



VFES MONTHLY REPORT

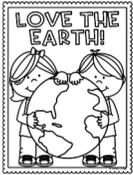
April 2021 – Team Updates

Kindergarten:

In the kindergarten classrooms during the month of April, we have been busy learning our sight words and practicing our handwriting as well as using our reading strategies to improve our reading skills.

During the month of April, we read about different pets, different types of animal homes, different types of transportation, and about our country. The students have been practicing writing complete sentences using their sight words and sound spelling.

In Math, we worked on addition and subtraction number sentences. The students learned about the symbols for adding, subtracting, and the equal sign. Using picture stories, the students wrote their own number sentences to describe what was happening in the picture.



We celebrated our traditional Earth Day in a nontraditional manner! Each day during the week of April 19th, we focused on one topic related to protecting and keeping our earth healthy. We began the week doing a drawing of our earth and colored the water blue and land green. Each student drew and wrote about what they can do to help our earth. We did an oil spill experiment where we demonstrated what it looks like when there is an oil spill in a body of water and how it can be cleaned up. We inspected real worms, labeled their body parts, and learned about how important they are to our soil. Each student got to plant some seeds and learned that they need, sun, water, and soil for them to grow. We talked about recycling and shared different ways we all recycle. Finally, we planted flowers in front of the VFE sign!

First Grade:

The flowers are in full bloom and so are our first graders. During the month of April, our students set off on their journey to Africa during their Social Studies times. The children are learning all about the African culture as they visit various stops along the way.

In Science, the children are learning about green efforts. This unit coincided perfectly with Earth Day. Ask your child about the things they plan to do to make our Earth even more beautiful.



In Math, the children are doing a great job learning addition and subtraction with and without regrouping. Your child should be able to complete these problems while explaining the process. Our next unit will be loved by all . . . MONEY! Please review the names of coins and their values at home. Knowing how to count by 5s and 10s will make learning how to count money much easier!

Reading in first grade is an amazing skill to see develop. The children have learned so much and are practicing what they have learned each day. Currently we are learning about diphthongs and practicing the vowel combinations in our reading, spelling, and writing. We reflect on our reading and answer questions that are both text-based and inferred. The children are learning to think about what they are reading by asking questions before during and after they read. We are so proud of our first graders!

VFE is a school filled with days of learning and fun. An exciting event for our first graders was having the opportunity to vote for our new school mascot. We can't wait to find out the winner. Fridays have also brought a bit of excitement to our last few weeks of school as we have a theme for each Friday. Whether virtual or in-person, the kids are excited to show their participation. Please see your teacher's Schoology page for a list of upcoming themes. WE ARE VFE PROUD!!

As we approach the upcoming month, MAY your days be filled with warm weather and sunshine!

Second Grade:

Second graders and their teachers have been enjoying many spring activities!

In Language Arts, the key concept focused on “Our Heroes”. The children read and wrote about real-life heroes. To conclude the unit, we celebrated National Superhero Day! The students created their own superhero capes and participated in a round robin. The teachers rotated from class to class and each class experienced a different activity with each teacher. The activities included: a read-aloud, craft, writing activity, and games.

In Science, students worked hard studying our science curriculum about the planets and outer space. This unit is one that the students really enjoy. The children learn mnemonic devices to remember the planets in our solar system and get a strong understanding of distances, sizes, and orbit tendencies of each planet.



In Social Studies, the students started the unit on Immigration. The children have enjoyed listening to literature and learning about the land bridge.

We are looking forward to all the wonderful May activities and the warmer weather!

Third Grade:

April was a busy month for our third graders.



We have now moved onto our Plant Unit which correlates wonderfully with all of the beautiful flowers blooming around us. Students are watching and observing the growth of a Wisconsin Fast Plant with Mrs. Prothero. It is exciting to see how quickly the plants grow! At home, students should be planting and watching their marigolds grow for some hands-on fun!

In Social Studies, we have been continuing our study of Pennsylvania! We have gone on a “road trip” and have seen and explored many sites. Students are now exploring some very important cities, Philadelphia and Harrisburg!

April also had our students busy preparing for their Famous Pennsylvanian/American Biography project. They have started researching their famous person at home and taking notes as they go. Students will be asked to share their research on Friday, May 14th by sharing a prop and making a speech about their Famous Pennsylvanian/American in first person. We are looking forward to hearing and enjoying all of their efforts!

In Language Arts, we have covered a lot! We spent time working on determining importance and comparing and contrasting texts, as well as reviewing parts of speech and figurative language. We also continued to practice responding to text-dependent questions!

In Writing, we have begun working on our How-Tos and making sure to use a lot of detail to describe a process.

We sent our flat twins all around the world to go on some pretty fabulous adventures. We are excited to see the pictures that our friends and family send back to us with our flat selves!

Third grade is excited for all the fun and exciting activities coming up in May!

Spring is such a fun and busy time for all of us at VFE, especially in 4th grade!



We are getting ready to start our P.A.L (personal achievement in learning) presentations. The kids have been working so hard putting together their research and becoming experts on their topics. It will be so exciting to see what they present next month.

In Writing, students are writing creative stories about a doodle they created. Each student started with the same line and turned that line into a drawing of a character that will be in their story. It was so much fun to see how different each student's picture turned out.

In Science, students took a break from their motion and design unit to study about Earth Day. The students are learning why it is so important to take care of our Earth.

In Social Studies, we are continuing to study how our new nation was formed. The kids have learned about the three branches of government and the responsibilities of each branch.

In Language Arts, we are learning how the reading strategy "Fix-up Strategies" helps us to understand and think about what we are reading.

In May, we are looking forward to our visit to tour the middle school as well as other fun end-of-the-year activities that are planned for our 4th graders!



Special & Support Area Updates

Library



Library classes are still rolling along at all levels. Virtual students should continue to check out the Library course page on Schoology for lessons, tutorials, and resources. There's a PebbleGo direct link on the primary division pages which will take students to this fantastic non-fiction resource without having to enter a username or password.

Through non-fiction and fiction literature and digital resources, **Kindergarteners** are learning about animal classes. (No, not PE for fish – animal groups!) We started with invertebrates and now are examining the vertebrate classes: reptiles, fish, amphibians, birds, and mammals! These studies will take us through the end of the year.

First graders spent much of April immersed in poetry – rhyming, free verse, and haiku were all introduced through literature from the VFE library collection and developed through follow-up activities and discussions. To support the Social Studies curriculum, we have now moved onto Africa and will be enjoying Anansi tales as well as conducting some research into African animals using PebbleGo as a digital resource.

Inventors and immigrations are the topics of study in **Second** grade. We wrapped up a unit on inventions in early April with opportunities for students to learn about inventors and the inventing process. Through literature, we will be traveling through time and around the world following the lives, experiences, and emotions of immigrants.

Third graders have been learning about a variety of book formats throughout the year – graphic novels, hybrid novels, and recently, novels in verse. They've enjoyed creating their own comic strips to tell stories and have experimented with some new poetry forms in response to our read-aloud. To finish the year, we will be expanding our geographic literacy with stories about road trips and from our nation's neighbors: Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean. These studies will be supplemented with non-fiction research using digital tools.

The fabulous **Fourth** graders of VFE have been busy working on their PAL projects and just finished the humorous Candace Fleming's *Fabled Fourth Graders of Aesop Elementary School* along with many follow-up research and response opportunities. We're just beginning a Media Literacy unit before we wave a fond farewell to this amazing group of students.

Please plan to return any library materials by the end of May. Students will still be able to find pleasure reading material through MackinVia and Epic until the end of the year.

