

Welcome to Quarter 2!

Hopefully everyone got to rest and enjoy their family over fall break! In science this quarter we will continue in a similar fashion with high expectations for behavior and learning. The main focus of the classroom rules are for students to be prepared and to be respectful. A copy of the classroom rules is on my website. Two important skills that students need to use effectively in science are critical thinking and reading informational text. More information about these two skills are on the back of this sheet.

Please be sure to be checking InfoDirect on a regular basis for the most up-to-date information on your child's grades and to see if they are missing any assignments. I do my best to keep InfoDirect as accurate as possible. Please also continue to check my website (bcaroelfs.weebly.com) for the daily agenda which includes assigned homework and upcoming quizzes, tests, or projects. My website also includes vocabulary, notes, useful websites, and pictures. I do my best to keep the agenda accurate and as far in advance as possible.

Finally, school-wide conferences are coming up. I would like to have all conferences completed before October 28th. Several of you I have already met with or we have communicated through email. Additionally, some of your children are already doing their best and have acceptable grades. In these above cases, a conference is not required (although one may certainly be scheduled if you wish). If your child is struggling or you have specific concerns then a conference is suggested. Furthermore, you can contact me at anytime throughout the year by email at vroelfs@bcalions.org. There is also a contact form on my website.

Please select the appropriate option below, sign, cut, and return by Friday. Day and time requests will be honored whenever possible. If a conflict arises, you will be notified. If something comes up and you are unable to come at the time you requested, please let me know as soon as possible.

Let's continue to "walk in love" this quarter!

Mrs. Valene Roelfs

Student Name _____ Parent/Guardian Signature _____

I do not wish to have a conference at this time.

I would like to meet with you on... (please select a day and time)

Thur. 10/20 8:15-8:30	Thur. 10/20 8:30-8:45	Thur. 10/20 8:45-9:00	Fri. 10/21 2:15-2:30	Fri. 10/21 2:30-2:45
Fri. 10/21 8:15-8:30	Fri. 10/21 8:30-8:45	Fri. 10/21 8:45-9:00	Mon. 10/24 2:15-2:30	Mon. 10/24 2:30-2:45
Mon. 10/24 8:15-8:30	Mon. 10/24 8:30-8:45	Mon. 10/24 8:45-9:00	Tues. 10/25 2:15-2:30	Tues. 10/25 2:30-2:45
Tues. 10/25 8:15-8:30	Tues. 10/25 8:30-8:45	Tues. 10/25 8:45-9:00	Wed. 10/26 2:15-2:30	Wed. 10/26 2:30-2:45
Thurs. 10/27 8:15-8:30	Thurs. 10/27 8:30-8:45	Thurs. 10/27 8:45-9:00	Thurs. 10/27 2:15-2:30	Thurs. 10/27 2:30-2:45

What is Critical Thinking?

Critical thinking is **NOT** rote memorization or regurgitating facts.

Critical thinking requires students to use higher order thinking skills such as:

- ★ Applying
- ★ Analyzing
- ★ Evaluating
- ★ Creating

Students with good critical thinking skills can:

- ★ understand the link between ideas
- ★ determine the importance and relevance of arguments and ideas
- ★ identify inconsistencies and errors in reasoning
- ★ approach problems in a consistent and systematic way

It is important to remember that these critical thinking skills are new for most middle schoolers and that it may take time and practice for them to use these skills effectively on a regular basis. You can help you child with these skills by reviewing assignments and tests/quizzes which involve critical thinking. Ask them **HOW** to get the answer and show or explain to them how to **THINK** through the given situations.

Reading Informational Text

Generally, as was done in the first quarter, reading from the textbook will be assigned as homework. While it is acknowledged that different people learn in different ways, gaining knowledge from reading informational text is an important skill to master for the real world. Following these steps may help your child improve their informational reading skills.

- ★ Eliminate Distractions ~ Read where you can really focus. Make sure that your brain is concentrating on your reading.
- ★ Read Slowly ~ Try to understand the point of each paragraph. Reading too fast will make you miss some key points.
- ★ Don't Skip Words ~ If you don't understand a word, use a dictionary. A single word can really change a whole meaning.
- ★ Notes ~ Take a few notes in your own words to help you remember complex ideas. Draw pictures that relate whenever possible.
- ★ Discussions ~ Discussing what you read helps learning happen because you are repeating ideas and teaching others.

Additionally, the 3-2-1 method and the P2R method are successful strategies for some:

- ★ 3-2-1 ~ Write (or discuss) the following **AFTER** you have read the whole passage:
 - 3 things that you discovered (that were brand new)
 - 2 things that you found interesting
 - 1 question that you have (to ask the teacher or to research on your own)
- ★ P2R
 - Preview ~ Preview the passage before starting to read. This includes reading the section titles and looking over charts and pictures.
 - Read Actively ~ Read a whole paragraph or section before taking notes or discussing that way you can determine what is most important.
 - Review ~ Summarize the reading in your own words by writing or discussing what you have read. Go over any review questions included.

Remember, that "practice makes perfect". Gaining knowledge from informational text should become easier if you make a point to work at it and keep at it.