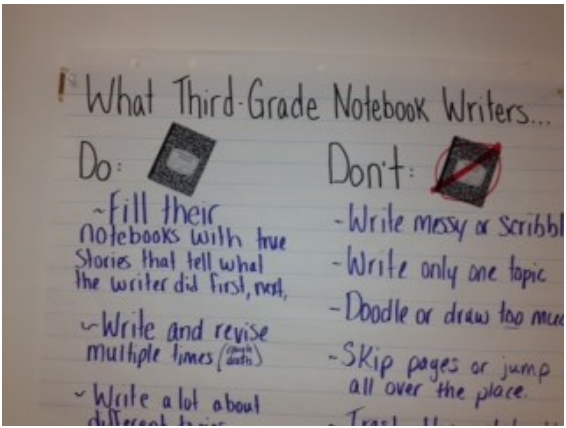
BURR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

We teach writing through both a process and on-demand approach. Process pieces give students an opportunity to draft, revise, proofread, edit, and publish their work over an extended period of time (days, weeks.) On-demand writing requires students to draft, revise, and edit their work in a fixed amount of time (usually 45 minutes.) Students at Burr write in a variety of genres including memoir, poetry, and non-fiction research.

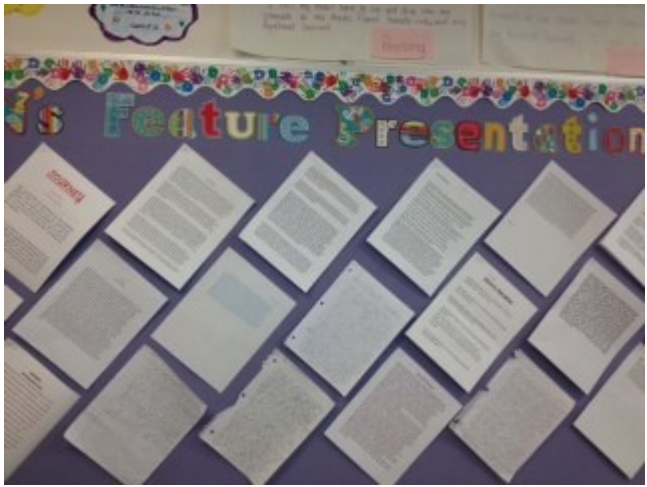


Stages of Writing Process

Revision



Use of Writer's Notebooks



Research Writing



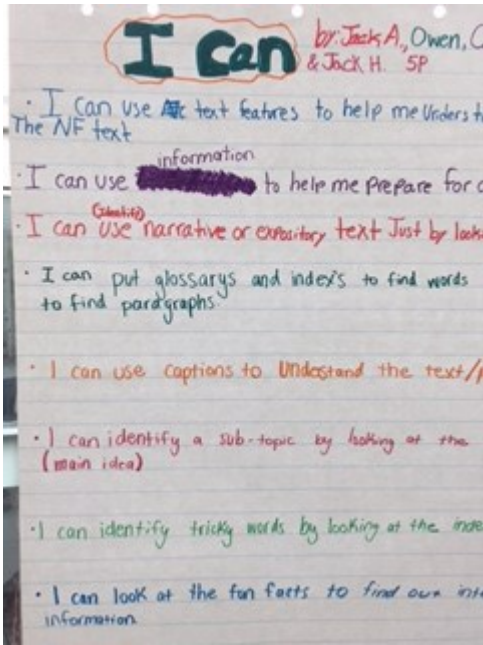
BURR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



Our goal with reading instruction is to teach students strategies that help them strategically decode, comprehend, and read with fluency. We also work to help them develop a reading life—where they read for pleasure, have favorite authors and titles, and become engrossed in stories and real life information. We are specifically focusing this year on discourse—helping students to talk deeply and thoughtfully about text—and written response. The walls of our school show favorite quotes from books, strategies for comprehending text, and favorite titles and authors.

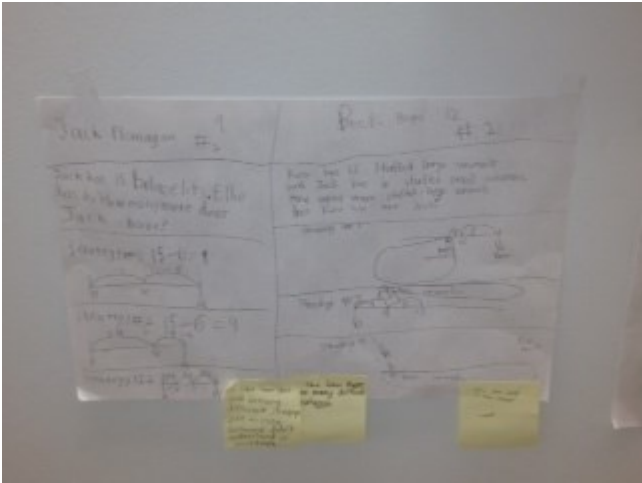


Just right books are books that can be read by students independently for both word accuracy and meaning.

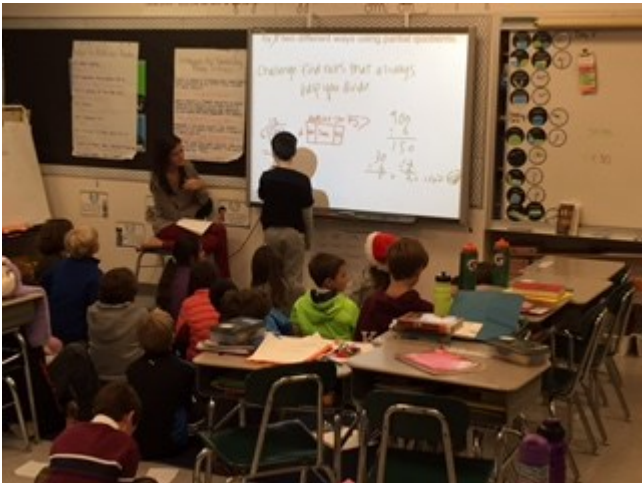




When students learn math at Burr (and throughout the Fairfield Public Schools) they learn both conceptual ideas and algorithms. Students learn multiple strategies to help them understand number sense, place value, and a variety of other topics including time, geometry, algebra, and problem solving. Students also practice fundamental skills that help them with math fluency—such as knowing your facts. Step into a math class at Burr, and you will see individual students working on problems along with paired work, small group work, and teacher led groups. Students spend a lot of time developing their math thinking by talking and writing about math in order to explain how they solved specific problems.



Student Developed Math Charts



A student explaining and demonstrating their math thinking to their class.



Developing Math Fluency

Thank you to Burr’s staff and students for their hard work every day. Thank you to Burr’s parents and community for supporting our school mission and sending us such wonderful children.