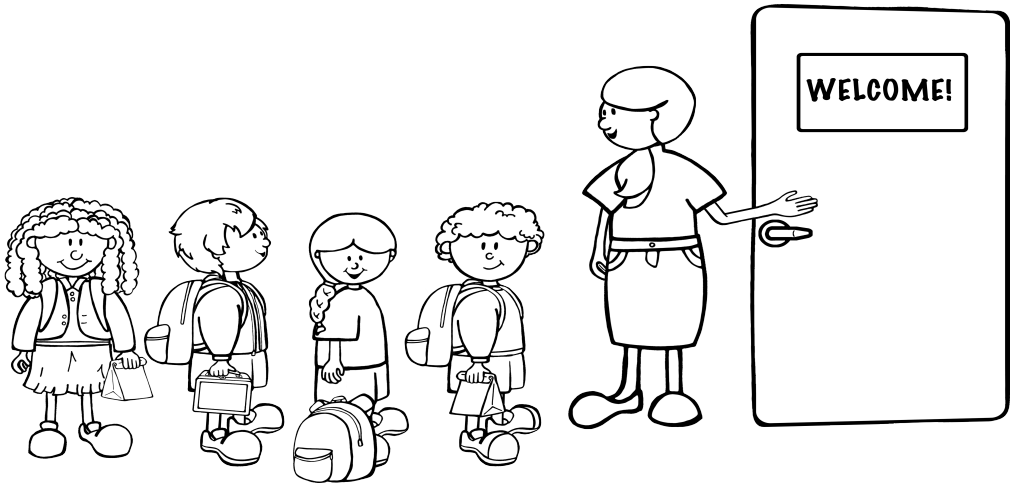
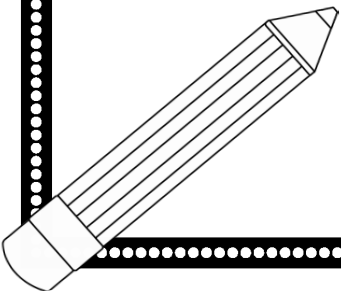
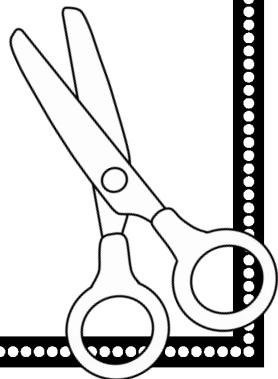


WELCOME TO **2ND GRADE** WITH SR. AMNA



2014-2015 PARENT HANDBOOK
MDQ ACADEMY



Dear Parents,

Assalamualaikum! My name is Sr. Amna Baig and Insha'Allah I will be your child's second grade teacher for the 2014-2015 school year. I am in my 8th year of teaching 2nd grade. I have a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and a Master's degree in Reading Instruction and Curriculum. I look forward to having your son or daughter in my class and I am excited to get to know him or her.

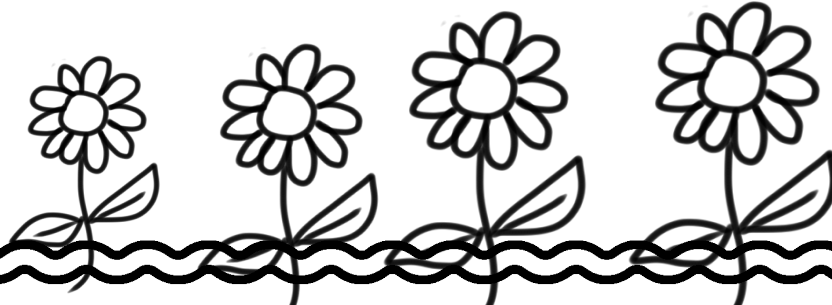
I feel as though an open line of communication between the parent, student, and teacher is the key to promoting an educational climate that is conducive to learning. I am looking forward to working with you and your child. Many of you already know me, and I hope to develop a solid relationship based on trust and reliability as the school year begins. You can help by sending me well-rested children with full tummies and a hug and a kiss still fresh on their minds. :) This sets the stage for a positive day! I also encourage and expect parents to check homework and folders that go home on a daily basis so that there is an understanding of what is being expected.

The beginning of second grade starts off with a review of many of the concepts learned in first grade. If students have a solid grasp of what they already learned, they will be able to understand the new material at a much quicker rate. Second grade is filled with many basic things they learned the year before, but students will learn harder concepts, develop deeper understandings and connections, and become more independent in the completion of their work. They will be taking notes, writing with more depth and length, reading with increased speed and fluency, and participating in more cooperative group work and projects.

Please feel free to contact me at any time if there is a question or situation you would like to discuss. You will receive additional communication through out the year through a variety of ways. PLEASE read through this handbook very carefully, as many routine and procedural guidelines are stated that you will need to know and may be very new to you.

. Jazak Allah Khair!

Sr. Amna



Communication

You can contact me at abaig@mdqacademy.org.

You can also call the school and leave a message. I will call you back as soon as I can.

I have created a class website where you can find information and up to date happenings in our classroom. The address is

www.mdq2ndgraders.weebly.com

I will also be using a free text messaging service called REMINDEr.

I'll be able to send you texts with any important reminders or information I'd like to convey. In order to sign up, you just need to send a text that only says

@8cblc

To this phone number - 6316992603.

You will not be charged to receive these texts and I will never see your phone number. Also, you will not be able to text me back at this number, as it is a one way service.

In addition to these communication methods, a weekly newsletter will also go home highlighting the week's activities as well as any reminders and notes from me.

With the wide array of communication methods offered to you, it is my hope that we are always in touch and that important reminders and details are conveyed. Being in touch in so many ways will help prevent miscommunication Inshallah!

General Information

- ❑ Every day a homework folder will come home. Please check it daily for important notices and information. Empty out any papers which are not needed. Here is an overview of the homework folder:

Your child will be receiving a plastic pronged two pocket folder in the beginning of the year. Inside you will see a pencil pouch and a few plastic sleeves.

The pencil pouch will hold the spelling card ring, math games ring, writing utensil, and a deck of cards. (Please see the homework section for information regarding the above mentioned items). There will be a few extra items in the plastic sleeves.

I will send home a study guide for Science and Social Studies in the beginning of each unit. You can choose to have your child review this information as we go through the chapter in class. You will be notified in advance for any tests and quizzes, but it is a good idea to practice using the study guide and not just review it the day before the test.

- ❑ On Friday, I will send home a Friday folder. It will contain projects and graded work/tests. Please empty the folder. The only items that need to be returned are unit/chapter tests with a parent signature. All the other worksheets and projects should be kept at home. The folder will also contain my weekly newsletter. Read this to see what we did for the week, as well as important requests, reminders, and information for the upcoming week(s).

- ❑ Please make sure to send in healthy snacks with your child for snack time. If the food requires a spoon or fork, send that in! I cannot heat any food in the microwave.
☹ NO FOOD CONTAINING NUTS allowed - this includes NUTELLA!

- ❑ A water bottle is a MUST.

- ❑ Absolutely NO toys (including trading cards and electronics), allowed in school. The item will be taken away for a certain period of time. Sorry!

- ❑ Make sure everything that gets turned in has the student's name on it. It is very difficult and time consuming to try to figure out which paper belongs to which child.

- ❑ Progress Reports will generally be sent home once at the end of each month. They must be signed and returned the following day. These reports keep parents up-to-date on their child's work and will address any concerns the teachers or parents might have.

Classroom Management

I have a few management systems running in the classroom. They may change as the year and the needs of the students progress.

One system is CLASS DOJO. You will receive more information on this, but it is an internet app based program where students will earn or lose points on certain behaviors such as teamwork, on task behavior, Salah time, etc. They will try to reach certain milestones in points for various rewards. Parents will also be able to see the points and reasons for why they were given or taken away when they sign up for Class Dojo. (Individual codes will be sent home).

I also have a behavior clip chart. They start each day in the middle spot that says, "Ready to Learn," and they can move up or down depending on behavior. Moving up the chart will result in hole punches in their behavior card, which when filled, can be turned in for a class coupon. Moving down the chart first lands on a verbal warning, another move down results in privileges taken away, and the last spot is parent contact.

I will have additional whole group reward system in place, as well as a small group reward system. My goal is for students to be kind and respectful towards others. If certain negative behaviors persist, and I have already contacted the parents to try to resolve the issue, the next step may be for administration to get involved. But Inshallah I will try my best to work with the parents in order to help the child succeed and do well!

2nd Grade Homework Routine

Please read this very carefully as the H.W routine is very different this year.

The homework routine for second grade this year may be very different than what students and you are used to! We will use a **TEAM** homework approach. Each week, your child will have a list of homework options. These items will be selected to help your child master basic skills with fluency. Each activity completed will earn your child one star. There may be additional activities listed for those students who need, or like, an extra challenge! The more activities completed, the more stars earned. At the end of the week, your child will need to return the list of homework options with his/her stars totaled and a parent signature. As a class, we will add the stars together to get our class TEAM total to see if students have earned a reward. The reward will consist of minutes of fun time or activity. *The homework log MUST be signed and returned on Friday in order for the star points to count.* Signed homework logs shown with an appropriate amount of effort will count towards a homework effort grade, not the individual assignments themselves.

100-150 stars = 10 minutes of fun time.

151-200 stars = 13 minutes of fun time.

201+ stars = 15 minutes of fun time.

Above, I mentioned that the homework assignments are options. So yes, that means that they are not mandatory. I will not be collecting or checking any math, spelling, reading, etc.; homework. They are routine homework assignments that will be given each week. Students are encouraged to do how ever much homework they feel they need to learn a skill. But they cannot do this alone. This is where YOU, the parent, comes in. This year will consist of a highly engaged parent-child-school relationship. I need YOU to help your children succeed as well. If you see a specific area your child is struggling in, feel free to let me know and we can work on it in class.

Let's get back to the stars and totaling of homework points. Students are encouraged to do as much of the homework as they can or need to acquire the skill. When I add up all the homework points, and one or two students consistently do not do any homework or do not send in the homework log, then the class won't earn the whole group reward. It is my hope that soon, these one or two students will learn that they need to pull their weight in order to help the class. TEAM homework is a concept that EVERY student will work together in the class to reach a weekly goal. Assignments are optional and parents and students will work together to choose the tasks they want to complete for the week. Students who consistently work hard to do the homework that is necessary for them to learn, will be able to grasp concepts in class better.

Homework Options Descriptions

Reading: There will be no reading log this year. Students should be encouraged to develop a love of reading and it is not always necessary to document it with minutes read and a parent signature. This option will be on the homework log daily and students should try to read as much as they can. It is a proven fact that the more students read on a daily basis, the higher their rate of fluency, accuracy, and comprehension is. Whenever students read for the day, they should put a star or check mark next to that option the weekly H.W. log. Re-reading the same book also helps build fluency.

Math: Math homework is going to be tons of fun this year! Instead of the traditional workbook worksheets to complete, students will get to PLAY GAMES to learn and solidify basic fact concepts and relationships. Students will learn a new game every week that involves a deck of cards. Every time a new game is introduced, a card with directions for that game will be sent home on a metal ring. Students will have a metal ring in their homework pouch on which game cards will be added. They will also receive a deck of cards that should always stay safe in the homework pouch. These items will not be replaced if lost. On the homework log, there will be an option to play one or more of the games students have learned. **THEY WILL NEED YOUR HELP** to play this game. It is a family activity! The more you play, the better their basic skill knowledge becomes. If you play a math game, put a star or checkmark next to that option on the log for the specific day.

Note: I will still send home a packet of the math homework book worksheets at the beginning of each chapter. This is intended for extra practice should you choose to use them to review concepts specific to the chapter. I will not collect or grade these, but they can be used for reinforcement at home or to study before a test.

Spelling: Spelling will be differentiated this year to suit student needs and development. Each Monday, students will be given a pretest on the phonics skill of the week which will determine if they stay on that list or receive a challenge list with the same phonics skill but more difficult words.

There will be two lists - 10 words for List A and 10 words for List B (challenge list). There will also be a set of 5 words that will be used for both lists, making a total of 15 words a week.

In the homework folder, in one of the plastic sleeves, you will find a spelling menu of choices. Again, this assignment is optional even though it is listed for every day of the week. Some students may only need to do one spelling activity that week and they will memorize the pattern and words. Some students may need to work on spelling all four days. Again, it is up to you and your child to determine how much he/she needs to practice the spelling words.

Similar to the metal ring the math games will come on, a card with the spelling words of the week (with your child's list - List A or List B highlighted), will be attached to a metal ring weekly. This way, students will always have a ring with all their old words on it too, which will be helpful when we do review spelling tests of several of the past lists. **ALWAYS KEEP THIS SPELLIST LIST RING IN THE HOMEWORK FOLDER POUCH** so it can stay safe throughout the year. It will be not replaced if lost. Spelling homework can be completed in the homework notebook, but again, I will not be checking or collecting this, so the notebook can always stay home.

Fluency: On Monday, I will send home a one minute timed fluency and comprehension sheet. An adult needs to set a timer to **ONE MINUTE**. As the child reads, underline any incorrect words. The child should stop reading after one minute. Put a line after the last word that was read before the minute was over. On the right hand side of the page, there are numbers next to each line. That tells how many words the passage has up to the end of that line. From this, you can determine how many words your child read in one minute. On the bottom, record the total number of words read, the number of mistakes made, subtract those two numbers, and write the total number of words for minute in the last slot. Doing this daily will help build your child's fluency. The more they read the same story and see the same words, the more they will increase their accuracy and fluency. On the back side of the reading are comprehension questions for the story. Whenever you work with your child to do this fluency read, place a star or check mark next to the option for the specific day.

Extras: There may additional tasks provided on the homework sheet that students can do in case they want to do more homework or earn more stars! These are enrichment activities to enhance skills we are learning in class.

Please note!

***Occasionally there will be **MANDATORY** assignments listed. These can include tasks such as projects or special Science or S.S. assignments. If they are mandatory, it will be indicated. Please also note that Quran, Arabic, and Islamic Studies do not count for this homework routine and homework for those classes should be done according to the teachers' instructions.

What is the benefit in this system?

- Parents and children are both involved in successful completion of homework
- There is less pressure
- If you get very busy one day, as we all do, it is okay to not complete an assignment for the day. Just make sure to make up for it the next day so you can help your class earn stars and reward time!
- Homework is fine tuned to the individual needs of your child. If in the future, I see the need to set a particular number of assignments for individual students that need the extra push, then that will be done.
- Students can develop a love for reading and math in an organic and authentic way.

Love,
Your 2nd Grade Teachers