



VFES MONTHLY REPORT

March 2013–Team Updates

Kindergarten:

March was a windy month in the kindergarten classrooms. We learned about wind and made very colorful kites in the shape of a diamond.

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. The children worked on their writing skills to write about a leprechaun.

We began our Pet unit and learned about different pets and what some of the characteristics are of each pet.

Money, shapes and patterns kept us busy during math. We learned about solid and flat shapes, sides, faces, edges and corners. Then we created patterns using the flat shapes.

Finally in Science we learned about mountains, valleys, rivers, lakes and plains. To demonstrate our understanding of these concepts we created our own landforms using playdough..

First Grade:

We hope you had a great Spring Break!

March flew by! First grade began the month with a celebration of Dr. Seuss' birthday. We enjoyed different stories written by this famous author and learned about his life by participating in a round robin.

We were lucky to have an occupational therapist visit our grade this month. She taught us a special handwriting lesson about forming lowercase letters of the alphabet. Ask your child about the "magic-c". We will continue to remind the children about these letters as we write.

First graders enjoyed their "Green Day" parties. The teachers planned activities for the day that revolved around the color green. The most favored part of the day was the green snacks. Thank you for sending in a green snack to share with the class!

A portion of the month was dedicated to Writing Workshop where our first graders were busy creating stories for the publishing center. Each child created a story that will be "published" into a book. This is an exciting activity in first grade as it is a culmination of all our writing lessons. We definitely have a grade full of authors!

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First Grade *(continued)*

In our Africa unit, the children are learning about the Maasai people and Swahili language. The children are practicing the skill of comparing and contrasting as they compare their culture and language to those who live in Africa.

In Science, the children continue to learn about the rainforest. Our hallway rainforests now have animals, flowers, birds and ants. Come and visit our tropical rainforest...admission is free!

Happy Spring!

Second Grade:

March certainly entered like a lion, with many cold and windy days! Filled with many activities, in second grade, the month has flown by!

We have reached the conclusion of our social studies unit, Exploration of the Americas. Students learned about the earliest people who came to the Americas, the nomads, and how they traveled. They learned that the Vikings made the first proven sea voyage to the new world and how the book Marco Polo's Travels influenced Columbus to make his journey.

We have concluded our study of soils in science and are growing cucumber plants in three different soils. We made predictions as to which soil would be the best for growing. Now we are waiting to find out! We observed the compost we started at the beginning of the unit and found that our worms were doing a great job in creating rich soil.

Dr. Suess's birthday was celebrated with funny and exciting stories. Hats were made and poetry written. Second graders have written on a variety of topics this month, including "My Lucky Day", and "How I Know it is Spring".

Teachers and students alike are looking forward to our trip to the Franklin Institute in April. Happy Spring to all! Let's hope for warm, sunny days!

Third Grade:

The Third Grade has spent the month of March working on a variety of activities. In science, students have been testing common household chemicals in different ways to collect data and observe the changes in properties. Students loved this unit as we mixed chemicals with vinegar, iodine, red cabbage juice and even fire (in a very safe way)

Third grade has continued the study of Pennsylvania. This month State Representative Warren Kampf came for an assembly and explained how laws are passed in Pennsylvania.

Students also began learning about Chester County. They enjoyed discovering places around them and the County's rich heritage.

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Third Grade *(continued)*

In language arts students spent the majority of March working on Theme 10, "Money Matters". Literature has been focused on topics such as budgeting money, making your money grow and helping others.

Students have been determining the "author's purpose" in the stories they are reading. They have been deciding if the information is meant to entertain, persuade or inform the reader. They have really enjoyed the stories in this unit..

We are looking forward to a great Spring Break and the activities planned when we return. Students will be taking the PSSA's starting the week of April 8th. They will also travel to Conestoga on April 17th for a cultural arts performance.

Fourth Grade:

Many thanks to Mrs. Gardner for bringing Conestoga High School students who are involved with REACH (Responsible, Educated, Adolescents Can Help) to visit our 4th grade. Students learned from the CHS students' skits and had a great time interacting with them. 4th grade students wrote letters to students going to the Senior Prom.

Students did a fantastic job with their P.A.L. presentations, and we learned about many different topics. The presentations ranged from King Tut to Coca-Cola®. Their projects will remain on display in the 4th grade hallway, outside the Media Center and inside the Library through Friday April 12th, 2013, the night of the Ice Cream Social.

The final design challenge was given during our Electric Circuits Unit in science. Students are building and wiring their "buildings" for electricity. Students have incorporated switches to turn on and off the lights for their "buildings" or individual rooms. The "buildings" will also be on display through the week of April 12th, 2013.

April Events

4/1-4/5	Art Goes to School
4/2-4/3	4th Grade Trip to Valley Forge National Park
4/6	PTO Adult Social Phoenixville CC
4/8	4th Grade Thomas Jefferson
4/9-4/16	PSSA Math & Reading Testing
4/12	PTO Ice Cream Social
4/16	Kindergarten Earth Day Make T-Shirts
4/17	3rd Grade to CHS for Theatre Production
4/17-4/19	PSSA Make Ups
4/23-4/24	PSSA Science Testing
4/22	Kindergarten Earth Day Celebration
4/24	2nd Grade to Franklin Institute
4/30	1st Grade Concert

