



VFES MONTHLY REPORT

March 2012–Team Updates

Kindergarten:

The first week of March had us reading lots and lots of Dr. Seuss books as we celebrated his birthday and *Read Across America*. We enjoyed his well known rhymes, silly words, and funny characters in each book. We also learned about the changes in weather that occur during the changing of the seasons – especially wind! We read several books about kites and created our own high-flying kites for the hallway! We ended the month by learning about Pets! We watched short video clips and read a variety of fiction and non-fiction books about some of our favorite friends!

In April, we look forward to a visitor from the S.P.C.A. when we present a check for \$249.00 from the Kindergarten Bake Sale that was held during parent conferences. In Math we are working on addition/subtraction stories and of course, counting to 100 many different ways! The children have been collecting their pennies for the Earth Day penny jar. After all the pennies have been counted by the kindergartners, we will purchase the plants needed for the VFE front flower bed! We are enjoying the buds on trees, daffodils, singing birds, and of course, recess with NO jackets!!!

First Grade:

Happy Spring! March began with a celebration of Dr. Seuss' birthday. The children had a wonderful time hearing 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 learned about African animals as they went on an African Safari. They also heard many different examples of African literature as we studied various folktales. Our study of the rainforest ended with an exciting lesson where the children had the chance to see and taste actual products of the rainforest. Thank you to all the parents who donated fruit for the children to sample. Mrs. Guy, our science aide, presented a great lesson on the products. The children had the chance to learn and see what everyday items come from the rainforest. We hope that children will never forget how important the rainforest is to our world.

By the middle of March, we welcomed back Mrs. McCann from maternity leave just in time to celebrate Green Day. The children came to school wearing green and brought a green snack to share with the class. The completed green activities throughout the day and some children even thought they spotted a leprechaun!

Our biggest adventure in the month of March was creating stories for the publishing center. This is an exciting event for the students and the teachers. It truly is a product of eight months of hard work. The books are a celebration of our learning progress. We started with letter formation and letter sounds in September and we now are writing stories...first grade is amazing!!

Second Grade:

March was filled with many special events and activities in second grade! We spent many hours rehearsing for our spring music program. Mrs. Bove taught the songs and movements. The students memorized the choral speaking parts in their core classes. If the applause and compliments from the audience are indicators, it was a big success! Great work, Second Graders!

We all were fascinated by the program, Science in the Movies. Many of the concepts are part of the science curriculum so it was wonderful for students to see how those concepts are applied in the very interesting job of special effects director.

Second Grade (continued):

The month ended on an exciting note as students, parent volunteers, and teachers explored the Franklin Institute. All the exhibits were fascinating, but of course especially popular, were the dinosaurs!

Somehow, we also managed to welcome spring with two writing pieces, a spring acrostic and a spring paragraph. We have finished our social studies unit, Discovery of the Americas. To introduce our next unit, Immigration, we all watched a virtual tour of Ellis Island. The study of the solar system will begin after Spring Break. We are looking forward to the last two and a half months of school. Happy spring to all!

Third Grade:

This month our third graders enjoyed an anti-bullying assembly hosted by the Harlem Wizards on March 7th. We also had a visit from our district dental hygienist who did small group lessons on cavity prevention in our classrooms on March 14th and 15th.

The big event this month was the Pennsylvania State System of Assessment testing. From Tuesday, March 13th – through Tuesday, March 20th our students took six PSSA tests. Three tests focused on math and three tests focused on reading and writing. Our students were well prepared and worked extremely hard on these tests. We were very proud of their effort and focus throughout the week and congratulate our students for finishing and working so hard.

Throughout the month we continued to work on our reading theme units and connecting writing with literature. In math our students are continuing to move through their respective units and are becoming stronger each month on their basic facts and skills.

We look forward to April which will include exciting events such as our school "Trike-A-Thon" on Thursday, April 12th, the "Third Grade Ice Cream Social/ Art Sale" on Friday, April 20th and our "Pennsylvania Play" on Wednesday, April 25th.

Fourth Grade:

The month of March was very busy, and filled with many great experiences. The beginning of the month started off with the 4th Graders walking to Valley Forge Middle School to see the play, *Beauty and the Beast*. We would like to thank the students and the faculty for a wonderful show and a warm welcome. We would also like to thank Mr. Gibson and the other administrators for inviting us to watch the play.

Next we would like to thank Mrs. McMullen for bringing the Conestoga High School students over from REACH (Responsible, Educated, Adolescents Can Help). The 4th grade students learned from their skits, and had a great time interacting with the high school students while writing letters to the students going to the Senior Prom.

The next person we would like to thank is Angie Alexander for bringing over Troop 479 from Valley Forge Middle School. Troop 479 presented their play: "Reaching Out". The play showed the 4th grade students how one idea could change a community if you work hard as a group to accomplish your goals.

We would like to thank all the Special Area and Support Personnel for their help during the 3rd and 4th grade PSSA's. Their hard work and dedication allowed things to run smoothly during the testing.

The end of the month did not slow down, and the students did a wonderful job presenting their P.A.L. projects. The students and teachers learned so much together.

We would like to thank the PTO, and the Cultural Arts Committee for bringing to us a wonderfully exciting assembly that showed us some "trade secrets" about how science is used in movies.

The last person we would like to thank is Mrs. Narcisi for inviting the park ranger from Valley Forge National Park over to visit us here at VFES. The ranger showed the students what life was like for the soldiers wintering at the encampment during the Revolutionary War, and introduced them to some of the activities they will be doing when they visit next month for a field trip.

Special & Support Area Updates

Library—Elissa Sullivan

Library celebrations have been ongoing. Each month a staff member has been chosen to pick the books listed on the bookmark of the month. Recent staff members have been Mrs. Shepherd, Mrs. Veroneau and Mrs. Cleary. However, in June, a student winner of the Spring Fair Raffle will chose the books for the June bookmark.

Students also voted for their favorite book as part of Valley Forge Elementary School's participation in the state-wide Pennsylvania Young Readers Choice Award program. Valley Forge students in kindergarten through third grade voted for *Shark vs. Train* by Chris Barton and Tom Lichtenheld; and third graders through sixth graders chose *The Strange Case of Origami Yoda* by Tom Angleberger. State-wide winners will be announced in April. It is always exciting to see if we choose the same book as the rest of the state.

We have had a record number of students participating in our challenge to read 100 books. The theme has been ***Kick It Up – Read!*** And our students have definitely been doing that. This challenge will conclude on May 25th. All competing students have been receiving ongoing prizes. There will also be several more drawings for gift certificates to Barnes and Noble. Congratulations to all the participants. Additionally, those students who have completed the challenge will receive a certificate of achievement from the library at the end of the year.

April brings two special celebrations to the library: El día de los niños /El día de los libros (Children's Day/Book Day), and National Library Week. For each celebration we will have special books, games and activities

Kindergarten students have become familiar with many great authors: among them Laura Numeroff and Rosemary Wells. First grade students have been listening to fiction, nonfiction and folk tales to support their studies of Africa. Second grade students are working on locating books in the library using the automation system and their call numbers. Third grade students are creating author studies. Fourth grade students have completed their PAL research.

Thank you to all the approximately 60 library volunteers. Jan and I couldn't do it without you!

When you visit a library this summer please don't forget to take a picture of your child and the library. We will display them in the library. The students love looking at the pictures of their fellow classmates and libraries around the world. The pictures can be emailed to me at sullivan@tesd.net or brought in to school in the fall.

Happy Reading!



April Events

- 4/2-4/6 Spring Break
- 4/9 4th Grade Thomas Jefferson
SPCA visits Kindergarten
Bucket Filling
- 4/10 Kindergarten decorates
Earth Day T-Shirts
- 4/11 4th Grade Math
Placement Test
- 4/12 Trike-A-Thon
- 4/17-4/19 1st Grade SAGES
Testing
- 4/17 1st Grade First Aid
Basics
4th Grade Field Trip VF
National Park
- 4/18 4th Grade Field Trip VF
National Park
- 4/20 Kindergarten
Earth Day
PTO Ice Cream Social
- 4/24-4/25 PSSA Science Test
4th Grade
- 4/25 3rd Grade PA Play
- 4/26-4/27 PSSA Science Test
4th Grade (Make Up Days)

