



VFES MONTHLY REPORT

February 2013–Team Updates

Kindergarten:

The kindergarten classes woke up February with a PJ and Pancake Day. The students learned the process of making pancakes and followed it up with a written step by step description of the process. We practiced using special words like first, next, then, and last. Having woken up for the month we moved on to writing friendly letters. We learned about the opening, body and closing of a letter. We even learned what P.S. stands for. President's Day lent itself to our lessons on money and learning about coins. Of course the highlight of the month was our Valentine Program and party. We practiced for many days learning the songs and learning how to get up and down from the risers. It was a fabulous performance and the audience loved it! As if that wasn't exciting enough we also celebrated 100 days of kindergarten with fun activities such as drawing what we will look like when we are 100, standing on 1 foot for 100 seconds, and making a 100 crown!

First Grade:

February was a lot of fun in first grade. There were many important events to learn about and celebrate. We started the month off with Groundhog's Day. The kids had a great time making predictions about our upcoming weather. Some children can't wait for Spring while others are enjoying the Winter weather. However, when the ground hog didn't see his shadow, everyone was excited by an early Spring!

We had an exciting assembly to kick off our "Read for Ronald" reading program. We hope our first graders are practicing their reading while supporting a great cause.

One favorite first grade memory happened in the month of February as well. Our first graders created awesome rainforest murals! We welcome our families to take a walk down the "First Grade Rainforest". As we learn about rainforest animals, plants and insects, our rainforests will continue to grow.

We also celebrated the 100th day of school this month. The children had a great day celebrating 100 days of learning and fun! How quickly the time flies when we are having fun!

Love was in the air in the first grade hallway as every first grade class celebrated Valentine's Day. Our **loves** came to school in their PJs and had a fun Valentine Brunch Party to celebrate this special day. The children enjoyed playing games, creating crafts and sharing valentines with classmates.

Following Valentine's Day, we learned about President's Day. During this time, the first graders learned about Abraham Lincoln and George Washington. Everyone enjoyed the day off in honor of these famous presidents.

A Black History Month Round Robin was a perfect way for our first graders to learn about important African Americans in history. The children learned about Rosa Parks, Jackie Robinson, Ruby Bridges, Barack Obama and Harriet Tubman.

Before the month was over, we also learned about Dental Health. We had a visit from a dental hygienist, Laura Forlano, who met with each class to teach the children about dental health. The children were given a new toothbrush to practice what they learned.

Now that February is over, first graders are waiting to find out if March will come in like a lion or a lamb??? The teachers are hoping the groundhog was right...come on Spring!

February began with lots of excitement, as Second Graders participated in a Chinese Round Robin. They experienced the art of papercutting and each left with a souvenir created especially for them by Mr. Cheng . All were in awe, as this amazing artist created animals and cartoon characters with his swiftly flying scissors and paper plates! From Mrs. Gu, another wonderful artist, children learned calligraphy and how to hold a brush correctly to create bamboo paintings. Listening and self-discipline were the focus of lessons taught in the karate demonstrations. Our own Mrs. Pazesniak, an aide here at school, presented a powerpoint on growing rice and spoke of her experiences growing up in China. Students did a great job of using chopsticks to sample the tasty rice! Parent volunteers shared information on the celebration of Chinese New Year and read a story. We heard many students declare that "This was the best day ever!" Thank you to Mrs. Pellegrini for organizing a great morning and to all the volunteers who made such rich experiences possible. I

In honor of Valentine's Day, children wrote on various topics involving the feeling of love. Their writing and beautiful drawings decorated with hearts, brought life to the second grade hallway. Some classes wrote couplets and created beautiful Valentine cards to take home. All enjoyed the Valentine's Day parties, planned and hosted by our homeroom parents. Thank you for brightening up dreary February with some fun and delicious treats!

Soils is the topic of our current science unit. Students are focusing on learning about three parts of soil: sand , clay , and humus. They are conducting tests to discover the attributes of each type and will be discovering what makes the best soil for planting. We are learning how worms play a valuable part in growing healthy plants and will be testing theories by actually growing seeds in different soils. A compost bin has been created by all classes.

In Social Studies, we are learning about the discovery of the Americas. Ask a second-grader to tell you who discovered America. You may be surprised at the answer! We are looking forward to spring and many new activities and adventures! Be on the look-out for information regarding two up-coming field trips. Bring on the warm weather!

Third Grade:

Third grade had a great month of February. We had our kick-off assembly for our read for Ronald McDonald fundraiser at the start of the month which got students very excited about this school wide project.

Third grade was also very excited to send art work to the John James Audubon Society as part of our community partnership. During the month of February V.F.E students' art work has been displayed at the Audubon Center for guests and visitors to see. Our art will again be on display at the center's Maple Sugar Festival held on March 2nd. All V.F..E families are invited to enjoy pancakes and the beautiful landscape the Audubon Center has to offer.

The highlight of February was our students' Famous Pennsylvanian speeches given on Thursday, February 21st. All third graders spent the month of February researching a Pennsylvanian (past or present) who has made lasting contributions to our great state. Then students dressed up as this character and gave speeches in front of their classmates and parents. The kids did an outstanding job and it was a day teachers, families, and students all felt proud of the hardwork put into to this class project!

V.F.E looks forward to a great month of March with more exciting learning projects yet to come!

Fourth Grade:

We would like to thank Mrs. Lukens and Mrs. Swetkowski for the class about digital citizenship, and for teaching us tips about being safe while using the Internet. Next, we want to thank all the parent volunteers who helped make our classroom Valentine's Day Parties a huge success. The students, faculty, and the parents seemed to have a wonderful time at their classroom parties. Finally we would like to thank all the staff and students from Valley Forge Middle School for inviting us over to watch the 5th and 6th Graders' play. The 4th grade students had a great opportunity to see what life will be like next year when they arrive at VFMS. The play was fantastic, and everyone had a wonderful time while we were visiting there.

Library—Mrs. Sullivan

Library celebrations have been ongoing. Each month a staff member is chosen to pick the books listed on the bookmark of the month. A student winner of the Spring Fair Raffle will choose the books for the June bookmark. The library will celebrate Dr. Seuss' birthday in the primary division classes with books, games and activities. Kindergarten will hear the first Dr. Seuss book, *And to think that I saw it on Mulberry Street*, *Horton hears a Who*, and *The Cat in the Hat*; first grade will hear *If I Ran the Zoo* and make strange animal flip books, and second grade will hear *I Wish that I Had Duck Feet*, learn biographical information about Dr. Seuss and do Seussical word searches. We are also beginning to vote for our favorite book as part of our participation in the state-wide Pennsylvania Young Readers Choice Award. Valley Forge students vote in two categories: kindergarten through third grade and third grade through sixth grade.

Fourth grade students have been busy working on their PAL projects in the library. Prior to this they used different resources such as World Book Online, World Book Encyclopedia and the World Almanac, answered trivia questions and played games to develop the skills needed for their PAL research.

Third grade students are immersed in locating biographies and listening to biographies. Currently they are working on an autobiography project which requires them to read an autobiography of a children's author and find five interesting facts about the author, locate a book the author has written in the library, read the book and answer the 5Ws about the book, and finally put all the information together.

Kindergarten has been doing author studies using books, Bookflix, Internet sites and worksheets. Some of the authors we will study are Mo Willems, Frank Asch and Jan Brett.

Second grade students have been studying different versions of fairy tales. Some of the highlighted fairy tales were *Cinderella*, *Rumpelstiltskin*, *Three Billy Goats Gruff* and *Little Red Riding Hood*. Additionally they have been listening to nonfiction stories.

First grade students have been listening to Japanese folk literature, nonfiction and fiction stories. They are working on library terminology: call number, fiction, nonfiction, author, illustrator, spine, cover, etc.

Congratulations to all the students who have been participating in the challenge to read 100 books. Drawings from these participants for a gift certificate to Barnes and Noble will continue to be held until the end of the school year. Keep reading!



Special & Support Area Updates

ESL—Kelly Hess

Valley Forge Elementary School's English Language Learners (ELLs) have been especially busy during the month of February! Students in the ESL Program took the annual ACCESS for ELLs tests. They were assessed in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Our students worked so hard and they should be very proud of themselves!

Now that the testing is over for this year, we are beginning new and exciting units and projects. Kindergarteners are continuing to work in their First 100 Words vocabulary books and journals. We will also be working more with the present progressive tense. Soon we will begin our "Animals" unit, which includes vocabulary and identifying singular and plural items. First grade ELLs are beginning the "Outdoors" unit. They will work on asking about and describing weather, specifying locations, and identifying objects in a location.

We have two second grade groups in ESL. One group is working on the "Comparisons" unit, in which they are comparing objects. The other second grade group is beginning our "People at Home" unit. They will work on identifying and describing family members, and making introductions. Both second grade groups learned about money and enjoyed playing computer and board games that involved "earning" and counting play money.

Third grade ELLs learned about describing amounts with count and non-count foods, and asking/answering questions with count and non-count foods in our "Food" unit. Now they are beginning a new unit, "The Weekend," in which they will learn about and use different aspects of past tense: simple past and past progressive. Fourth grade ELLs learned about using articles (the, a, an), and giving and receiving directions in our "Around Town" unit. Now they will learn about active and passive voice in our "Explore the World" unit.

March Events

- 3/1 Half Day Grades 1-4
No Kindergarten
Parent Teacher Conferences
- 3/1 Dr. Seuss Round Robin—1st Grade
- 3/1 4th Grade Pretzel Sale
- 3/2 Dr. Seuss's Birthday
- 3/5 Group Picture Day
- 3/8 "Bucketfilling Day"
- 3/8 State Rep. Kampf to meet with 3rd Grade
- 3/8 Pizza Bingo CHS
- 3/15 Green Day—1st Grade
- 3/15 REACH—4th Grade
- 3/15 Wizards Game 1 CHS
- 3/16 Wizards Game 2 CHS
- 3/20 PSSA Prep
- 3/25—3/29 No School
Spring Break

