



VFES MONTHLY REPORT

January 2013–Team Updates

Kindergarten:

The kindergarten classrooms had a dreamy January with our Sweet Dreams theme. The children listened to many stories related to this theme. We made "Dream Pillows" which involved each student drawing a picture of something that would help them have happy dreams then parents helped us iron these pictures onto a pillow case. The children were amazed by the outcome and have reported having very happy dreams!

In Social Studies we listened to the story "Martin's Big Words" and came up with our own dreams about helping our world, community or school.

We concluded our formal study of the alphabet with a small alphabet party. The students drew pictures and wrote words that begin with each letter then sang some alphabet songs.

We had a wonderful night at the Kindergarten Math Night. Thanks to the Elementary School Math specialists for organizing this once again. The students and parents took home many different ideas on how to practice math skills at home.

We ended the month with our trip to the Eastern University Planetarium where we got to see a giant telescope and had a wonderful presentation on the "night sky".

First Grade:

Happy 2013! First grade returned from Winter Break with a Japanese Round Robin. During this time, first graders traveled to each first grade classroom to learn about Japan and the Japanese culture. It was the perfect way to begin our new year in first grade. Our unit on Japan comes to an end this month. The next stop isAfrica!

The winter weather was the topic of many writing projects and lessons as we discussed snowmen, snow, winter animals and winter clothing throughout the month.

In Science, the first grade studied magnets for the month of January. The children explored with magnets and discovered amazing magnetic facts. Our study of the rainforest followed our study of magnets. The Philadelphia Zoo visited our school with a "Zoo on Wheels" program. The children had a great time meeting and learning about various rainforest animals. Thank you to the PTO for this fabulous program. During this assembly, we also presented the zoo with the money we raised from our pretzel sale. The zoo was thankful to receive \$308.65. With that money, our first graders adopted a rainforest jaguar. The children were excited to know that they are helping keep a rainforest animal healthy!

First graders love birthdays. In January, we celebrated Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday by reading books and writing about their own dreams for our world. First graders may be little, but their dreams are big!

Second graders began the new year writing New Year resolutions or describing what they were looking forward to doing and learning in 2013. We have many exciting activities and learning ahead of us from now until the end of school!

In Science, we have been learning how to separate mixtures of two solids and a liquid and a solid. We also separated colors in permanent markers. Later, students had to apply techniques learned during the Changes unit to discover a "mystery mixture". Properties of matter have also been discussed, as well as what causes matter to change. Second graders have learned the words: suspension, solution, mixture and separate.

February first brings the culmination of our study of ancient China. Thanks to the PTO and many volunteers, we will enjoy a Chinese Round Robin with fun and informative activities. Lessons in this Social Studies unit have included: the Great Wall; Dynasties; How Silk is Made; Tangrams; Counting in Chinese: The Legend of Fa Mulan, and many wonderful literature selections. We will hate to leave China, but look forward to learning about the exploration of North America.

This month, the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Junior was also studied. Teachers shared a biography of his life and students reflected on ways they personally can make a difference in their worlds. We were also able to watch a part of the inauguration of President Obama. Valentine's Day, with parties and cards, will soon be here! How quickly the year is going!

Third Grade:

Third grade has been busy this month with many fun and exciting activities. On January 17th Betsy Ross came for an assembly to talk about our nation's flag. This assembly kicked-off our study of famous Pennsylvanians in Social Studies. Students will be spending the next five weeks researching and writing speeches based upon a famous Pennsylvanian past or present. Students will present their speeches on Thursday, February 21st! This event is always one of the highlights of our third grade curriculum! All third grade parents are invited to see their child on the 21st!

Third grade students have also been finishing our Land and Water Unit in Science. We will be moving onto Chemical testing in February! In Global Social Studies students finished learning about Mexico and began studying our neighbor to the north, Canada. Students are learning about the ten provinces and three territories that make up Canada.

In core, students are continuing to progress through our Reading Theme Units. We are currently working on Unit 7, Forces of Nature. Through every unit we do whole group and small group instruction to help facilitate reading fundamentals and new skills. Our students are working hard, and it is fun to watch them develop over the course of the year.

We look forward to February and all the exciting activities that will be going on at V.F.E.!

Fourth Grade:

The month of January went by very fast, and we had many wonderful learning experiences. When you walk down the halls of the Fourth Grade, please take time to read the narrative stories students wrote about snow people. You will also find "snowflakes" falling to the ground with wonderful poetry written on them.

We started a new unit in Science, and we are learning about how electric circuits work, how electricity is produced, how to be safe when dealing with electricity, and how to conserve electricity.

P.A.L. (Personal Achievement in Learning) has started, and we are excited to learn about the wonderful topics the students are researching over the next four to five weeks.

The Fourth Grade would like to thank the PTO and the Cultural Arts Committee for having Kit's Interactive Theater visit us. We had a great time being part of her performance and learning many new and interesting facts about the causes of the American Revolutionary War.

Physical Education

We have had a great start to the new year in Physical Education class!

Kindergarteners continue to work on spatial awareness, locomotor skills and are being introduced to stick handling skills. First and second graders have been working on fitness, teamwork, basic game strategies and stick handling games. Students in third and fourth grade have worked on fitness exercises, teamwork, cooperation, social skills/responsibilities and more advanced game concepts.

All grades learned about dance and what a fun exercise it is. All parents are encouraged to play games with their children that involve throwing, catching, and kicking a variety of balls. 3rd and 4th graders will also be taking their Fitnessgram assessments in the upcoming months. The scores and reports will be sent home to parents so they can discuss the importance of having good overall fitness for the student's lifetime.

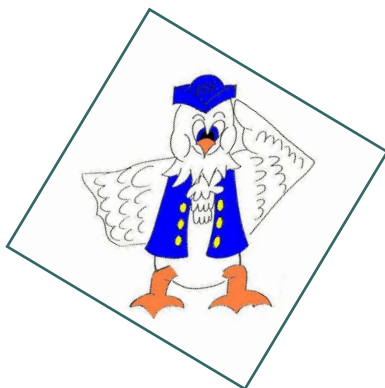
Just another reminder - please don't forget to send your child to school with sneakers on PE days so that they can participate. If you are buying sneakers at some point this year please try and buy sneakers that don't leave skid marks. Please understand that winter boots, UGG type boots are not safe in Physical Education class. For safety reasons students need to wear sneakers that can be laced up or velcroed. The strap that gets tightened with a toggle – does not count! Please only buy regular old sneakers – the kind you wore when you were growing up.

Kindergarten Math Night:

Kindergarteners and their parents were invited to the Tredyfrin/Easttown School District 3rd Annual Kindergarten Math Night on January 29th. Students and parents were able to roam the open-house style event and participate in games and activities appropriate for kindergarten-aged children.

Students made shapes out of play dough, and helped to build a living graph. They made necklaces out of Fruit Loops that reflected their own special pattern. There were games to play and activities on lap top computers. Students went fishing for numbers and wrote numerals in shaving cream (always a favorite station!).

There were snacks and lots of conversation about all things mathematical. I think it is safe to say a fun time was had by all; students, parents and teachers!



February Events

- 2/1 2nd Gr Chinese Red Robin
- 2/4 Kindergarten Registration
- 2/5 Kindergarten Registration
Read for Ronald Assembly
- 2/8 1st Gr Rainforest Painting
PTO Pizza Bingo—CHS
- 2/12 1st Gr—100th DAY
- 2/13 Kindergarten Valentine
Program
- 2/14 Happy Valentine's Day
1st Gr—PJ Brunch
- 2/15 Staff In-Service Day
No Students
- 2/18 No School
- 2/19 1st Gr—African American
History Month Round Robin
- 2/20 4th Gr to VFMS Play
- 2/21 3rd Gr—Famous Pennsylvanians
- 2/25 1st Gr—Dental Hygienist
- 2/27 Half Day School Gr 1-4
No Kindergarten
Parent-Teacher Conferences
- 2/28 Half Day School Gr 1-4
No Kindergarten
Parent-Teacher Conferences