

Name

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Home-School Connection#24

Monday, 4/3/17 - Due Monday, 4/10/17



THEMES and SEEDS: "Nothin's enough if you don't care enough."

55, I just realized that two of the mcas passages you read this week, "Virgil" and "The Growin' of Paul Bunyan" both had to do with planting seeds and the hard work it takes to grow them. Had you noticed that? Please write your answer here: _____ Also, the *title*, "The Growin' of Paul Bunyan" is probably about the 'growin' of Paul as much as it is about growing of the baby tree. Had you considered that? _____ Last week, as we talked about vocabulary for the mcas, we discussed the word *theme*. Share what you think a theme is and any examples of themes you have seen in your reading or other experiences. One of the themes from the Paul Bunyan story was the quote by Johnny Appleseed. **"Nothin's enough if you don't care enough."** Describe that quote and what you think it means. Why did Johnny say that to Paul Bunyan? Do you think that was one of the themes in *Virgil* too? _____ If no, what do you think the theme was? Can you and or your family member, think about a person, place or thing (noun) that you didn't appreciate at first, but then things changed and you started to care? What caused the change?

GETTING READY: Last you had to get ready for community meeting *AND* we tried to get ready for MCAS 2.0. Throughout the week, you were filled with good humor, flexibility and kindness. On Friday, after community meeting, parents, teachers and Ms. Cook came up to say how much they enjoyed and appreciated your performance. I know some of you were worried about glitches, but your audience loved what you did. Did you enjoy getting ready? How was it for you preparing for tests and community meeting in the same week? What did you learn about yourself or about what it takes to get ready from our week?

TEST TAKING SKILLS: 3rd and 5th graders are taking the ELA MCAS on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. You will probably have some questions like the Paul Bunyan story where you have to continue a story, and you will probably have questions based on poems, stories and nonfiction texts. This is just one way to see how you are doing in school. Test taking is a kind of genre and you can learn it like any other genre. Talk to your parents about each of the strategies below and which ones you now do better

- Read the open response question first so you know what to look for
- As you read, underline parts of the text that answer the open response question
- Write notes in the margins (marginalia) to describe what you underlined.
- Include a topic sentence that reveals the question
- Write supporting details that match the topic sentence. Include evidence from the text that proves your point. Explain your evidence using words like, "this quote shows..." or "this explains..."
- Use transition words that help organize your response
- Include a concluding sentence that summarizes the main idea you focused on.
- Check your work for conventions when you are done.

ANALYZING TECHNIQUE: This week we talked about how different it is to just read a book versus looking at the author's technique. For example if you already know how to play the piano, or baseball or soccer, or the trombone or ballet or magic tricks and you watch someone do that thing, you analyze it differently. Share examples of things your parents know how to do and how it affects their experience when they watch someone else do it.

BUD NOT BUDDY: In all good stories, there are vivid characters who say things that reveal their traits. There is a vivid setting and an interesting plot. There is a main problem/conflict. There is rising action, the climax and falling action where things get wrapped up. This week, we got to the climax of *Bud Not Buddy*. We found out the real connection between Bud and Herman E Calloway and what the writing on the rocks means. It was fun listening to your gasps as the truth was revealed. After that, we found out how the story ends. Some of you were not happy with the ending, some of you liked how it all came together. What did you think? We also read that the "afterward" when the author, Christopher Paul Curtis, explained how the characters were based on his own grandfathers and their experiences in The Depression. We learned a little more about the Redcaps (thanks to Pascal who looked it up) and about Satchel Paige.

BOOK GROUPS: You finished your books. Talk to your parents about what you enjoyed about the book groups and what you learned about yourself or the book from having them. Have your parents ever been in a book group? Would you ever have one in your own home?

HOW DID THE TESTING GO? If you are doing this after you took some or all of the mcas testing, how did it go? Did you feel prepared? Was it stressful? Was it better than you thought? What parts of the test were harder or easier?

OTHER: Please write at least three other questions below about anything else we have been doing or thinking about in school. EX: Soap Operas, Fractions, Tangrams, New Read Aloud, New Book groups? Specials? Something else?

Due MONDAY: We made a time to do this on: _____ Parent Signature & Comments:

Student Rating (1-5) Please say why and which topics lead to the most in-depth discussions.