

THE KI REPORT

A newsletter on Kindness and Inclusion for Root Elementary parents and families.

Character Word of the Month: Gratitude

An expression of thankfulness or appreciation.

Lessons from Lavender

During counseling time, we will talk about what gratitude means, and how it helps us in our daily lives. I will be talking with your children about how having and showing gratitude can build stronger relationships, help us overcome frustration, and even help us sleep better. It's also important to teach your children to be grateful for what their bodies can do (walk, hear, see, smell, learn, sleep, eat, etc.) and all of the wonderful things that come along with family and friends (love, encouragement, trust, etc.). Read a book with your child and talk about gratitude. Spend time at the dinner table taking turns discussing things that made you feel grateful that day.

Reading suggestions:

Did I Ever Tell You How Lucky You Are - Dr. Seuss

The Giving Tree - Shel Silverstein

It Could Always Be Worse - Margot Zemach

All the World - Liz Garton Scanlon

Bear Says Thanks - Karma Wilson

"Gratitude and attitude are not challenges; they are choices" - Robert Braathe

You can follow what I'm teaching on Root's website under the counseling tab. If you need assistance of any kind please contact me at 479-445-1021 or at jennifer.lavender@fayar.net

Sincerely,

Mrs. Lavender



A Teacher's Gratitude

It's 8:20am on a chilly, Wednesday morning. Ali Walton squeezes in another sip of coffee as she asks more than 20 five and six-year-olds about the day of the week in which she has also cleverly embedded early math concepts of one more/one less. Between the continuous ping-ponging of questions (no single one treated any less importantly than the others), commenting on the work of children, rolling up a student's sleeves, and

all that accompanies the role of classroom management, it's clear that coffee with a double shot should be a part of every teacher's toolkit. Also abundantly clear is Mrs. Walton's attunement to the smallest of details when it comes to not only teaching, but loving all of the children in her classroom.

*When asked about her inspirations for teaching, Mrs. Walton recalls several key figures, including her mother who has been teaching Special Education at the same school for the past 46 years. Her most notable influence, however, was her first grade teacher, whom she affectionately refers to as Ms. Betty. "She taught my dad, my sister, and then me. She would read us *The Boxcar Children* everyday," says Walton. "I loved going to school, and I wanted to give that same experience to other children." While Walton strives to repeat much of what Ms. Betty did, it's obvious she brings her own fun-loving, never-miss-a-beat flare to her own classroom. She said her teaching is often guided by a favorite quote of hers, "**Some children come to school to learn, and some children come to school to be loved.**"*

*Following the near loss of her father to a car accident four years ago, Walton grew a greater appreciation for life. "I try to end each day with a positive and show appreciation for the smallest of things." This mindset extends into her classroom as she helps her students learn the art of giving thanks and how small acts of kindness can go a long way. But most importantly, Mrs. Walton wants every child to know that they are loved. Because as she so eloquently stated, "**Love is an act of gratitude.**" What are you grateful for today?*

