

La Tierra Community School

First Grade Policies

2017-2018

Butterfly Expedition: Wings of Wonder

Our first expedition in first grade will be focused on butterflies. We will learn how to take care of our school's butterfly garden so it is a happy habitat for butterflies and a great place for learning. We will study the life cycle of butterflies and watch caterpillars grow and change into butterflies in our own classroom. We will learn about butterfly habitats in Arizona and talk to local butterfly experts. We will explore the guiding questions "How do butterflies grow?" "What is so special about the Monarch?" and "Are butterflies important to the world?"

Geology Expedition: The Search for Buried Treasure

Our second semester expedition is all about rocks! Students will have the opportunity to discover the connection between rocks and our world. We will be exploring the guiding questions "Do rocks tell stories?" and "Do people need rocks?". In our investigations we will be studying some big geology concepts including the layers of the Earth, the rock cycle, and the different types of rock in our world. We will also study the ways ancient peoples used rocks to help their life and will carry that into how rock are used in our lives today. We will have the opportunity to study many of the different rocks and landforms around Prescott and Yavapai County!

Expedition Fieldwork:

We have exciting plans for fieldwork in the works for this year. There will be many walking excursions as well as a couple that will take us a little farther from campus. I will send information home regarding the trips as soon as possible so you can have time to plan and prepare. **Please send your student to school ready for an adventure every day with sturdy, comfortable walking shoes, hat and water as some of our trips could be spontaneous.**

Ways to support our expedition and your student's education:

- Limit the number of school absences as much as possible.
- When you see or do something that connects to our studies, expedition topic as well as reading and math, point it out to your child. Help him or her see that learning extends past the classroom.
- Make donations of time, supplies or expertise (talk to me for specific ideas). We would love to have you as a volunteer!

- Have a discussion with your student daily about what he or she is learning.
- Model being a lifelong learner at home!

Trips to the Prescott Public Library:

Our first grade class will be taking bimonthly trips to the Prescott Public Library. They are primarily scheduled for the first and third Thursday of each month from 1:10-2:00 although there may be a few that are different. Check the class calendar to confirm library days. Students will be allowed to check out one or two books each visit. You are more than welcome to meet us or walk with us to the library on our library days. If you decide to come please make other arrangements for siblings.

Homework:

Students are required to bring their daily folder (provided by the school, ours is red) back and forth from home to school EVERY DAY! This folder is designed to make communication among teacher, school, parents and students easier. Please check the folder **every day** for letters, flyers and/or notices from school. Parents are expected to help with homework and then sign the Homework Record. Folders will be checked every day at school.

In the primary grades families should expect to see a packet of practice pages each week on Thursdays. The goal of this packet is to inform families of the skills, concepts, and standards being taught at school as well as to allow students opportunities for reinforcement and practice. These assignments are due by the following Thursday. The assignments should take students approximately 10-15 minutes to complete, and students should be able to complete them fairly independently. Practice at home should be fun and interesting! Make it a quiet time to pay bills, catch up on email, or simply celebrate great learning progress. We suggest setting aside a consistent time in a comfortable place in your home with no distractions. If your child is consistently spending excess time and struggling greatly with what is being sent home please set up a time to conference with your child's teacher.

In addition it is an expectation that La Tierra Community School students spend time each day reading or being read to. Students in kindergarten, first grade, and second grade are expected to read and log 150 reading minutes per week or approximately 20 minutes per day. Please log minutes each day in the table provided in the student's take home folder.

Starting in August, each week your child will bring home a special book on their specific reading level. Time has been spent at school to identify the instructional reading level your child is on. Reading fluency and comprehension are considered when assessing these levels. Your child should read the book twice over the weekend and return books to school on Monday. If a book is lost, misused, or destroyed families will be expected to cover the cost for the book to be replaced within two weeks of book being sent home.

Birthdays:

Birthdays are an exciting time for kids! If you would like for your student to celebrate their birthday at school you are welcome to bring a healthy treat to share at the end of the school day. Inclusion is an important lesson we teach at La Tierra Community School so our policy is that everyone in the class receives a treat. Please be in contact with me at least two days in advance so I can put you in our plans. **If you are having a celebration outside of school that does not include every child please do not hand out invitations at school.**

Food and drink:

Please make sure we are aware of any allergies your child has to foods! During the day we have a scheduled morning snack time as well as lunchtime. We would like to stress the importance of healthy snacks and healthy choices at lunch. **Your student will have a better day at school if their body is fueled with healthy foods.**

Please be sure your student eats a good healthy breakfast everyday before school, this gives their bodies and minds energy to start an active day of learning and activities.

Staying hydrated is a very important part of our day; it is amazing how the right amount of water affects our bodies! In the classroom students will be permitted to have their water bottle with them. During lunch if they would like another beverage they may drink it only at the lunch table. Please remember that caffeinated, carbonated and very sugary beverages are not allowed at school.

Students are not permitted to share or trade food with other students at lunch or snack time due to allergy concerns and general health concerns.

Please note that there is no microwave or refrigerator available for student use.

Toys:

Toys and electronics are not allowed at school. Please make sure your student keeps all toys at home, even if they are in their backpacks they are quite the temptation and will distract from the learning.

I am very much looking forward to this school year and working with you and your student. I anticipate rich learning and much excitement throughout the year. I am always open to any questions, comments or concerns you may have about what is happening in the classroom and at school. Please do not hesitate to contact me at school or via email.

Lets have a great first grade year!

Sincerely,

Miss Dawn Klaiber

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