

Building Readers for Life

Downingtown Area School District

K-5 Literacy Newsletter

Hello, Downingtown Families!

As we welcome Spring and move into the third trimester of the 2017-2018 school year, this Literacy Newsletter will provide you with assessment updates, reading strategies, and resources to build successful readers and foster positive home and school connections.

April is Earth Month

April is Earth Month. Enjoy the great outdoors and inspire your budding naturalists with these literacy related ideas.



Start a Nature Journal

Take your child outside and encourage her to write down what she observes about her surroundings, including observations of plants, rocks, and insects up close. Have your child choose an animal or plant and watch it for five minutes. Then, ask your child to write about her observations, and draw and label a picture of the plant or animal.

Keep a flower tally in your Nature Journal. Count the flowers in an area in the spring once a week for three weeks. Compare your tallies. Your child will have fun watching the numbers go up as flowers bloom in the spring.

As parents know, dirt can be pretty interesting to kids. Have your child dig a hole and notice how the soil changes as he digs deeper. Can he describe the different layers? What creatures did he find as he dug? Record these and other interesting findings in the journal.

For more family fun nature based ideas, check out:
www.natureworkseverywhere.org.



Edition 7, March 2018

Literacy Assessment Updates:

Kindergarten to 5th Grade

AIMSweb

May 1 - May 11

Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark

Assessment System

May 1 - May 31

Looking Ahead:

3rd to 5th Grade

PSSA Testing - ELA

April 9, 10, & 12

PSSA Testing - Math

April 16 & 17

4th Grade

PSSA Testing - Science

April 23 & 24





This year, Children's Book Week, the annual celebration of books and reading, is the same week as Screen-Free Week! Reading is one of the best ways to go screen-free. Check out these books before Screen-Free Week to get inspired—and then read them again during (and after) as a reminder that kids of all ages benefit from time to play, unwind, be bored, and connect with family, friends, and nature.

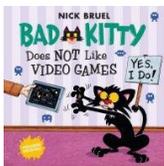


Early Literacy

Activities to foster important early skills

1. **Learn** letter names and sounds by singing the Alphabet Song. Explore iTunes to find lots of different versions.
2. **Play** with the sounds of language by introducing nursery rhymes through books and song.
3. **Enjoy** rhyming books together. Read aloud to your child and pause at the opportune spots, encouraging your child to join in on the rhyming portions of text.
4. **Listen** to children's music together. Clap, dance to the beat, and listen for rhyming words. Music provides natural opportunities for children to manipulate the sounds of language.
5. **Practice** quickly naming letters, numbers, objects, and colors by playing 'Beat the Clock.' Open a book or magazine and have your child point to and name as many letters, numbers, objects, or colors as she can in 30 seconds.

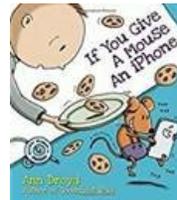
Reading Recommendations



Bad Kitty Does Not Like Video Games
by Nick Bruel (Roaring Brook Press)



Doug Unplugged
by Dan Yaccarino (Dragonfly Press)



**If You Give a Mouse an iPhone:
A Cautionary Tale**
by Ann Droyd (Penguin Random House)

Children's Book Week is the annual celebration of books for young people and the joy of reading.

Established in 1919, Children's Book Week is the longest-running national literacy initiative in the country. Every year, events are held nationwide at schools, libraries, bookstores, homes — wherever young readers and books connect!

The 99th anniversary of Children's Book Week will take place April 30 to May 6, 2018. During Children's Book Week, plan a trip to your local library or book store to ignite the interest of your young reader. Have your child use the **I.P.I.C.K. Strategy** to help your child choose the right books.

The **I.P.I.C.K. Strategy** stands for:

- **I** choose my book.
- **Purpose**: Why am I choosing a book today?
- **Interest**: What are the things that I like or want to learn about? What holds my attention?
- **Comprehend**: Do I understand what is going on by reading the words and pictures?
- **Know**: Do I know enough of the words to understand what is going on?

