

LS WEEKLY BULLETIN

Weekly Bulletin 11 | November 4, 2016 | Elizabeth Gale

Important Dates

- **November 8:** PAFA General Meeting at 10:00am
- **November 11:** Lower School Assembly. 1M will be presenting starting at 8:15am
- **November 19:** PAFA Bingo Night from 5:00-9:00pm
- **November 25:** Professional Development Day for teachers. No school for students.
- **November 24:** Lower School Assembly. 1P will be presenting.
- **December 2:** Lower School Assembly. KG will be presenting.



On Thursday, November 3, SCIS-Pudong had our first Fire Drill for the 2016-2017 school year. Students, teachers and staff did an excellent job following the fire drill procedures and all students were quietly lined up on the field within a few minutes of the alarm sounding.

Dear Families,

Another exciting week of fun and learning within the SCIS-Pudong Lower School. At this point, all grade levels have begun their second Unit of Inquiry and students have been engaged in a variety of learning experiences where they have had the opportunity to ask questions surrounding their inquiry topics and work with their peers to begin seeking answers to their queries. When planning, teachers begin by assessing student's prior knowledge and providing experiences through the curriculum and through the environment that give students opportunities to: test and revise

their thinking, allow them to make connections between their previous and current perceptions, and allow them the freedom to construct their own meaning in a way that is significant, relevant and engaging.

Below are the **Central Ideas** that serve as the focus for the current unit of inquiry in each grade level:

- **Nursery/Preschool:** *Play gives us opportunities to learn.*
- **Prekindergarten:** *Artists use many ways to express ideas and feelings.*
- **Kindergarten:** *People play in different ways around the world.*
- **Grade 1:** *Historical evidence and stories provides insight into our past, present and future.*
- **Grade 2:** *Stories can be constructed, retold and interpreted in different ways.*

- **Grade 3:** *Processes cause the earth to continually change with varying impact.*
- **Grade 4:** *One's mindset affects physical and mental growth.*
- **Grade 5:** *Human migration is a response to challenges, risks and opportunities.*

For more information on what and how your child is learning, please take some time to visit their classroom website by accessing the Teacher Websites tab on the left side of the SCIS-Pudong homepage: <https://pd.scis-his.net/home>

Have a wonderful weekend!

Liz Gale
Lower School
Principal



Halloween Photos - Thank you to all of our families and friends that came out to support the Halloween Bash last week. Special thanks to our PAFA parents for all of their hard work planning the event. Please visit our media site at <https://media.scis-his.net> for pictures of the event, along with our Halloween Photo Booth snapshots.

Flu Shot Update - This afternoon we sent out a follow-up email to all families about the rescheduling of our flu shot date to November 23. The consent form and payment deadline for this new date will be November 18, please refer to that email for further details. If you have any questions, please contact our Nurse Lynn: pd-nurse@scis-china.org



Choosing “Just Right” Books

Given that your child has already been in school for over two months, it is very likely that you have heard them or their teacher use the phrase “*just right books*” or “*best fit books.*” You may have asked yourself what is a *just right book* and how important is it that my child reads *just right* books at home. The purpose of this article is to provide you with answers to both of these questions.

In a nutshell, a just right book is one that seems custom-made for the child. It is a book that a child finds interesting and can confidently read and understand with a small amount of support. These books also make the child stretch their thinking a little bit so they have opportunities to apply the strategies they have been learning and to experience new vocabulary, different genres and writing styles (Routman, 2003).



Beginning this school year all Lower School teachers in Grades 1 through 5 will be using the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment system to determine each student’s independent or just right reading level. The Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment system is administered during a one-on-one student-teacher assessment conference in which teachers assess students processing strategies, fluency and comprehension. A child’s reading level is defined using the Fountas and Pinnell A-Z text level gradient, with levels progressing from the easiest level being A to the most challenging

level Z. If a child's just right level is between A-K it means that they read with 95-100% accuracy and excellent or satisfactory comprehension. If a child's just right level is between L-Z then they read with a 98-100% accuracy and excellent or satisfactory comprehension (Fountas and Pinnell, 2011).

It is important to remember that the purpose of reading is to gain meaning, to understand what the author is saying, to enjoy the story and to connect to the characters. If a child is reading a book that is too difficult they will become frustrated. If the book is not challenging enough then it will lead to boredom (Routman, 2003). Therefore, it is essential that the book is "just right." A just right book is one that provides a little bit of a challenge for the student. It should be a book that the student finds interesting and can be read with a small amount of assistance.

Parents often ask, "How will my child become a better reader if he or she is not challenged by reading harder books?" The answer is that children become better readers by reading lots of books at their 'just right' level. It takes about 20 encounters with a new word for that word to become part of a child's known vocabulary. The recommended number of books to read at a given level is about 30 (the amount is more for students in grades 1-3). At that point the child knows the 5% of words not known earlier, and is ready to move up a level, where more new words to learn will be encountered.

The complexity of the story, the characters and the information also increases as the levels increase. A child may be able to read the words in a higher level book, and may even know what the words mean; but the complexity of the story and the characters will be behind the developmental level of the child. Oftentimes, the content of the higher-level books is not age appropriate for younger readers.

An unwanted side effect of trying to push children to read harder books is that children pushed become discouraged and turned off by reading. Children must enjoy the experience of reading to be enthusiastic about reading, and students who are enthusiastic about reading are the best readers.



The best way to help your child become the best reader he or she can be is to enjoy a wide variety of books together at your child's "just right" level.