

Georgia Preschool Association

The President's Corner Nancy Bulger

Fall 2017

Happy 60th Anniversary To Us!

"Teachers who love to teach teach children who love to learn."
~author unknown

Hello everyone!
I hope you and your students are enjoying some glorious fall days! Many of you were able to attend one of the several district training events offered around the state this past summer and fall, with more yet to come (check out the GPA website). We are very excited to be celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Georgia Preschool Association with you, so mark your calendars for March 2-3, 2018, as we present the annual conference with the theme of "Like a Diamond in the Sky."

The GPA Board of Directors has spent several meetings planning for our 60th Anniversary Annual Conference, and it promises to be fun and exciting, with over 20 workshops available each day. Be sure to attend Friday morning, as our

keynote session speaker is Steve Spangler of Steve Spangler Science. Steve Spangler is a celebrity teacher, science toy designer, author and an Emmy award-winning television personality, and I can't wait to see what experiments my teaching staff bring back to school! This conference will be a gem (pun intended)! Don't miss it!



<https://stevespangler.com/>

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Copied with permission from a fellow educator. She is an 8th grade teacher....

"The weather was dreary and my spirit felt that way, too. Now fast forward to the start of 6th period with a bunch of 8th graders. We were all ready to just go home and "he" was late.

Where had he been? Talking to his girlfriend. You've got to be kidding me!?!? We do stations in my class, and I was waiting for him to rotate to my small group for a little pep talk. (Little did I know how much I really had been waiting for him.)

His small group finally arrived... 4 very cool 8th grade boys. Before I could even say, "Open your books," he asked if he could share something. My answer, "Always."

He proceeded to share that he will

not be at school tomorrow because he will be in court. He's been in foster care for one year and tomorrow a judge will decide to terminate his parents' rights or prolong the inevitable a few more months. He shared how much he has prayed about his situation and that he believes terminating their rights is the correct choice. He shared how much he has loved and appreciated his foster family and how God placed him in exactly the right spot. He wants to be a ward of the state and can't wait to see what God has planned for his life. He just knows tomorrow is going to guide him towards one day attending college and helping others. He shared a few more details and ended with, "I'm sorry I was late. I just had to hear my girlfriend say that she loved me. Before tomorrow, I needed to know that someone loved ME."

GULP!!! It's not often that I'm left speechless. His confidence, openness, and faith revived my weathered spirit. His appreciation for what most take for granted was heartwarming. The way his buddies showed compassion and offered encouragement was refreshing.

Today's small group lesson plan was to cover main idea. I had no way of knowing that I would not be the teacher. His lesson was real. It was engaging, and we all walked away a better person after sitting in his class. My goodness, I LOVE my job!!!!!!"

One of the many things I love about my job in education is when the child becomes the teacher. We can learn so much if we take the time to listen and learn. Thank you Amy for this reminder!

District News

District 4 Tonie Sanders

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The 2017 District 4 Training event was held on August 5th at Saint Philip AME Church in Decatur. Over 170 teachers gathered for an exciting day of great workshops and fellowship with staff members from over 23 schools in the district.

Workshop presenters Maria Abercrombie, Cheryl Turner and Kim Martin provided 6 hours of excellent state approved training.

Door prizes were provided by School Box. Our district members thank Georgia Preschool Association for providing this event in our area.

In response to some of the Directors in the district, we are planning a Director's event on personnel and school handbooks to tentatively take place on January 22, 2018. The event will earn the participants 4 hours of state

approved training. If you are a director, please send me your e-mail address to receive more information. We wish all our district schools a wonderful new school year filled with joy.



The start of a new school year is exciting and invigorating! The year lies before us and we think about the children we will meet and the ways that we can help them to grow and learn. We have attended workshops that provided us with many new ideas. We've set up the room, prepared materials, made birthday displays, cut out nametags, talked to the parents and finally, the children arrive! We keep busy planning themes, activities and experiences for the children - apples, community helpers,

pumpkins, new friends...but wait! Have we ever stopped to ask the children what they think about all of this? If so, District 5 is sponsoring a workshop that might interest you!

If Preschoolers Had a Top Ten List, What Would They Tell Their Teachers? Speaker Kathy Lee will answer that questions in a two hour workshop, from 10 am to 12 noon on Saturday, **November 11th** at St. Peter Chanel Preschool in Roswell, GA. Preschoolers everywhere are crying out to be heard by their

teachers! Come learn how to best meet the developmental needs of preschoolers through the environment and appropriate activities.

Two hours of training credit will be given. Registration information was emailed to all GPA members in mid-September or you can email Barb Gordon at mno@stpeterchanel.org for more information.

District 6 Diane Lamb

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Happy Fall Y'all!

Hopefully, everyone's year is off to a good start and the children and staff have settled into a routine. This is a wonderful time of year with the cooler nights (finally) and the leaves are beginning to turn colors. There are so many activities that can be done this time of year. The staff at Griffin Frist Baptist just completed "Fall Family Night". This year we incorporated a little talent show for each age level. When you let children perform the family and friends turn out. This was a western theme since that was the theme for our Scholastic Book Fair. We had a BBQ dinner which parents purchased tickets. We had over 250 folks attend. We also offered a family picture session. Our Book Fair sold over \$2200 of books which gives us \$900 Scholastic dollars to spend. This involved all the teachers dressing in western wear and encouraging the children to also dress in western wear. It was a fun evening for everyone and gave the parents, grandparents and friends a chance to visit the classroom and see some of what goes on

at school. Thank you Lynn Pitts for organizing this huge event.

I do want to thank everyone who attended the Georgia Preschool Association meeting at Griffin First Baptist Weekday this year. Dana Hernandez from Brain Balance started the day with a very informative session about ADD, ADHD, Autism, Dyslexia and other neurological disorders. We had over 200 participants who seemed to have fun learning new things that could be incorporated into their classrooms. We had lots of laughter and enjoyed seeing old friends and making new friends. This is a great way to network and you can talk with others doing the same thing you are doing. We have set the date for next year's GPA District 6 training. It will be **JULY 18, 2018**. So go ahead and mark your calendars and plan on joining us at Griffin First Baptist Weekday.

The Georgia Preschool Annual Conference will be MARCH 2 and 3, 2018 at Cobb Galleria. Make sure you plan on attending this awesome conference. A little secret - Steve

Spangler will be the keynote speaker. There will be many workshops offered that will be of interest to everyone. We also have many vendors for shopping and of course the "silent auction" where one person's trash is another person's treasure. Our school makes a field trip of this conference by going on Thursday afternoon and staying until after the Saturday sessions. You can use this time together as team building and the staff getting to know each other better.

In District 6 we have a Southern Crescent Preschool Collaborative group that meets quarterly. If you are interested in joining, please let me know. Thank you Debby Daniel-Bryant of Griffin First United Methodist who has spearheaded this for District 6.

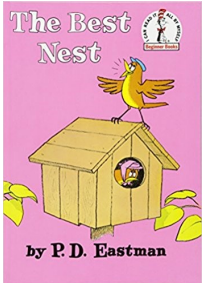
Also, if there is anything that I can help you with at your school or if you want to visit our school or if you need more information about GPA, feel free to contact me. You can email me or my office phone number is 770 228-7880.



Having fun with STEM

Many of us think Science, Technology, Engineering and Math are just a little too serious for preschool. We are missing some fun opportunities! These activities go on in preschool classes every day and, with a little tweaking, teachers can show that they are helping students think creatively and solve problems.

One of the easiest ways to approach STEM skills is to start with a story. Usually the characters encounter some kind of problem. Teachers can help children identify the problem and design a solution. For example, in The Best Nest,

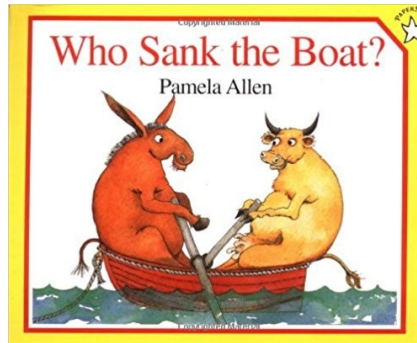


has difficulty finding the right site and good building materials for their nest. Frequently, teachers follow-up this story with a nest building opportunity as a hands-on project. With a

little discussion, the children can evaluate the pros and cons of natural building materials like twigs, mud and leaves as construction

materials. While building a nest, they can evaluate how to make it strong and sturdy and test its stability by adding some artificial eggs. Sharing their ideas with the teacher and peers is an opportunity to use some of the new vocabulary they may have learned.

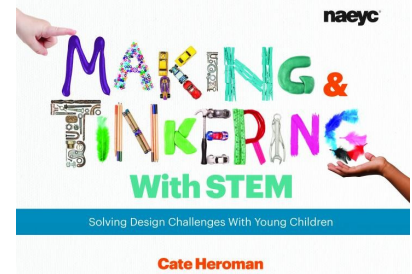
In a recent staff meeting at St. Andrew, teachers explored some design challenges for boat building after reading Who Sank the Boat?



They explored some engineering concepts like balance, estimation, counting, water displacement, size, or weight and the advantages and disadvantages of foil, Legos, craft sticks, and tape as potential building materials. Part of the fun was actually evaluating how many plastic

farm animals could fit in the various boats that teams built. After some careful boat construction, the winning team fit over 100 animals in a foil boat!

For additional ideas for following up with this type of activity, check out Making & Tinkering with STEM, by



Cate Heroman and find great ideas for using story characters to explore STEM.

GPA Past Presidents to be honored at 60th Anniversary

The Georgia Preschool Executive Board
 In celebration of GPA's 60th anniversary
 Invites their past presidents to join them
 for dinner on Thursday, March 1, 2018
 6:00 p.m. at Cobb Galleria Embassy Suites Hotel
 You are invited to be our guest overnight at the hotel
 and join us on Friday, March 2nd
 to be celebrated at the Keynote session.

Please RSVP to lclifford@georgiapreschool.org

If you are a past president or know contact information for one of our past presidents please email lclifford@georgiapreschool.org or call Louise at 404-636-4811.

A Word About **GEEARS**: Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students

Why the First 2,000 Days?

"There are only 2,000 days between the time a baby is born and when he or she will begin kindergarten. During that time brain architecture is forming, creating either a strong or weak foundation for all future learning. Child development is a

dynamic, interactive process that is not predetermined. It occurs in the context of experiences and environments. Harvard University neuroscientist Jack Shonkoff puts it this way, "brains are built not born."

GEEARS is leading a statewide public awareness campaign to spread the message about the importance of a child's first 2,000 days of life, and the Georgia

Preschool Association is proud to be a supporter. To learn more about this important campaign to inform your teachers, parents and families, go to <http://getgeorgiareading.org/>



GET GEORGIA
READING

CAMPAIGN FOR GRADE LEVEL READING

PARTNER

First TM
2000   
DAYS
 Early Investment **DAYS**
 A LIFETIME OF RESULTS


CAMPAIGN LEADER
 #GAFirst2KDays



LANGUAGE
NUTRITION



ACCESS



POSITIVE
LEARNING
CLIMATE



TEACHER
PREPARATION

"Like a Diamond in the Sky: Celebrating 60 Years of Georgia Preschool Excellence."

Georgia Preschool Association 2018 Annual Conference will be our 60th year for Georgia Preschool to be in existence! For 60 years we have provided quality workshops for the education of teachers across the state of Georgia. We are proud to reach this milestone and we hope that you will join with us as we celebrate "Like a Diamond in the Sky: Celebrating 60 Years of Georgia Preschool Excellence."

Is science one of your weak points? If so, you will not want to miss the Georgia Preschool Association 2018 Conference, as it proves to be enlightening in getting your classroom full of science activities and in helping you get excited about fun science you can do with younger children. We are thrilled to announce that Steve Spangler, well known science expert seen many

times on TV, will be joining us for our keynote session this year. I'm sure he will thrill us with all his fun antics and activities! Don't miss this chance to see Steve in person!

Of course, there are many other wonderful workshops to be presented as well this year! Look for many things that will help you in the classroom and many ways for you to network with other preschool teachers who love doing the same thing you do!

Topics include:

- GELDS: What's Hot What's Not
- What to do Instead of Crafts
- A Trip to Toddler Town
- STEM in the Early Childhood Classroom
- When Your Classroom Angels Forget Their Halos

- Handling Emergencies
- Developmental Milestones
- Questions are the Answer
- Constructing Circle Time
- The Language of Math
- Fine Motor Skills
- Boxes and Bowls on Buckets: Classroom Organization
- Critical Conversations with Parents Speak Sing Move and Play
- Classroom Management Through Music
- The Four C's of Helping Children Manage Upsets
- Women's Self Defense
- SightWords.com

Save the Date!

Georgia Preschool Association Annual Conference

March 2 and 3, 2018

Cobb Galleria Centre

Is Chocolate in Your Future?

Janis Smith

Many hands are needed to make GPA's Winter Conference successful. Some of the most important are our workshop hostesses who greet our presenters, help with anything they need and give out those all-important stickers at the door.

With over 80 sessions we need many helping hands. You can sign up for workshops you are planning to attend and get a reserved seat. We ask you to let us know what you

thought of the speaker so that we know whether or not to invite them back. When you turn in your evaluation there is a CHOCOLATE reward!

If you would like to be a hostess, just let me know and I'll add your name to the list!

See you in 2018!

Janis Smith

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GPA Conference Silent Auction



GPA Conference Exhibit Hall

Karen Coffeen

We are looking forward to another great conference on March 2nd and 3rd!

A part of that wonderful experience is the Exhibit Hall (don't we all love to shop?). We are inviting the exhibitors back from last year, some from previous years, and some new companies. We have easily accessible space again this year plus time between classes and at lunch for you to shop.

We'll be bringing back our fun Bingo so that you can win a prize just for visiting the vendors. A lot of the prizes are donated by the vendors,

so you'll get a useful or a fun prize—it's your choice! You can fill out as many Bingo cards as you want—the more you fill out the better your chance of winning a prize.

We would also like your input. If you would like to be an exhibitor, know of someone else who would, or remember a company that has not been there for awhile; please contact me as soon as possible:

Karen Coffeen

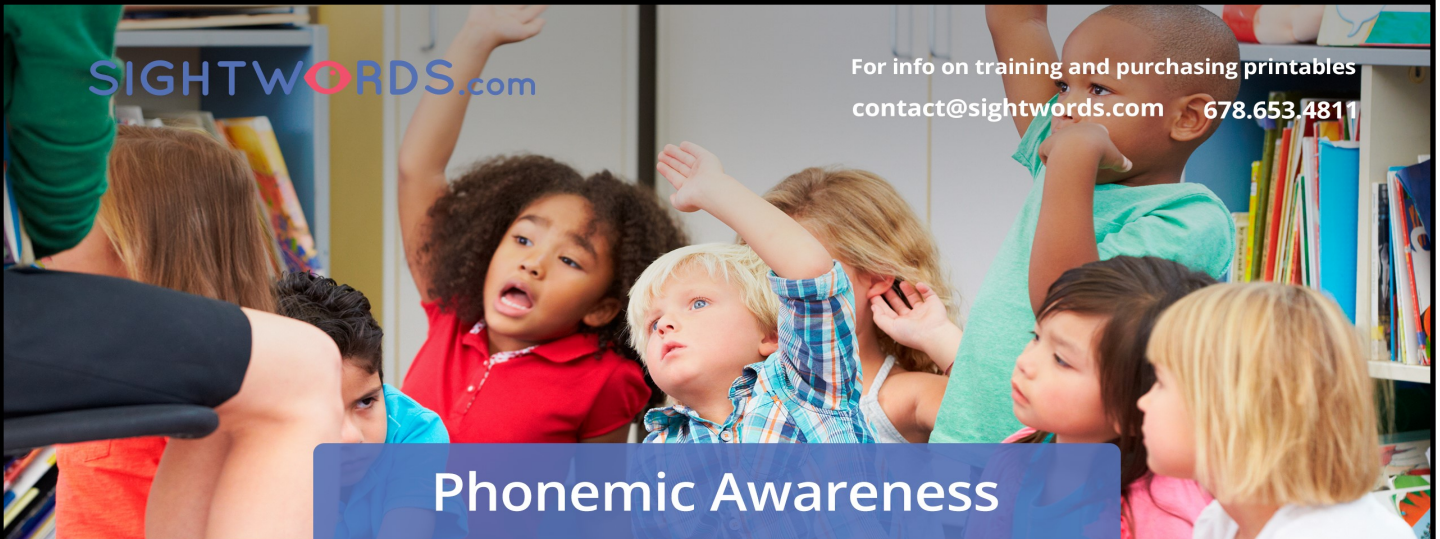
kcoffeen@georgiapreschool.org

or

770-590-0982.

You can also check the GPA website (www.georgiapreschool.org) for more conference and vendor information.

I'm looking forward to seeing you at the conference!



SIGHTWORDS.com

For info on training and purchasing printables
contact@sightwords.com 678.653.4811

Phonemic Awareness

Phonemic Awareness is the ability to think about and play with the sounds (phonemes) in words. It is a top predictor of a child's success — or failure — in learning to read.

The Phonemic Awareness curriculum at SightWords.com — for children 3 to 5 years old — is research-based, effective, and free. This is the tool parents and teachers need to give children a solid foundation in this crucial pre-reading skill.



110

carefully sequenced activities
covering the full scope of Phonological
and Phonemic Awareness skills

Every activity includes:

- All materials as free downloadable PDFs
- How-to video
- Instructions for one-on-one and small groups
- Cross-reference to GELDS and Kindergarten Performance Standards
- Guides for pacing and fast-tracking



Sponsored by the Georgia Preschool Association
with grant support from the Callaway Foundation



TRINITY
SCHOOL



Visit sightwords.com/phonemic-awareness/ today!