

RADIX ELEMENTARY

MARCH NEWSLETTER



“...if you have a purpose in which you can believe, there’s no end to the amount of things you can accomplish.”

As Mother Nature once again played havoc with our school calendar, we look forward to the hope of spring. **Please note--Our calendar has been adjusted as follows: School will be OPEN April 2nd and 3rd with an early dismissal March 29th (a.m. and p.m. kindergarten and pre-school will both attend in the a.m. session; all other students will be dismissed at 1:20). There is no school on Friday, March 30th.**

A special “THANK YOU” to the PTA and all volunteers who made this year’s Tricky Tray a success. In addition to the efforts that allowed for the PTA to raise a substantial amount of money to support the Radix school community, all attendees had fun listening to the antics of our emcee- Mr. Kevin Adams. The evening was quite a tribute to Radix with all of the amazing families and friends who were there to support us.

All parents are invited to attend the PACE (**PA**rents **C**aring about **E**ducation) being held in the Radix Media Center on Saturday, March 3rd at 9:30 a.m. We will be discussing school goals, report cards, school safety, and any other topics parents have on their minds.

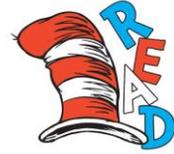
In order to enhance communication between home and school, I am inviting parents to join the Radix REMIND which I intend to use to share information about events, special days, school closings, etc. In order to receive messages you can either email: radix17@mail.remind.com or text to: **81010** with the message: **@radix17**

Attached to the newsletter is a copy of “Reading Connection” for you to reference as you work with your child at home. There are great strategies to reinforce reading and writing, as we share “Tips for Reading Success.” Enjoy!

Radix will be celebrating Read Across America the week of March 5th. The following are the theme days for which all students are encouraged to participate:

Monday, March 5th "Fox in Socks"

Silly Sock Day: students are encouraged to wear funny, mismatched or silly socks! (students must wear shoes to school)



Tuesday, March 6th "Thing One And Thing Two"

Twin Day: find a buddy and wear matching colors or clothes

Wednesday, March 7th "Wacky Wednesday"

Students are encouraged to wear mismatched clothes or wacky "Whoville" hair

Thursday, March 8th "Cat In The Hat"

Hat Day: students are encouraged to wear their favorite hat to school

Friday, March 9th "The Lorax"

Mustache Day: students are encouraged to wear a Lorax mustache...have fun & be creative!

The second marking period will be ending March 15th, with parent conferences taking place March 26-28 for students we feel will benefit from parental intervention at this time. Evening conferences will be held on March 27th. Information regarding the conferences will be sent home March 2, and the conference scheduler will open from March 5-20.

Please be mindful that we are preparing for our annual state testing, PARCC, beginning April 23rd with our 3rd graders, followed by our 4th graders the following week. Attendance for testing is critical. As it was last year, there will **only be one** administration of the PARCC. Since all students have a personal computer, testing time is greatly reduced. We need all students to take this assessment seriously-that is how we are approaching it, and are counting on our supportive parents/guardians to reinforce that, too. I implore everyone to ensure that all 3rd and 4th graders participate in PARCC. There are many reasons to support the decision to have your child/ren participate:

- It provides our staff feedback with explicit results regarding areas needing instructional changes to best address the new standards. As a school community we are at a disadvantage when students opt out of the mandated State assessment. We are left without sufficient data that would allow us to make positive changes to our curriculum and instruction to support academic success for all students. We need all eligible students to put forth a best effort with this year's PARCC assessment.

- Taking the PARCC benefits us as a school, not only for the participation rate, but it provides us with useful data to help us modify instruction to ensure that students are meeting the ELA and Math standards critical for academic success.
- Lastly, schools are rated and ranked, as seen with our “School Report Card”. We will potentially be rated poorly if a large number of students opt out of the PARCC.
- PARCC has become a graduation requirement, so all students need to get comfortable taking on-line assessments. The more familiar they are with this type of test, the more confident they are as they approach future and similar assessments.
- This type of on-line assessment is what students are more and more likely to encounter as they move on through school, and ultimately to college and/or the workforce. Students will benefit from taking computer-based assessments like the PARCC.

I hope you seriously consider the above. I am counting on ALL eligible students to take the PARCC this year, and greatly appreciate your support.

Important Considerations:

- **March 3-** PACE meeting-9:30 a.m.
- **March 5-** Spring fundraiser begins
- **March 6-** McRadix Night at McDonald’s 5:00-7:00 p.m.
- **March 7-** REAL (book) Distribution
- **March 15-** Deadline for ordering a yearbook. All orders are done on-line at: YBPay.lifetouch.com and the Radix ID code to order is: **11835918**.
- **March 21-** Fundraiser ends
- Several students are incurring bills for charged meals and/or snacks in the cafeteria. Please **discuss spending in the cafeteria** with your child/ren. Many parents are being caught off guard with unexpected bills. Our new policy dictates that if a child owes money, a hot meal is not an option; students may only opt for the alternate offering.
- With nice weather on the horizon, please be sure **students wear jackets** so they can go outside for recess. Weather permitting...students will be outside!
- Students are not permitted to return to their classrooms from the cafeteria for **forgotten lunches/coats**. This is our protocol for numerous reasons: classroom doors are to be locked at all times; a student would need to have the door unlocked, which would require a stop by the main office to and from the classroom; students can’t enter classrooms without an adult present. There simply are not enough adults to escort children, and there isn’t enough time for students to return to classroom, get door unlocked and locked, and return to the cafeteria with enough time to eat. For these reasons, students **MUST** remember to take their lunch (if bringing a packed lunch) to the cafeteria. ***Students who get to the cafeteria without their lunch will be directed to purchase, and charge, a lunch.***

Teaching kids skills to stay safe on-line:

In this technological era where children's first language isn't English, it is "tech speak"; and where most kids have regular access to the internet/web; and where many students have their own cell phone; concerns have escalated for student safety. There are many websites that provide tips to help you keep your kids safe as they interact on-line. Basic guidelines for parents include:

- Talk about responsible social networking activity.
- Tell children to think before they post (Would they want their grandmom to see what they post? If not- DON'T POST)
- Remind your child to be kind in their interactions-give examples of appropriate vs. inappropriate comments/posts.
- Tell children NEVER to post their location or personal information, including, but not limited to, teams they play for, schedules, etc. This type of sharing may make them vulnerable and easily found.
- Get your own account and follow or friend your child to monitor their activity.

Sites that provide tips for internet safety:

- How to Spy on Your Child On-line:
 - www.parenting.com/article/how-to-spy-on-your-child-online
- The Secret Life of Kids On-line: What you Need to Know:
 - www.parenting.com/article/kids-social-networking?page=0.1
- Common Sense Media Networking Tips:
 - www.common sense media.org/advice-for-parents/social-networking-tips
- Tweet Reports: Social Media Guidelines for Children:
 - <http://tweetreports.com/reputation-management//social-media-guidelines-for-children/>

As expectations are being elevated to prepare for a greater level of academic rigor and personal independence amongst students, we hope parents will continue to partner with the teachers to assure student success. Students, as they face increased challenge, need parental support. If there are existing concerns, communication between the school and home is critical.

I truly believe that Radix is synonymous with excellence, thanks to committed staff, involved parents, and wonderful students.

Yours In Education,

Dr. Jill DelConte

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

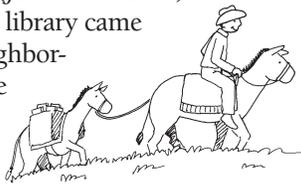
Book Picks



Read-aloud favorites

■ **Biblioburro: A True Story from Colombia** (Jeanette Winter)

What if the library came to your neighborhood on the back of a donkey?



This is the true story of a Colombian schoolteacher's traveling library that brought books to children in remote villages. (Also available in Spanish.)

■ **Dragons Love Tacos** (Adam Rubin)

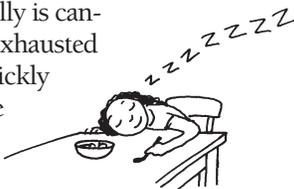
When a little boy discovers that dragons like to eat tacos, he decides to host a taco party for them. But if a fire-breathing dragon accidentally gets a bite of spicy salsa, look out! A silly story about a dragon party that turns into a disaster.



■ **Just a Second** (Steve Jenkins)

In just a single second, a bumblebee flaps its wings 100 times and the earth travels $18\frac{1}{2}$ miles. This nonfiction book will help your child think about time in fascinating ways. She'll also discover different methods of measuring time.

■ **Bedtime Is Canceled** (Cece Meng)
Maggie and her brother write their parents an official-looking note: "Bedtime is canceled." Somehow, the note blows out the window, lands in a newspaper office, and ends up in a headline. Soon, bedtime really is canceled, and exhausted children quickly discover the importance of sleep.

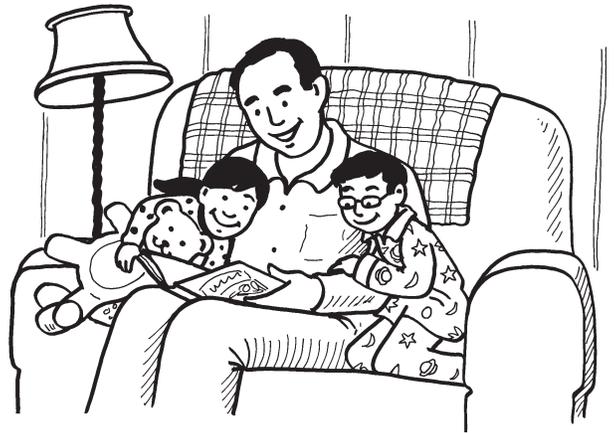


Time for a story

Want to spend time with your youngster, build her reading skills, and help her learn to love books? You can do all three when you read aloud. Here are suggestions.

Read regularly

Try to read to your child every day. You might aim for 10–15 minutes of bedtime reading for a peaceful end to the day. Bring along a book, and read to her during a sibling's sports practice. Or curl up together with a book when you get home from work.



Take turns choosing books

Your youngster may want to hear old favorites again and again. Use your turn for new titles and variety, such as nonfiction or poetry.

Let her participate

Ask your child to turn the pages while you read. Also, she can finish sentences that rhyme or fill in words she knows. Go slowly so she has time to understand

the story and look at the illustrations. She'll enjoy read-aloud time more if she plays an active role.

Be playful

You can use different voices for different characters (a high, squeaky voice for a mouse or a deep, booming voice for a horse). Or substitute your youngster's name for the main character's name, and use family members' names for other characters.

Note: You don't have to be an expert reader—your child will love it when you read aloud because it's *you*.♥

Writing that makes sense

As your child first learns to write, his stories may not always make sense to others. Help his writing flow logically with these two ideas.

1. Even if your youngster isn't writing sentences yet, he can tell you stories. As he describes the new class pet or something funny that happened at lunch, you can jot down his tale.

He'll practice relating events in a logical order, and that can help when he puts his thoughts and ideas down on paper himself.

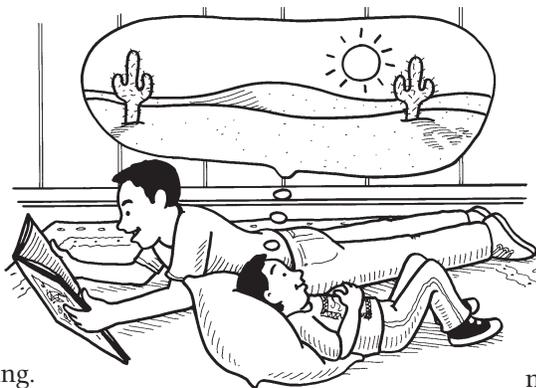
2. Let your child read his stories to you. Ask questions to encourage him to add information ("What did you do with your friends at recess?") or to clear up a confusing part ("Who said, 'Let's go home'—you or your brother?").♥



Read between the lines

Learning to infer, or “read between the lines,” is one key to good reading comprehension. Consider these tips for helping your youngster make inferences.

Describe the setting. Pick a book, and read a few sentences to your child (without him looking). Leave out words that name the setting. *Example:* “Sand stretched in all directions...cacti dotted the landscape.” Can he infer where the story is set? If he isn’t sure, give him a hint. (“Where do you see lots of sand and cacti?”)



Look for lessons. Fables are great for reading between the lines. Read one by Aesop, and help your youngster figure out the lesson. For instance, *The Tortoise and the Hare* teaches that even if you’re slow, you can win if you just keep going. Have your child point out parts that he used to make his inference. (“The tortoise never stopped, and he took one good step after another.”)

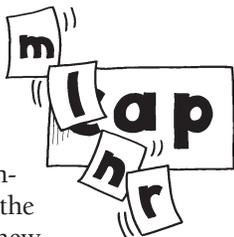
Use prompts. Questions that start with “Why do you think...?” or “How do you know...?” can encourage your youngster to infer. You might ask why he thinks a character behaved the way he did or how he knows it’s going to snow. Together, look for clues in the book that may help him answer the questions.♥

Fun with Words

Wonderful wordplay

Use these activities to build your child’s phonemic awareness—her ability to hear sounds in words:

- Choose a three-letter word, such as *cap*. Have your youngster substitute different beginning sounds from the alphabet to make new words (*lap, map, nap, rap, sap, tap, zap*). How many can she think of?



- Pick a long word, and tell her to clap once as she says each syllable. For *mozzarella*, she would clap four times: *moz-za-rel-la*.

- Ask your child to say a word without the first sound. *Example:* “Can you say *sit* without the *s*?” (*Answer: It*)

- Think of a word, and give your youngster a “sound” clue to figure it out. For instance, “I’m thinking of a word for something that you chew but don’t swallow. The word has an *uh* sound in the middle.” (*Answer: Gum*)♥



Vocabulary boosters

A large vocabulary can turn your child into a better reader and writer. Try these everyday ways to help her learn new words.

Keep your ears open

When you and your youngster go places, point out words that people use. Maybe a waiter describes an *entree* or the dentist talks about *molars*. Encourage your child to figure out what the words mean by the way they’re used.



Go beyond nouns

Help your youngster add adjectives and verbs to her vocabulary. Sports and games offer opportunities to use action words. Let your child hear you comment on the softball that *soars* or the runner who *sprints*. When she sends thank-you notes or greeting cards, suggest descriptive words (a *polka-dotted* shirt, a *fantastic* birthday).♥

Parent to Parent

Build, read, and write!

My son James loves to play with blocks. At our parent-teacher conference last month, his teacher suggested that we use blocks to fit in extra reading and writing practice.

We found books about things he could build, such as castles, skyscrapers, and monuments, and I put them with his blocks for inspiration. At first, I thought he’d just look at the pictures, but he has started pointing

out facts that he reads, like how moats kept enemies away from castles. I also encouraged James to write signs to go with his buildings. When he made an airport, for example, he wrote “Tickets,” “Bags,” and “Taxi” on slips of paper and taped them to the blocks.

I’ve noticed that James’s buildings are more creative—and I’m happy that he’s reading and writing while he plays.♥



OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ways to promote their children’s reading, writing, and language skills.

Resources for Educators,
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