



# Room 109 Weekly Update

December 1, 2023

Happy December! Wow!

**Heggerty** - This week we started to talk about listening for blends. We have noticed that a blend is two or more consonant letters that work together, but you can still hear a little of the first sound and a little of the second and third sound (if applicable). We discussed the analogy of a blender as Mrs. Fuller had made a smoothie with strawberries, blueberries, spinach and water. The ingredients went into the blender in their original forms, but after mixing and blending them, the end result was a little different. However, the smoothie would still taste a little like the strawberry, the blueberry, and the spinach. We focused a lot of the "L blends" such as bl (as in blue, bloom, and blaze), fl (as in flag, flame and flip), gl (as in glue, glam, and glove) and s blends (as in slip, smash, snack, and swish). We also learned that the sp and the st blends could be found at the beginning of a word or at the end of a word, but this was not true for the rest of the blends.

**Fundations** - This week we started and finish Unit 5 (it was a short unit - mostly review). In this unit, we continued to review our first three glued sounds (am, an, and all), when to apply bonus letters, and continued practice using digraphs.

**Reading Workshop:** During Reading Workshop this week, we continued to work on using the informational pillar. We have been reading about Bats. After listening to "Zipping, Zapping Bats" by Ann Earle and watching a video on bats, we created a modified informational pillar as a class on Bats. The class really shared some wonderful facts and learning from these informational tools! We used our knowledge to write a paragraph together on bats. As we shared our ideas about bats, it was a meaningful way to delve deeper into an author's writing process. After writing our first draft in our informational pillar, we used our time in writing to analyze our written text. In our first draft, we noticed that many of the sentences started the same way (with the word "bats.") This was a perfect segue for me to model how author's use Sentence Variety in writing. We talked about how a variety is a bunch of choices for something. For example, in the grocery store, there are a variety of apples like Red Delicious, MacIntosh, Granny Smith, etc. This variety makes eating apples more interesting, so we don't get bored. So, instead of starting every sentence with the same word (which can be boring and redundant), good writers try to use a variety of sentence starters in their writing. We talked about other word choices we could use, or other "word referents" (groups of words that describe something and have the same general meaning as the topic word. For example, for the word "bats", we were able to substitute the word(s) "they," "these flying mammals", "furry animals", etc.). Please see our attached writing drafts!

## First Draft

Bats are fantastic creatures.

Bats use echolocation to see how far or how near things are. Bats can also use echolocation to find food like bugs and other insects. Bats make a high pitched sound for echolocation and humans can't even hear it. Bats also are threatened. This means that people need to protect them more. One way to protect them is keep their homes safe. We can make bat houses using wood. If we don't protect bat homes, some people can kill them by tearing down their houses. We can add gates to protect caves so people don't harm them. We also learned that bats are nocturnal. That means they are awake during the night time, but they sleep during the day.

## Revised Draft with Sentence Variety

Bats are fantastic creatures.

Bats use echolocation to see how far or how near things are. They can also use echolocation to find food like bugs and other insects. These flying mammals make a high pitched sound for echolocation and humans can't even hear it. Did you know that these black or brown furry animals also are threatened. This means that people need to protect them more. One way to protect them is keep their homes safe. We can make bat houses using wood. If we don't protect bat homes, some people can kill them by tearing down their houses. Also, we can add gates to protect caves so people don't harm them. Another fact we learned is that bats are nocturnal. That means they are awake during the night time, but they sleep during the day.

## Writing

Students were also asked to write 2 informational sentences telling about bat facts. For this purpose, we continued to discuss Sentence Variety as students were doing more of this writing independently. We will also be working on using sentence variety in our journal writing as a new expectation for Trimester 2!

Another purpose of this writing is to help us to develop our technology skills by word processing these pieces on the computer using Microsoft Word. This process involves learning how to create a document, type (finding the letters and punctuation and spacing to write sentences), how to make letters uppercase by using the shift button and the desired letter to be capitalized for the beginning of sentences or proper nouns/names and finally closing/opening these documents. Lots of beginning skills for physical writing as well as electronic writing!

**Math** - This week, we finished working in our unit on the Relationship between Addition and Subtraction using Problem Solving (Part 1 - Within 10). This week, we reviewed fact families, learned how to find a missing number in an addition or subtraction equation using number bonds, and solving story problems. Be on the lookout for these tests coming home soon.

## Other news

Today is the last day of Trimester 1. Can you believe that we have just finished the first part of first grade? Report cards will be sent home at the end of next week.

I hope that you have a nice weekend.

April Fuller