

Valley Forge Elementary—March 2014—Team Updates

Kindergarten:



It was wonderful to have a full month of school in March. In celebration of Dr. Seuss' birthday we listened to and read many of his rhythmic stories. Our literacy stations were full of Dr. Seuss rhymes and word games. The Leprechaun visited our classrooms and in some cases, created some mischief in different ways. We tried many different green foods in honor of our "green day". The children worked on their writing skills to write about a leprechaun.

We began our Pet unit and learned about different pets and brainstormed facts about each pet. We had many discussions about facts verses opinions. Money and counting to 100 by 2's, 5's and 10's kept us busy during math. Finally in Science, we learned about animals in winter and landforms such as mountains, valleys, rivers, lakes, and plains. To demonstrate our understanding of these concepts we created our own landforms using playdough.

First Grade:

Happy Spring! Whether March came in like a lion and will go out like a lamb is yet to be determined but one thing is for sure . . . March flew by!

The month began with a celebration of Dr. Seuss' birthday. The children had a wonderful time listening to many Dr. Seuss books and creating projects that coincided with the stories. Dr. Seuss is a favorite for children of all ages!

In Social Studies, the children have "traveled" to Africa. They are having a great time visiting the land, learning about the culture, and listening to African literature.

In Science, we were finally able to paint the rainforest. Once the weather cooperated, we were off and painting! They look amazing! Please stop by and visit our tropical hallway as we continue to add more details with each lesson! Thank you to all of our volunteers who helped make this day possible!



One of March's highlights was our Green Day. The children were encouraged to wear green and bring in a green, healthy snack to share with the class. The teachers included green activities in the day's instruction. By the end of the day, some children even thought they spotted a leprechaun or two! Thank you for sending in a green snack to share!

Hopefully, April will bring us very few showers and plenty of May flowers!

Second Grade:



March has been a busy and exciting month in the second grade! We began the month with a celebration of Dr. Seuss's birthday. Students learned about his life, his many varied books, and his style of writing. Students made a variety of crafts, including hats. Some students composed their own "Green Eggs and Ham" type poems. To read them made us laugh!

Our science unit is Soils. Students are investigating three soil parts: sand, clay, and humus. As part of our study, we have created a compost bin with the addition of worms. We will compare what happens in the bin to a control compost without worms.

We have begun studying the exploration of the Americas in Social Studies. Ask a second grader to tell you who "discovered" America! It may not be the answer you expect!

We ended the month with a great trip to The Franklin Institute. We all had a fantastic time exploring the hands-on exhibits. The visit concluded with a very exciting (judging by all the "ooohs!" and "ahhs!") show in the planetarium. Thanks to all the parent volunteers who chaperoned. We couldn't go on these adventures without you!

Spring has been a long time coming but now that it is here, we have so much to look forward to! We will keep you posted on our April happenings!

Third Grade:



This month Valley Forge third graders have been busy preparing for the PSSA tests. Since 3rd grade is the first year students take the PSSAs, we helped them by teaching test-taking strategies and reviewing the type of material that will be on the test. We are confident our students will do well and have been proud of their effort throughout the month.

Students have also been busy testing mystery chemicals in Science. They mixed liquids and solids to form chemical reactions and recorded their data in an observation packet. Students have really enjoyed this unit and are learning more and more about ways scientists test and gather information.

In Social Studies, we are continuing to learn about Pennsylvania. This month students received an assignment where they will research and learn about a famous Pennsylvanian. Then on May 1st, students will dress up as their Pennsylvanian and share a speech as this person to their classmates. We know our kids are excited about this project and we can't wait to see all the hard work they put into it!

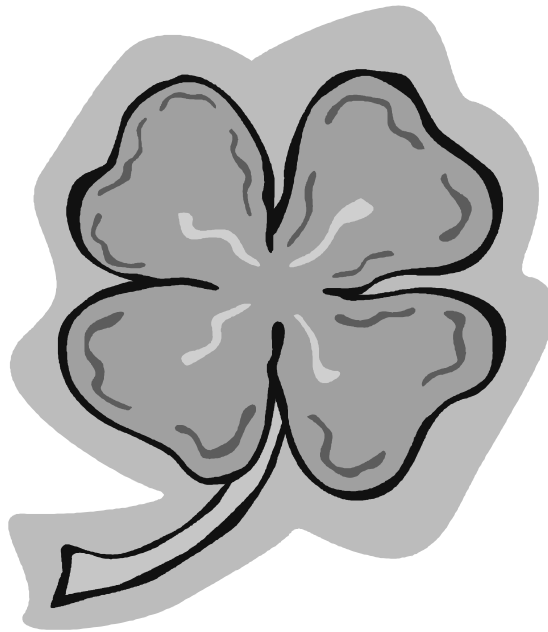
April will be busy as kids continue to work on reading and writing themes and prepare for Spring Break. We look forward to warmer weather and exciting learning opportunities for our students!

The month of March flew pass us very quickly and we had a wonderful time learning and having some fun.

We would like to thank Mr. Gibson and Ms. Simmoneau for inviting the 4th grade to Valley Forge Middle School to watch the wonderful presentation of *The Wizard of Oz*. The students at the middle school did an outstanding job with the set and the performance of the play.



The final design challenge was given during our Electric Circuits Unit in Science. The students are building and wiring their “buildings” for electricity. They have incorporated switches to turn off and on the lights for their “buildings” or individual rooms. The “buildings” will also be on display in the 4th grade hallway for over the next few weeks.



Special & Support Area Updates

Physical Education

March was an exciting month for Physical Education! Students in grades Kindergarten through 4th grade all participated very well during our gymnastics unit. Gymnastics is a great form of exercise that teaches students about body awareness and helps to improve their overall fitness, especially their muscular strength and flexibility.



3rd and 4th graders have started to take their Fitnessgram assessments and their reports will be sent home with their final report cards at the end of the year. We encourage families to practice pushups, sit-ups, pull-ups, running, and stretching to help build students confidence while taking these assessments. Students are constantly learning how to increase/maintain their muscular strength, muscular endurance, flexibility, and cardio respiratory endurance as well as learning about body composition. K, 1st and 2nd are practicing different exercises that help with their future fitness assessments.

Please mark your calendars for 1st and 2nd grade Field Day on Thursday, May 22nd and 3rd and 4th grade on Friday, May 23rd. The rain date for either one of those is Thursday May, 29th. 4th grade Conestoga Relays will be on May 13th. More information will be sent home as the dates get closer.

