

# Welcome to Mrs. Porter's First Grade!



*Hi! Welcome to my class! Here are a few things to help you and your child get settled in our classroom. If you have any questions or concerns, at any time, please call me and I will return your call as soon as possible. I am looking forward to a wonderful year! Mrs. Porter*

## Classroom Supplies

Each child has been asked to bring a set of supplies. Please see the attached list. Many of these items are communal so the only items that need to be labeled with your child's name are the backpack and the 2" ring binder. Please send these items to school as soon as possible as we begin writing in our journals the second day of school.

## Classroom Donation

Our first grade class does some snacks, a number of classroom science experiences and goes on two bus field trips each year. We are asking for a \$20.00 donation to help defray PART of these expenses. We may need to ask for additional funds throughout the year for admission to field trips, etc. If paying by check, please make the check out to Wasatch Elementary School. However, no child will be excluded from an activity based on the inability to pay this donation.

## Weekly "Fun Facts"

Each week, on Monday, I place a weekly newsletter in your child's blue or red folder. Please take time to read this newsletter EACH week. We have had numerous times where children have missed participating in a fun activity because parents did not read the newsletter. With 50+ students, this is my main source of communication with you and your child and once the day starts, I cannot be calling parents to have them bring a requested item to school.

## Homework Folder

A red or blue folder will go home with your child each day with English notes/homework on one side and Chinese on the other. Please check it DAILY for notes and finished work. Your child's home reading bag will also be inside of this folder starting the first week of September.

## Home Reading

Your child will be given a nightly reading book on his or her level starting in September. Please listen to your child as he or she reads the book and sign-off on the sheet that the book has been read. A new book cannot be given out unless there is a parent or other responsible adult's signature on the sign-off sheet. If a child has missed more than two nights of reading in a row, a phone call will be given to the home. Lost or damaged books will cost \$6 to replace. Please try and make it a happy habit to read every night, M-F. You will be amazed at the results!

## Monthly Homework (English)

Monthly homework is sent home at the beginning of each month starting in September. The first grade team has asked that each child read 15 minutes (either by him or herself or with a parent) five days a week. A purple sign-off sheet will be stapled to the top of each monthly homework packet. In addition, weekly math homework and Chinese language homework will be given as part of the dual-immersion experience.

### V.I.P.

One of our favorite things to do in first grade is let each child have a special week to share different things about themselves and to invite the child's family to come into the classroom for a visit. Due to time restraints in the Chinese Immersion program, ALL VISITS ARE HELD ON FRIDAYS UNLESS SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS ARE MADE BEFORE HAND. More information about this visit will be sent home the week before it is your child's special week.

### Home Items

Please help your child keep small toys/trinkets at home. Often these items can become a distraction to your child and his or her work or to another child. At other times, toys/trinkets can become lost or even stolen which often leaves the child sad or frustrated and unable to concentrate on his or her schoolwork. I will discuss this thoroughly with the entire class. A warning will be given for a first offense and the child will be asked to put the item(s) away. If the child brings a toy/trinket a second time, it will be taken away and kept until his or her parent can come and retrieve it. Thanks in advance for your help in keeping our classroom a productive and happy place for learning.

### No Show and Tell

Due to time restraints, there will not be an official Show and Tell time each week. I encourage children to create written stories at home to share with our class as well as reading favorite trade books. Occasionally, I will ask children to bring in an item that goes with a thematic study and of course we always want to celebrate life events like special family trips or new siblings! In addition, oral language is also practiced via classroom plays performed in December and May.

### Spelling

Research has shown that weekly spelling lists of random words does little to improve the spelling of young children in their own independent writing. Instead, our class will work with many word families throughout the year in addition to having a particular emphasis on learning the 100 word wall or "sight" words that are commonly misspelled for each child (based on the research of Fry). A list of these words will be coming home in your child's homework folder in October with more details to follow.

### Volunteers

I love to have parents and BYU helpers in the classroom! Independent writing and guided reading centers are the area where this help is most needed. This year I will need a helper from 9:45 to 10:45 a.m. and 1:45 p.m. to 2:45 p.m. M-TH. I usually begin with helpers the third week of September after the children are familiar with classroom routines. Thanks in advance to those who are able to help out in the classroom! Room mothers will be calling or e-mailing those who are interested in helping out starting in September.

### Holidays

We celebrate three classroom parties in our English classroom: Halloween in October, A "Polar Express" party in December and Valentine's Day in February. Thanks in advance for your help, either with bringing in treats or your physical presence, on these days!

### Illness

Children who come to school are expected to participate in all scheduled activities for that day. There is no place for a child to stay inside for lunch recess, for example, as I am not in my room to monitor children. We understand that there is no way to keep all children healthy at all times throughout the school year, but we will do our best to have the children wash their hands often, disinfect desks, etc. so that we can keep our room as healthy as possible. Please follow the Wasatch guidelines about when to keep your child home so that we can all enjoy a healthy and happy school year together.

**Here is to a fantastic first grade year together!**