

Principal's Newsletter

Verner Elementary School

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Dear Parents/Guardians,

Writing is a key skill that every child needs to master to be successful in school and in the workforce. Being able to communicate, both orally and in writing, is the key to obtaining jobs, advancing a career and communicating with co-workers, colleagues, friends and family. Here at Verner we are focused on teaching each child the foundations of writing that they need to succeed and also pushing them to become better communicators through their writing. With your help and support we can help our children become great writers that will have all the skills needed to be successful both here at Verner and well beyond.

Tips to support writing at home.

Types of writing:

1. Descriptive Writing—a good description paints a vivid word picture for the reader.
2. Expository writing—writing that explains. Explanation may involve giving directions and instructions, explaining a process or a device, explaining what something is, or explaining an idea.
3. Narrative writing—a good narration tells a story. It can be real or fantasy and can take place in the past, present, or future.
4. Persuasive writing—you are attempting to convince someone to agree with your ideas and opinions.

Upcoming Events

December 2

School Board Reorganization Meeting—7pm High School Library

December 2

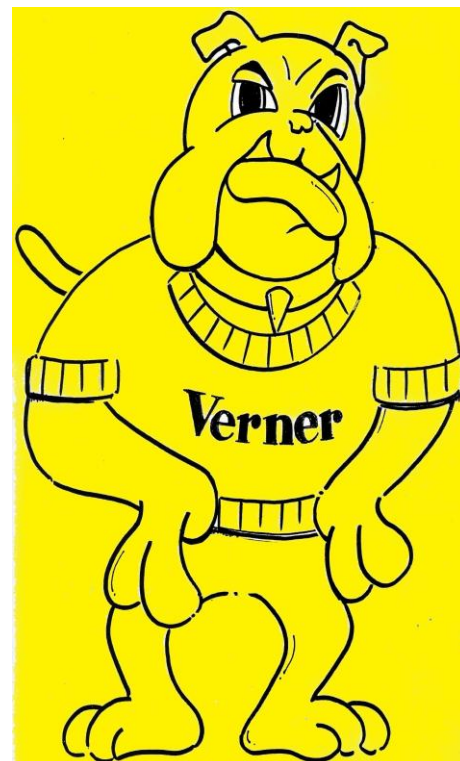
VPTO meeting 6pm—Verner Library

Important Announcement

Students last day for Thanksgiving break is Tuesday November 25th and students will return to school on Tuesday December 2nd.

Tips for parents:

- Provide a place. It is important for a child to have a good place to write—a desk or table with a smooth, flat surface and good lighting. Be sure that your child has all the necessary supplies for writing; paper, pencil, pen, computer, etc.
- Allow time to write. Help your child spend time thinking about a writing project or exercise. Good writers do a great deal of thinking. Your child may dawdle, sharpen a pencil, get papers ready, or look up the spelling of a word. Be patient—your child may be thinking.
- Respond. Do respond to the ideas your child expresses verbally or in writing. Make it clear that you are interested in the true function of writing which is to convey ideas. This means focusing on “what” the child has written, not “how” it was written. It is usually wise to ignore minor errors, particularly at the stage when your child is just getting ideas together.
- Praise. Take a positive approach and say something good about your child's writing. Is it accurate? Descriptive? Thoughtful? Interesting?
- Make it real. Your child needs to do real writing. It is more important for a child to write a letter to a relative than it is to write a one-line note on a greeting card. Encourage your child to write to relatives and friends. Perhaps your child would enjoy corresponding with a pen pal.
- Encourage keeping a journal. This is an excellent writing practice as well as a good outlet for venting feelings. Encourage your child to write about things that happen at home and school, about people they like or dislike and why, things to remember or things your child wants to do. If your child wants to share their journal with you, read the entries and discuss them—especially your child's ideas and perceptions.
- Use word games. There are numerous games and puzzles that help a child increase their vocabulary and make your child more fluent in speaking and writing. Remember, building a vocabulary builds confidence.
- Read, read, read! The best activity to improve writing is reading. If your child reads good books, they will be a better writer. Reading exposes children to general



vocabulary, word study and content specific vocabulary. Through reading, students see a variety of authors' techniques that they can use in their own writing.

- Ask questions. Always ask your child questions when they write. Ask specific questions about your child's writing such as: "How did that happen?" "How did that make you feel?" "Can you tell me more about...?" What are some other words you could use to describe...?"
- Here are some common errors in grammar, usage and mechanics that will help you identify the trouble spots in your child's writing.
 - Problem: Lack of commas in a series.
 - Example: Our flag's colors are red white and blue.
 - Solution: Our flag's colors are red, white, and blue.
 - Problem: Not forming compound sentences.
 - Example: Tom likes baseball his friend likes hockey.
 - Solution: Tom likes baseball, but his friend likes hockey.
 - Problem: Wrong End Punctuation.
 - Example: What are you doing.
 - Solution: What are you doing?
 - Problem: Incorrect Noun Plurals
 - Example: The berrys are ripe.
 - Solution: The berries are ripe.
 - Problem: Lack of subject-verb agreement.
 - Example: He run every day.
 - Solution: He runs every day.
 - Problem: Run-on Sentences
 - Example: I like riding my bike after dinner first I have to help with the dishes.
 - Solution: I like riding my bike after dinner, but first I have to help with the dishes.
 - Problem: Sentence Fragments.
 - Example: Going to the grocery store for milk.
 - Solution: I am going to the grocery store for milk.
 - Problem: Proper nouns not capitalized.
 - Example: I saw dr. smith in new York
 - Solution: I saw Dr. Smith in New York