

Dear Incoming First Grade Parents and/or Guardians,

Can you believe it? Your youngster will be a first grader in August and I'm sure you're as excited as we are here at St. Pius X! We would like to give you a few helpful tips to make sure your child's transition to first grade is as smooth as possible and to prepare your child for a successful year!

First, students will be learning so many exciting things this year! We have a variety of prayers that students are required to memorize by the end of first grade. It would be wonderful if you could start exposing them to the following prayers over the summer: Guardian Angel, Hail Mary and The Lord's Prayer. First graders also attend Mass twice a week! Many families have found it helpful to practice the following behaviors while attending Mass over the summer: kneeling to pray, listening to the Homily and discussing Father's message, sitting still with his/her hands folded, standing during appropriate times and participating during prayers and responses.

Second, the Dolch Sight Word list is a list of words that make up between 50-70% of the words we encounter in text. Most of these words cannot be "sounded out" and they need to be learned by "sight". Since recognizing these words is so important during reading, using a variety of activities to practice the words is critical. We have included the words in this packet with activity ideas. You can also go to this website to print out pre-made flashcards for the activities section. It is also fine to just write them on 3 by 5 index cards too!

<http://bogglesworldesl.com/dolch/flashcards.htm>

We would recommend not just practicing them in isolation, but using them in a sentence and reading them within context. We encourage you to really focus on the Pre-Primer and Primer lists. When your child has memorized those two lists, you may move onto the First Grade list (which we have also included).

Finally, St. Pius X believes that summer reading is a valuable experience for all students and an important extension of our educational program. We have decided to have students choose one of their favorite books that they read over the summer and complete the attached Story Map handout. We will have students present these in the first few weeks of school. In addition we have included a calendar for your child to fill in with a smiley face for each day that he/she reads a book over the summer. Your child may also turn in his/her calendar in the beginning of the year. Please encourage your child to enjoy summer reading in the following ways... silent reading, shared reading with a parent or sibling, buddy reading (with a friend) and parent read aloud with discussion. Please contact us with any questions or concerns and we will be happy to answer them. Have a great summer! Happy reading!

Thank you,

The First Grade Team

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

characters

setting(s)

problem

solution

beginning

middle

end

title: _____

2018 JUNE

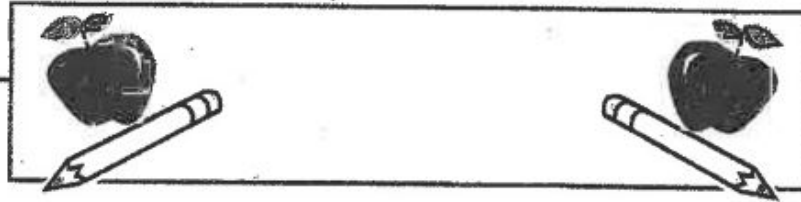
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2018 JULY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
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2018 AUGUST

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Parent's Guide to Sight Words

A word about Sight Words

Your child is working in small group with his/her teacher on the basic skills needed to learn to read. Sight words are one of the essential skills that you can help with at home. Practicing with your child will make a big difference.

This newsletter is provided to share some ideas on ways to make sight word practice fun for all!

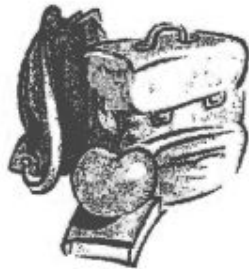
- Write each sight word on a card.
- Sight words should be recognized by SIGHT. "Sounding out" will not always work, and students should be able to read the word in 5 seconds.
- When the child is working on the first few words it may be necessary to start with 5-8 words and put doubles of each card in the stack. Never have more than 20 cards in the stack.
- The stack of sight word cards that you practice with your child should have more known than unknown words to build in success. When he knows most of the stack, remove the easiest 3-5 and add 3-5 new cards.
- Practice in short sessions. Two 8 minute sessions will be more productive than one 16 minute session.
- If the child becomes frustrated, change activities or take a break.
- Set goals with your child. How many can he get right? Raise the goal by just a few each time to build in success.

Flash Card Games

1. **Can you find?** Lay cards on table, face up. Ask the student to find a given word. If they find it, they keep it. Keep going until all cards are picked up.
2. **Who has more?** Flash cards to student. If they read the word within 5 seconds, they keep the card. If not, you keep the card. The goal is that the child has more than you at the end of the game.
3. **Concentration** Using double copies of the words, take turns turning over two cards at a time, trying to make a match. The player must read the word correctly to get the match.
4. **Go Fish** Using double copies of the words, pass out all but 5-6 of the words. Put these in a stack, face down, on the table. Look for matches in your set of cards (each player must be able to read the word or the set goes in the stack on the table). Take turns asking each other for cards to make matches. The person with the most matches at the end is the winner.
5. **BINGO** Draw a simple Bingo card (5 boxes wide and 5 high) and put sight words in the boxes. You may need to repeat words to have 25 words. On little slips of paper put the locations (B1 etc.). Draw a slip and if the child can read the word in the box they get to put a token in the corresponding box on his BINGO card. If he can't read it, you get to put a token in your corresponding box. The winner is the person who gets 5 boxes in a row.

Technology

- If you have access to an iPad or iPhone, there are sight word apps available.
- On a computer do a search for sight word games. Many are available.
- Make a word search with your child's words. (Do a search for free word search maker.)



Thank You Parents!

Thank you for all you do to help us make this year a successful one for your child. If we can help you in any way, please contact us!

Other activities

1. Using a highlighter or crayon help the child find his sight words in print (newspaper, magazine etc.)
2. Read to your child, pointing to the words so that he sees the words in books.
3. Let your child read a book at his level. You supply the words that he doesn't know. He will be excited to see his words in the books.
4. Put magnetic letters on the refrigerator or on a metal cookie sheet. Let him make his words.

The Reading-Writing Connection

Research shows that Reading and Writing are connected and that writing helps the child read and reading helps the child write.

Find fun ways for your child to write his sight words. Ideas:

- Put shaving cream on a table and let him write the words with his finger.
- Write words with a stick in the sand outside.
- Encourage your child to WRITE. Help them write the sounds they hear for words they don't know, but help them make the connection between their sight words and writing by encouraging them to spell the sight words correctly. Provide as much support as needed. At first you may need to lay the cards out for the child to see, and later you may be able to just have them there in case the child can't figure it out on their own.

Dear Parents,

Good afternoon! We are so excited to meet you and your kiddos at Open House! We wanted to touch base with you on a few things we could use your help with before the school year begins.

From past experience, we would like to communicate with you about your child's transportation ahead of time! If you could email your child's homeroom teacher telling these two things: how will your child get home on the first week of school, and the normal routine for the rest of the school year. Please include his or her bus number (You can contact the office for this information). Thank you in advance! This will help us have a smooth start to the year and ensure everyone makes it home safely!

Secondly, with the large amount of students and such little storage space, we would be so grateful if you could bring all supplies to Open House. The homeroom teacher will have spots labeled with bins to place the supplies during that event (glue, paper towels, etc.). The remainder of materials can go in your child's desk and their backpack can travel back home with you!

Thank you,

The First Grade Team