



Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to a new school year! I hope you had a wonderful summer and enjoyed spending quality time with your children. This summer I have been deeply engrossed in discovering what research says most benefits students as they become readers, writers and lifelong learners. As a result, the structure of my literacy block may look and sound a little different and I am EXCITED!

It won't be long until you hear your child talking about "The Literacy Lounge." The purpose of this letter is to fill you in on what The Literacy Lounge is all about, so you don't have to nod your head while wondering what in the world your child is referring to.

The Literacy Lounge is a way of structuring the reading block so every student is independently engaged in meaningful literacy tasks. These research based tasks are ones that will have the biggest impact on student reading achievement, as well as help foster children who love to read. Students receive explicit whole group instruction and then are given independent practice time to read independently while I provide focused, intense instruction to individuals and small groups of students.

When it is up and running smoothly, students will be engaged in the Literacy Lounge, which is comprised of:

- Independent Reading
- Buddy Reading
- Listen to Reading
- Word Study
- Writing Station

There are very specific behavior expectations that go with each Literacy Lounge component. We will spend our first weeks working intensely on building our reading and writing stamina, learning the behaviors of the Literacy Lounge and fostering our classroom community. I will also spend time learning about your child's strengths and greatest needs as a reader in order to best plan for each student's instruction.

One thing you'll notice that may be a change for you is a direct decrease in the number of worksheets your child brings home. While worksheets keep students busy, they don't really result in the high level of learning I want for your child. Instead, your child will be taught to select "Just Right Books" or books they can read, understand and are interested in, which they will read during the Literacy Lounge. They will be spending most of their time actually reading, which research supports as the number one way to improve reading.

As you can see, I am excited about giving your child the opportunity to be involved in a structure that will have a positive effect on their education.

Sincerely,
Ms. Winston