

ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL PRESCHOOL NEWSLETTER

303-690-6523

Nationally Accredited
MARCH, 2010

MELMAC PLATE ORDERS

Plan on having your child make a lifetime keepsake! You will have a chance to order melmac plates with your child's very own art work indelibly printed on the plate! We do this during class time. This is a fun activity and a life long keepsake!

FALL REGISTRATION REMINDER

...did you re-enroll your child for our Fall Classes?? Please see DeeAnne for details.

WE NEED PARENT VOLUNTEERS FOR THE BOOK FAIR!

Please sign up to work the fair. A sign up sheet is available in the hallway.

LOCK IT UP

Please remember to lock your car when you drop off and pick up your child. **DO NOT LEAVE CHILDREN UNATTENDED IN YOUR CAR! NOT EVEN FOR A MINUTE!**

TUITION REMINDER

TTH \$143.00/month
MWF \$179.00/month
Jr. Kindergarten \$291.00/month

If you pay monthly you will make your last tuition payment in May. At that time you will receive a Thank you and paid in full letter.

Credit Card Service

St. Michael's Preschool accepts credit cards as a payment option for tuition and other fees. MasterCard, Discover and Visa are accepted. Please see Dee Anne if you would like to take advantage of this option.

MARCH DATES TO REMEMBER

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| Tue. 16 | POPs Meeting 7:00 p.m. |
| Tue. 16 | No Lunch Bunch |
| Wed. 17 | St. Patrick's Day |
| Fri. 19 | Book Fair begins |
| Fri. 26 | Book Fair ends |
| Sat. 20 | First Day of Spring |
| Mon 29. – Apr 2 | SPRING BREAK – No Classes |

Recipes...recipes...recipes

Mexicali Pie

Ingredients

- **SPICE MIX**
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 1/2 teaspoons cumin
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon flour
- **FILLING**
- 1 1/2 pounds ground beef
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 green bell pepper, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 cups frozen corn, thawed, or 1 can (15-ounce) corn, drained
- 2 cans (14 1/2-ounce) Mexican or chili-style diced tomatoes

- **CORN BREAD TOPPING**

- 1 cup yellow cornmeal, 1/2 cup flour, 1 1/2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder, 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 large egg
- 1 cup milk
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil

Instructions

1. Lightly oil a shallow, 3-quart casserole dish. Combine the spice mix ingredients in a small bowl.
2. Brown the ground beef in a large nonstick skillet, breaking it up with a wooden spoon. Use a slotted spoon to transfer the browned meat to the casserole dish. Drain all but about 3 tablespoons of the fat from the skillet.
3. Put the pan back on the heat and sauté the onion and bell pepper for 7 to 8 minutes. Add the garlic and the spice mix, stirring all the while, then stir in the corn and tomatoes. Cover the pan and bring the mixture to a gentle boil, stirring occasionally. Stir the vegetables into the meat and level the mixture with the back of the spoon.
4. Heat the oven to 400°. Sift the cornmeal, flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt into a medium mixing bowl. Whisk the egg, milk, and oil in a separate bowl. Add the dry mixture to the eggs and whisk until evenly blended. Pour the batter over the filling and spread it evenly with a spoon.
5. Bake the Mexicali Pie for 22 minutes or until the topping is golden brown and a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Makes 8 to 10 servings.

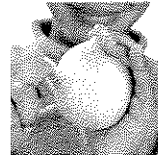
Apricot Scone Flower

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/3 cup sugar, plus extra for sprinkling on top
- 2 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- Pinch of ground nutmeg
- 2 tablespoons cold, unsalted butter
- Grated zest of 1 lemon
- 1/3 cup chopped, dried apricots
- 3/4 cup heavy cream or whipping cream
- 1 tablespoon milk
- 1 egg yolk
- 2 tablespoons apricot preserves

Instructions

1. Heat the oven to 400°F. Lightly butter a large baking sheet (preferably a light one; darker ones are more likely to make the scones brown too quickly).
2. Set a sifter inside a large mixing bowl and have your child measure the flour, 1/3 cup of sugar, baking powder, salt, and nutmeg (in that order) into it. Sift the ingredients into the bowl.
3. Cut the butter into small pieces and scatter them over the dry ingredients. Show your child how to rub the butter into the dry ingredients with his fingertips until it is broken into fine flakes.



4. Have your child zest the lemon and then stir the zest and the chopped apricots into the flour.

Roast Chicken with Potatoes and Butternut Squash (Feeds a Family of 4 for \$10)

2 tablespoons minced garlic, divided
1 teaspoon salt, divided
3/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, divided
1/2 teaspoon dried rubbed sage
1 (3 1/2-pound) roasting chicken
Cooking spray
12 ounces red potatoes, cut into wedges
1 1/2 cups cubed peeled butternut squash (about 8 ounces)
2 tablespoons butter, melted

1. Preheat oven to 400°.
2. Combine 1 1/2 tablespoons garlic, 1/2 teaspoon salt, 1/2 teaspoon pepper, and sage in a small bowl. Remove and discard giblets and neck from chicken. Starting at neck cavity, loosen skin from breast and drumsticks by inserting fingers, gently pushing between skin and meat. Lift wing tips up and over back; tuck under chicken. Rub garlic mixture under loosened skin. Place chicken, breast side up, on rack of a broiler pan coated with cooking spray. Place rack in broiler pan.
3. Combine potatoes, squash, butter, 1 1/2 teaspoons garlic, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Arrange vegetable mixture around chicken. Bake at 400° for 1 hour or until a thermometer inserted into meaty part of thigh registers 165°. Let stand 10 minutes. Discard skin.

10 Activities to Occupy Preschoolers

1. **Sorting machine** – kids love to sort things, like socks, crunchy colored cereal into muffin tins or colored blocks.
2. **Future Picasso** – a bowl of chopped fruit, cream cheese and graham crackers are perfect for edible art.
3. **Toy Rotation** – a bin full of toys that has been stashed for months can be a wonderful way for your child to “rediscover” things.
4. **Shake It Up** – place items into clear containers and let them shake.
5. **Water Colors** – a drop of food coloring can transform ordinary water into the ocean or a lake on another planet. Add toys and watch the fun.
6. **Paper Play** – give your child a spool of toilet paper and decorate their room or themselves (snowman). Be sure to have the camera ready!
7. **Lid-Le Ideas** – Put all your plastic containers and lids into a box and present to your child. See if they can find the correct lid to match the container.
8. **Roughin It** – Use chairs, couches, blankets and boxes to make tents. Bring flashlights, stories and snacks for the total outdoor experience.
9. **Obstacle Course** – Make an obstacle course out of chairs, pillows, or boxes. Have them race through as different animals such as snakes, cows, chickens or dogs.
10. **Footsteps** – put some paint onto a disposable plate and have your child step into it and walk across some large pieces of paper.

OUR READING TREE

Growing a reader, one book at a time! We are ready to “grow” our reading tree on the wall in the preschool hallway to track the number of books our children are reading. This means that any book your child reads, listens to, or looks at cover to cover can be recorded on one of our green leaves. There is a sheet of leaves in your child’s “cubby” to get started. Once you fill out a leaf (or leaves), please cut them out, bring them to school, and staple them onto our “reading tree”. Your child will be excited to see their leaf (or leaves) on our rapidly changing tree. We will continue to “grow” our tree March through May. More sheets of leaves will be available. Have fun and read to a child!

Take-Home Literature Packs

“Fun! Fun! Fun! We can’t wait for the next tote.”

“When the whole family became involved it seemed so natural.”

“It gives me new ideas on activities to do with my child.”

“I don’t know who had more fun, Leandra or her Dad.”

Such are the sentiments of a group of kindergarten families in the midst of a take-home literature program. Take-home literature packs are sets of books accompanied by sets of extending ideas and materials. They are sent home with children on a rotating or checkout basis. A typical pack includes two to five books that are related by theme (color, pets, rain, sports) and six to eight activities from which families may choose. Families are invited to read at least two of the books and engage in at least two of the activities over the course of a week. Activities include simple games, ideas for play, writing and drawing suggestions, and art and craft ideas. All of the materials needed to do the activities are included in the packs.

Take-home packs lead to many literacy-related benefits. For families, they offer a myriad of ways of exploring and interacting with books. The activities are more inviting than worksheets or memorization tasks, and they respect family’s ability to choose the activities that seem right for their children. Also, as family members spend quality time with their children, they develop new ideas for helping them learn to read and write. For children, the packs offer a fun experience that is a medium for developing both literacy and world knowledge. Children enjoy the intimacy of sharing books with one or two people and benefit from the collaboration that is part of most of the activities. Look for a sense of team to develop as you work with families and children toward a shared goal of developing children’s literacies.

St. Michael’s Preschool with the support of Parents of Preschoolers has a “Take Home Literature Packs” program in progress. Families are able to check out the packs for one week at a time. We are excited about this opportunity for our families to experience books together.

8 Good Things About Bad Times

1. You finally have the time to check out your local museums, historical sites and parks during your staycation.
2. You discover that you’re still killer at Boggle/Scrabble/gin rummy.
3. Rather than wasting time shopping online, you waste time filling your Netflix queue.
4. You’re no longer stressed out about what you don’t have, but feel blessed about what you do have.
5. You realize the generic products really do work just as well as the brand names.
6. Spending less and saving more gives you the feeling of control over your finances.
7. Who needs Starbucks? Folgers is better than you remembered.
8. You actually have a good excuse to invite your girlfriends over for a cheap bottle of wine: Instead of shopping, it’s clothes swap time.

Knights of Columbus – Lenten Fish Fry

Serving up the finest Alaskan Cod, New England Clam Chowder, Baked Potatoes, Cole Slaw, and Baked Beans. A tempting array of desserts and drinks offered by our Lady's Auxiliary.

Please come and join us any Friday between February 19 and March 26 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Look forward to seeing you there!

Reading Connection

Tips for Reading Success

Beginning Edition

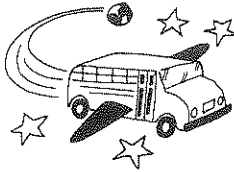
St. Michael's Preschool
Dee Anne Toby, Director

Book Picks

Read-aloud favorites

■ *The Magic School Bus Lost in the Solar System*

Ms. Frizzle blasts her class into the solar system for some out-of-this-world science lessons. One of the Magic School Bus series by Joanna Cole. (Also available in Spanish.)



■ *Doctor De Soto Goes to Africa*

In this tale by William Steig, the famous mouse dentist travels to Africa. But before he can repair the tooth of Mudambo the elephant, an unhappy monkey kidnaps him!



■ *The Whingdingdilly*

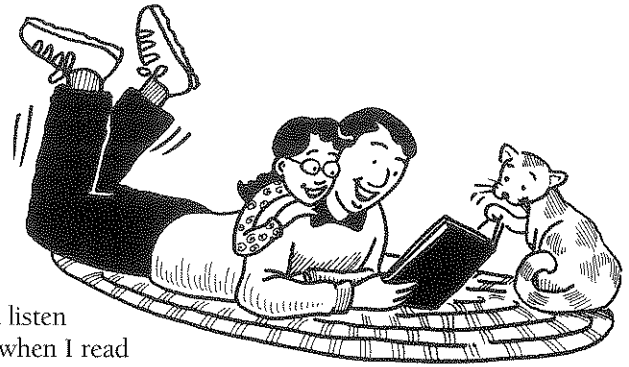
Scamp is bored with his life as a dog. Then Zildy the witch changes him into a Whingdingdilly. Life is anything but boring now—but is Scamp happy? Read this story by Bill Peet to find out.

■ *Babushka's Doll*

"It wasn't that Natasha was a truly naughty child." So begins the story of a little girl who needs some practice learning patience. The lesson begins when Natasha picks up her grandmother's doll. A magical story by Patricia Polacco.



Reading aloud



"I always stumble because I read too fast." "I'm afraid my child won't listen to me." "I was laughed at when I read aloud at school."

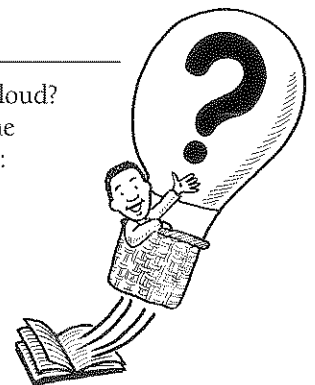
Do you have worries like these when you read aloud? You're not alone. Many parents avoid reading aloud to their kids. However, reading aloud is one of the best ways to help your youngster succeed in school. Keep these tips in mind:

- Everybody makes mistakes. If you make mistakes when reading aloud, your child will learn that it's okay for her to do so, too.
- Practice makes perfect. Find a book that you like and read it aloud by yourself until you feel comfortable.
- Involve your youngster in the story. Have her turn the pages. Or read one line and let her read the next.
- Take your time and don't rush the story. Your child can tell if you're in a hurry. Reading slowly will help you read clearly.
- As you feel more comfortable, try changing your voice to show the characters' feelings—joy, sadness, fear. These variations can make the story more exciting for both of you!
- Remember that you are helping your youngster learn to enjoy reading. Try different types of reading materials, such as comic strips and poetry.
- Above all, try to relax and enjoy the time you're spending with your child. ♥

Understanding stories

Does your child listen actively when you read aloud? It's a key to understanding what's happening in the story. Try these simple tips to build listening skills:

1. Ask your youngster to retell small parts of the story to you. Or ask him questions while you read. *Examples:* "What will happen next?" "Why do you think she did that?" Find the answers to the questions together.
2. After you've read a story together two or three times, skip a word or two. Ask your child to fill in the missing word or words. *Hint:* This works especially well with rhyming stories. ♥



Use what you know

Reading new words

Can your youngster read a word like “supercalifragilisticexpialidocious”? Maybe not! But did you know that your child can use words he already knows to read new words? Here’s how:

■ Start with your youngster’s name. Troy, for example, might have an easier time learning “tr” words such as “train.” You can use the “tr” consonant blend at the



beginning of his name to teach him other blends as well, such as “cr,” “pl,” and “st.”

■ Point out patterns in sight words your child recognizes.

Example: If your youngster knows “they,” he can learn “then,” “this,” and “that.”

“Could,” “would,” and “should” are three common sight words that also share a pattern.

■ Break down syllables in a longer word, such as “yesterday.” Cover the entire word with a small slip of paper. Then, slowly slide the paper to the right to show each syllable one at a time (yes-ter-day). This works especially well for words with several syllables, such as “supercalifragilisticexpialidocious”!♥

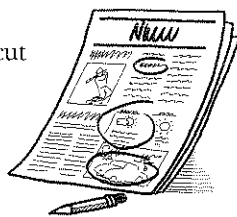
Fun with Words

Newspaper learning

With thousands of words in every issue, newspapers are a great way to build your youngster’s skills. Grab a paper, and try these activities.

Matching game

Have your child cut out several photographs and their captions separately. Mix them up. Matching the captions and the photos will improve her reading comprehension.



Scavenger hunt

List items in the newspaper (car ad, crossword puzzle, weather forecast), and ask your youngster to find and circle each one. She’ll build research skills as she looks through the pages.

ABC order

Together, find the names of 5–10 countries, states, and cities in headlines or stories. Let your child copy each one onto an index card and arrange the cards in alphabetical order. This will help her practice spelling and learn about geography.♥

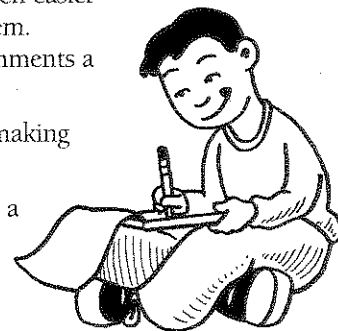
Q&A

Real writing

Q My son doesn’t enjoy writing. He will write a few words, such as his spelling lists. But when it’s time to write a paragraph or a story, he complains. Any ideas?

A Have your son try a few “real” writing tasks. It’s often easier for kids to write about things that have meaning for them. Encourage your child to give those longer writing assignments a try with ideas like these:

- ✎ Have him write what he remembers about the day (making a new friend, playing kickball, having pizza for lunch).
- ✎ Let him choose a cherished toy or animal and write a few sentences describing it. *Example:* “The bunny is soft. He hops fast.”
- ✎ Ask him to write lists of favorite songs, favorite characters in a movie, or ideas for his birthday.♥



Parent to Parent

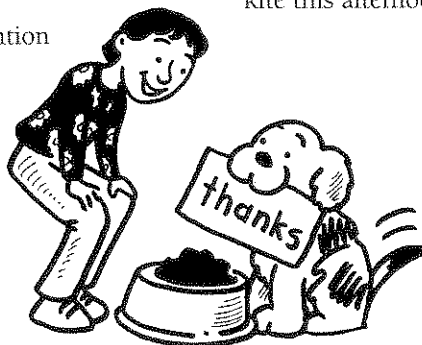
Simple reading practice

I’ve found a way to give my children reading practice—and improve their behavior at the same time. I write short notes to my kids and leave them around the house.

Sometimes I’ll mention my youngsters’ good behavior (“Thanks for helping with the dishes!”) or write reminders (“Please hang me up. Signed, Your towel”). Sometimes the notes are about

not-so-good behavior. (“I was disappointed when you yelled at me. Can we talk about it?”) I make sure to leave notes for treats, too (“Let’s go fly your kite this afternoon!”).

I look for unique places to put the notes, such as on their pillows, in front of the dog’s water bowl, or pinned to the shower curtain. The kids enjoy discovering the notes and reading them aloud.♥



OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ways to promote their children’s reading, writing, and language skills.

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