



“Let us put our minds together and see what life we can make for our children.” Sitting Bull

Sunshine and springtime...both are needed and certainly most welcome after the cold snowy March we have had! We look forward to the colors of spring, blooming all around us, just as we look forward to our children blossoming and wrapping up another school year. As the third (and final) marking period begins, students need to make sure they stay focused, as end of year distractions (longer days, sports, impending summer vacation, etc.) tend to easily over-ride academics.

At this time of year, we hope that our students have made significant progress, especially with regard to reading. You may hear that our goal is to have our students improve their fluency and comprehension skills, especially. In case you may be wondering about what fluency actually means so that you can best support your child, keep this in mind: Fluency is the ability to read like you speak. As Hudson, Lane and Pullen define fluency as being “...made up of at least three key elements: accurate reading of connected text at a conversational rate with appropriate prosody or expression.” Non-fluent readers struggle in at least one of the aspects of reading—making mistakes, read slowly, or don’t use expression. Students become fluent by reading...it’s that simple. For that reason, at-home reading is critical for your child’s fluency growth, which is one of the most important building blocks of reading because it directly impacts comprehension.

Then you may ask...What actually is comprehension? Simply put, it is the understanding and interpretation of what is read which requires being able to decode (know the words), make connections between what is read and what is already known, and to think deeply about what is read. Vocabulary development impacts comprehension, as well. Good readers can draw conclusions about what they read—what is important, what is a fact, what caused an event to happen, which characters are funny, etc. Therefore, comprehension involves combining reading with thinking and

reasoning. When your child reads at home, encourage him/her to retell the story using his/her own words. Ask about the characters, or why something occurred in the story; help your child think critically about what is being read. READ! READ! READ!

Attached to the newsletter is an edition of Home & School Connection which I find full of great tidbits of guidance for ways parents can support their young learners. I hope you find it helpful as you work with your child at home.

This month we have a full calendar of events, for students and parents. Please mark your calendars:

- **Monday, April 2nd:** Autism Awareness Month kick off**
- **Friday, April 6th:** Running Club forms are due
- **Tuesday, April 10th:** Running Club begins
- **Tuesday, April 10th:** PTA Meeting at 7:00 pm
- **Tuesday, April 10th:** **NEW deadline for yearbook orders** which can be made on-line at YBPay.lifetouch.com and the Radix ID Code is: **11835918**. **4th graders do not need to order, as the PTA is purchasing them for all 4th grade students.**
- **Saturday, April 21st:** 1st Radix Caring Club community event, beach clean-up on the Brigantine Beach (details were sent home, families have to register)
- **Monday, April 23rd:** PARCC testing begins with 3rd grade
- **Thursday, April 26th:** Take Your Child to Work Day

Miss Grayson is spearheading Autism Awareness activities which revolve around the message- We are all unique! There is going to be a fundraiser for the school community. All students are encouraged to participate: for **50 cents a student gets an Autism Awareness (paper) puzzle link. Each grade level will have a different color. Students are to put their name and one thing that makes them unique on the back of the link. We are going to connect and display the links- thereby uniting the entire school community, including our Holly Glen friends.

I'd like to take a moment and acknowledge our **Teacher of the Year**- Mrs. Sandra Fiorentino. Some may recall that Mrs. Fiorentino was named Teacher of the Year years ago - a tribute to the excellent and consistently impactful educator that she is. As Henry Adams once said: ***A teacher affects eternity; she can never tell where her influence stops.*** Mrs. Fiorentino has been influencing kindergarten students for nearly

30 years, yet her passion, dedication, energy and effectiveness have never waned. The Radix School community is most fortunate to have her teaching, impacting, and nurturing our young students.

Parents and Guardians, we need your help:

- **Playground update:** In response to questions about why our students are not permitted to run on the playground, I have decided to establish April as a trial period; not to encourage running, but to lift the running restriction in the mulch area. I will meet with all students to remind them of the need to be safe and to watch where they are going at all times. If students run without regard for equipment or others nearby and injuries increase, as a result, the restriction will be imposed again.

- **We need students in school daily and in on time.**

- **A final word about PARCC...**
I understand that several students did not participate in the PARCC last year. I implore everyone to have your child participate this year. There are many reasons to support the decision to have your child/ren participate in the PARCC:
 - It provides our staff feedback 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.
 - This type of on-line assessment is what students are more and more likely to encounter, regardless of the name of the test. Students will benefit from taking computer-based assessments like the PARCC, to become adept technological test-takers.
 - Lastly, schools are rated and ranked, as seen with our "School Report Card". Our rating is impacted by students opting out of 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.

I hope to see many of you at the forthcoming events. There are many opportunities to see our students shine, to show our support, and to be involved as proud families of Radix.

Given the recent school closures due to weather, the last day of school is now June 20th.

Have a wonderful spring!

Yours In Education,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. DelConte". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Dr. DelConte

What does respect look like?

Your youngster's daily dealings with adults and kids alike will be more pleasant if he speaks and acts respectfully. Try these tips for helping him learn about respect.

Respectful replies. Think about something that you and your youngster disagree on (say, whether his video game time should be limited). Model having a respectful discussion about it. You might say that his brain and body are growing and that he needs to run and play to stay healthy. Then, suggest a respectful response, such



as, "I want to be healthy, but I love video games." Have him brainstorm other situations where people have different opinions but still speak to each other with respect.

Everyday acts. When you mow the lawn or clean up after your dog, you can teach your child about respect for neighbors. Explain that keeping your

neighborhood clean and neat makes it nice for everyone. Ask him to think of other respectful things neighbors should do. If you share an apartment laundry room, he might say that you respect neighbors' time by removing your clothes when they're done so others get to use the washers and dryers.♥

A reading challenge

By reading more complex books, your child can learn new words, facts, and ideas. He'll also be exposed to more complicated plots and will grow as a reader. Share these suggestions:

- Knowing something about the topic or setting makes a tougher book easier to comprehend. If



your youngster is reading a novel set in China, he could talk to someone who has been there or look up the country online (try a children's site like *kids.nationalgeographic.com*).

- Encourage your child to look at a simpler book on the same subject. A picture-book biography about Harriet Tubman may help your youngster better understand a textbook chapter on the civil rights movement, for instance.
- Suggest that your child read complicated material with pencil and paper in hand. He can jot down questions, words to look up, or facts he wants to learn more about.♥

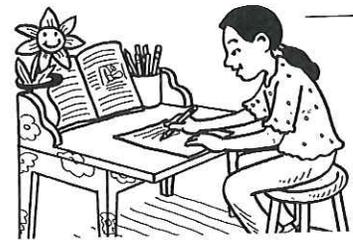


Strong study habits

Q: My third grader has to spend more time studying this year. How can I make sure she studies effectively?

A: Set your daughter up for success by helping her find a distraction-free study spot. Also, have her come up with a study routine. For instance, she could reserve time each evening to review her textbook and notes in the days leading up to a test. Also, many students find it helpful to jot down a purpose each time they study. Your child might write: "I will learn the definitions of all the boldfaced words in chapter 7, section 1."

Finally, encourage her to experiment with study strategies to find what works best. She could close her eyes and imagine how a word is spelled or draw a grid with 9 squares to solve 3 x 3. Or she might find it helpful to spell or recite math facts aloud in rhythm or to a familiar tune.♥



PARENT TO PARENT

Talking to kids about money

My children were always asking to buy things like dress-up shoes or new games. They didn't seem to understand that these items weren't in our budget.

I wanted them to learn about how we spend our money—and that it is limited. So I got a spiral notebook and labeled it "Family Spending Journal." I explained that for two weeks, everyone would keep a record of what they spent money on. I listed items like my

subway fare, the electric bill, and food at the grocery store. The children wrote down expenses such as school lunch, soccer cleats, and field trip fees.

After a few days, they were surprised by how many things we needed money for. Our kids had no idea, for example, that we paid for taxes on our income, several types of insurance, and membership in our homeowners' association. Sometimes they still ask to buy too many things at the store, but when I say no, at least they understand why.♥



OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ideas that promote school success, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.

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