

Dear Parents:

I am very pleased to inform you that this year our class will use the dynamic Word Web Vocabulary — not a new subject being added to our already filled curriculum but one that will integrate and reinforce the contents of our language arts course of study. This program is a product that meets a critical need in our education plan. I am sure that you will find that it will awaken not only our students but you, as well, to the wonderful world of words!

Word Web Vocabulary may appear confusing to you until you become familiar with it, which is why I am sending you this letter. The program's 36 lessons correspond to the length of our school year. Each lesson has a web of words related to just one root, prefix or suffix of either Greek or Latin origin, so that students see the relationship of such a group of words to each other. Every word is color- and shape-coded to designate beginner, intermediate, advanced and challenging and a few stages in between, so that all the students in our classroom will be able to use it at the same time.

As I am sure you already know, it is very difficult to design a lesson that meets the needs of all the children, which is one reason that we chose Word Web. Although we may not hold a student responsible for learning the meaning of some of the words, during our general classroom discussions, every child will be exposed to all of them and will certainly learn from that.

Not only do I plan to work with all students and their parents to decide the best level at which each student should work, but together we will make the decision as to the number of sentences each should write and the number of Think Links each should answer, a determination that may change as the year progresses. One of the strengths of Word Web is its built-in plan of continuous review that requires students to incorporate vocabulary words from previous weeks in the current week's sentences. It is possible that some students may object to the sentence writing, but this is a much-needed discipline, as well as an on-going opportunity to apply all skills learned in our language arts lessons.

Each week, in addition to the words joined by a web, there are three more words designated for the entire class: the Real World Word and the Wicked Word of the Week, words that all students will enjoy learning and which will augment their general vocabulary. These are built in to the program, but I expect to add a word each week from the students' science and social studies classes. In addition to being graphically-rich, Word Web's special features — Cool Connections, Bonus Blasts, Literary Links, Awesome Associations — enhance every lesson.

Throughout each lesson, Think Links ask questions of students, most of which take a bit of research to answer. This is one of the ways that Word Web Vocabulary encourages students to take an active - not passive - role in the learning process. It enables students to utilize words with imagination, purpose and creativity. I am sure that you will find it as intriguing and energizing as I do.

Sincerely,