

# Welcome to 4th Grade!



## Introduction

Welcome to our fourth grade classroom! This is my first newsletter of the year, and I want to begin by expressing how excited I am to be your child's teacher! Our curriculum is full of exciting and rigorous projects, field trips, and a variety of other learning experiences. You can look forward to weekly newsletters that I will post on our [classroom website](#)! This is a wonderful way for me to communicate with you regarding various things taking place in our room (room 17). Feel free to bookmark our website by visiting the following web address: [www.mrsalliebrown.weebly.com](http://www.mrsalliebrown.weebly.com)

My weekly newsletter (found under the "Gazette" tab) and shared weekly on ParentSquare will keep you informed of all the wonderful activities taking place in our room! I update the Gazette every Monday afternoon. Because of the website, I will not typically be sending home a paper copy of the newsletter unless you notify me otherwise. For today's news edition, I want to share with you some of our classroom policies so that we can start the year off in an effective and meaningful way.

## Homework

Your child will have about 30-40 minutes of homework a night, plus nightly reading. You can expect that I will assign work consistently Monday-Thursday. Occasionally your child will be assigned homework over the weekend. This happens rarely and would only be due to incomplete classwork or a big project that needs finishing up.

In the fourth grade, students practice being independent learners. Therefore, your child will be responsible for copying the nightly homework down from the whiteboard into their **weekly planner** on a daily basis. We take time to do this consistently at the end of each school day. Your child also has a binder that he/she is to place assignments into. This binder specifies book report due dates, holds online passwords, and is a place to store assignments in an organized way. Please help your child get into the routine of putting his/her binder into their backpack each night so that binders come back to school the following morning.

What will the nightly homework look like? Each night, your child will generally finish a math worksheet (which we review and begin in class), a language arts page (from their weekly packet), and a spelling activity to prepare him/her for Friday's spelling test. Additionally, students are expected to read twenty minutes a night. Since there is a book report due every trimester, taking time to read nightly is a great way to manage the book report projects effectively. We will review book reports more thoroughly at **Back to School Night scheduled for Thursday, September 7th from 5-6 pm**. Your child will also occasionally have science and social studies assignments to work on at home (although ample class time is given for students to complete this work at school).

I also like to list *about how much time* each homework activity should take for your child to complete. That way, if your child is taking *significantly* longer to complete nightly assignments, we can meet and talk about strategies to help him/her be successful. Please see the time break-down on the following page:

Math Worksheet: 20 Minutes  
Language Arts Worksheet: 10 Minutes  
Spelling: 10 Minutes  
Reading: 20 Minutes

At the bottom of each page in your child's planner, there is a place for parent/teacher comments. Please initial **each night** that you have checked your child's homework and that it is indeed complete. I will put a stamp next to your initials to confirm that I checked the homework in class. Also, if you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to write me a note next to your initials. I will get back to you within twenty-four hours! If your child is missing an assignment, I will send home a notification letting you know. The assignment will need to come back the next day along with the signed parent notification form.

### **Graded Work**

I send home all graded work and projects on Friday afternoon in a special "Friday Folder." Please look through the weekly work with your child and keep all assignments at home. The empty folder is due back to school on Monday morning. There is a place within the folder for you to indicate that all work was received and reviewed.

### **Behavior**

We have five agreements in our class that we discuss, practice, and master throughout the year. Students review these rules daily during our morning meeting. Our class agreements are as follows:

- 1) *Listen when the speaker is talking*
- 2) *Follow directions quickly*
- 3) *Respect others. Respect yourself. Respect our school. Respect our community. Respect our planet.*
- 4) *Make smart choices*
- 5) *Be safe. Be kind. Be honest.*

Students are recognized for demonstrating positive behaviors by earning Starbucks (not the coffee ☺), which is what we call our classroom cash. Students also get Starbucks for completing their weekly jobs.

Students may save their class cash, or use it to buy a trip to the bathroom, get a pencil, buy a new eraser top, go out to their backpacks, etc. Students may also use class cash to purchase unique coupons (for fun things like taking their shoes off in class for a day, drawing time on the whiteboard, taking a lap around campus, etc). However, most children like to hold off on spending their Starbucks because throughout the year, we have designated “Business Days!” At this time, students may choose to buy a “Business License”, create a portfolio, and bring handmade items to school to sell to their classmates. In the past, things like bookmarks, friendship bracelets, greeting cards, “furbies”, and many other items were popular! As I am sure you can imagine, this turns out to be a great economics lesson. Students learn quickly the concept of pricing objects at a reasonable value, making a profit, bargaining, etc. Please see the sheet in your child’s binder for more information (or check out our website)! I will also go over this more during my Back-to-School-Night presentation on Thursday, September 7th

### **Positive Reinforcement**

There are several ways I recognize hard work and positive behavior in class in addition to class cash. For students who love to go above and beyond, I have a variety of activities for them to choose from. Students can complete challenge questions (posted weekly), work on independent study projects, complete mastery club problems, or join our classroom book club (which meets once a week). Each extra activity earns students stars on our “Mastery Club star chart.” Once students earn 10 stars, they get to have a classroom “picnic” with me and a friend of their choice (and our class pet)!

As a group, students earn group points. The winning group each week gets to select the Friday fun activity for the class to participate in. Activities range from art activities, games inside, free play outside, and extra teacher read time/art activity.

As a class, students earn marbles for a classroom reading party. During the reading party, students build blanket forts, bring flashlights from home, and have an all around great time reading with friends. I can't help but join in, too!

As you can see, there are plenty of ways to recognize positive behavior and academics in our room!

### **Consequences**

While I know that this is going to be an exceptional year, there is a plan in place for students who are off task. In our class, time is given at the end of each day for students to reflect on how their day went. They fill out a self-reflection sheet and bring it home nightly (I collect these sheets on Friday). This enables students to self-monitor how they are feeling about themselves and their classroom community.

If there are any issues in class, I first give students a warning. If the behavior persists, I will have them take a break from the classroom activity and fill out a behavior reflection sheet (which requires a parent signature). Following that, I will call or email home. In the rare instance that an issue is more serious, Mrs. Pugno will be involved. I feel confident that our class is going to do great this year, and that we will be able to focus more on the positive rather than the negative.

### **Volunteers**

I love having help in the classroom and beyond! During my Back-to-School Night presentation, I will provide more information/sign-up opportunities.

## Special Plans

The fourth grade is known for some of the amazing field trip opportunities we provide our students (gold panning during our 3 day camping trip, outdoor education, Fort Ross, and more)! As these trips require ample planning time, they have already been scheduled. The dates are provided below:

**Outdoor Education to Clem Miller in Point Reyes: March 12th-15th**

**Fort Ross Day Trip: April 24th**

**Tour Through Gold Country: May 28th-30th**

I will need parent drivers and chaperones to make these trips happen! During my Back-to-School-Night presentation (and on the website), dates for other trips will also be listed so that you can plan accordingly to attend those that interest you and work with your schedule! I am really good at begging for drivers/chaperones and have never had to cancel a trip due to lack of volunteers. Get ready to sign up (after a really enthusiastic field trip presentation!!) during Back-to-School-Night!

## Student of the Week

Each week, our class celebrates a Student of the Week! Each day of the week, special activities are planned to honor the selected student. Activities are as follows:

**Monday:** Selected students shares "All About Me" poster

**Tuesday:** Student brings in baby pictures to share

**Wednesday:** Student bring an item for our mystery box to share

**Thursday:** Student brings in favorite book(s) to share with the class

**Friday:** Student gets a book of letters the class writes

I will send home the Student of the Week *All About Me* page this Friday. Please send it back to school with your child by **Monday**,

**August 28th.** I store them in the classroom until your child's week rolls around.

## **Materials**

Students will be provided all the necessary materials for class work. However, there are a few extra supplies I would like them to bring to class by the end of the first week. Please let me know if you have any trouble obtaining the items listed below, and I will help out in any way that I can.

### **Necessary Materials:**

- \* Backpack
- \* Standard Size Pencil Box
- \* Box of Crayons
- \* Box of Colored Pencils
- \* Small Box of Markers
- \* 5 Pencils-Sharpened
- \* Student Sized Scissors
- \* Handheld Pencil Sharpener  
(with Shavings Collector)
- \*Red Pen
- \*1 Glue Stick
- \* 2 Thick Sized Whiteboard Markers

### **Optional**

- \* 1 Package of Baby Wipes (classroom donation)

As space is limited, please do not send any extra supplies to school. If your child does bring something to class that does not belong, I will ask them to keep it in their backpack and will send it back home that evening. (Our desks are too small to accommodate any extra supplies)! Thanks for understanding!

## **Wish List**

Throughout the year, I may attach a “Wish List” to our class newsletter. This list will ask for items that I would love to have donated to the classroom. Please only donate if it is convenient for you!

## **Closing Notes**

If you need to get in touch with me for any reason, please don't hesitate to do so! My email address is: [Abrown@gusdschools.org](mailto:Abrown@gusdschools.org) I check my email nightly before 5 PM and will get back to you within twenty-four hours. I look forward to a wonderful year!

Thanks so much!

Mrs. Brown  
[Mrsalliebrown.weebly.com](http://Mrsalliebrown.weebly.com)  
[Abrown@gusdschools.org](mailto:Abrown@gusdschools.org)