



1st & 2nd Grade Explorers

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Dear Families,

Our First Expedition: We will kick off our first expedition of the year next week. An expedition is our . . .

"primary way of organizing curriculum. The subject matter of a learning expedition is a compelling topic derived from the content standards. Learning expeditions feature linked projects that require students to construct deep understandings and skills and to create products for real audiences." - *Expeditionary Learning Core Practice Benchmarks*.

This expedition will be focused around the survival characteristics of birds. We will focus more narrowly on two birds: the eagle and, for contrast, the quail. We will study each different part of their anatomy and why it supports this species survival. The standards we will be focusing on in Science will be: **EALR 1-SYSTEMS:** *The student knows and applies scientific concepts and principals to understand the properties, structures and changes in physical, earth/space, and living systems. Component 1.3 Changes:* *Understand how interactions within and among systems cause changes in matter and energy. GLE 1.3.9 Understand that plant and animal species change over time. Evidences of learning:* *Recognize and describe how individual plants and animals of the same kind differ in their characteristics and sometimes the differences give individuals an advantage in surviving and reproducing.*

To be able to get our students to a deep understanding of this goal, we will be drawing multiple drafts of an eagle, using new knowledge from in-depth studies about different anatomy parts. The students final drawing will be shrunk down to be printed on cards for a marketable final product. Please know that we will be breaking all of the learning down over several weeks through December and we will notify you of more details as we're teaching.

Healthy Living: Today will be the last day of studying our five senses and "Too Good For Drugs" curriculum. We've learned so much from the various centers about how our body works. We've also been learning about ways to take care of our lungs and our body. Please note that the recipes from the Healthy Cooking class are attached for your family.

Time for Reflection: One of the structures we use in the first and second grade explorer classrooms is something called "time for reflection". This is one intervention we use to help students identify the ways that they are disturbing other kids' learning or safety. We ask them to think about the behavior they've chosen, and then describe what they'd do next time the same situation occurs. We then send these notes home for you to reflect on the student's behaviors with them, hopefully helping them be responsible for their behavior. Please know that this is not a punishment but a teaching moment for us and the students.

Word Study: We want to let all families know that we would like you to tailor your student's word study time to their abilities. We don't want them to be frustrated with this task, hopefully it can be a fun way to study words. The students only need to do one of the items on the check off sheet each evening. If your child's teacher sends home challenge words, these are *OPTIONAL* and meant for building background knowledge (schema) for students to learn to spell and to read big words. Even if your child is not yet able to spell these words, reading these words, and practicing breaking them into chunks will help them make attempts at reading big words in the future.

Fieldwork on Thursday: We will be going to the Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge on Thursday October 4th. We will leave at 9:15 and we will be returning by 1:00 p.m. This means you will need to send your child with a couple of things on Thursday morning: a water bottle, good walking/hiking shoes, a *SACK LUNCH*, and a coat or hat depending on the weather. Any volunteers who are cleared are welcome to join us, it will be exciting! We will be looking and listening to birds.

Thanks for reading!