



VFES MONTHLY REPORT

January 2022 – Team Updates

Kindergarten:



The kindergarten classrooms had a wintery month in January. Our jolly snowmen adorn the halls with their colorful scarves and hats.

We practiced using adjectives in a sentence to describe the snowperson they created. We continued to learn new sight words, practiced handwriting, isolating letters sounds, and learning letters. We practiced the comprehension strategies of sequencing events and identifying characters, setting, and events in a story.

In Social Studies, we listened to a story about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and wrote sentences about dreams that we have.

In Science, we learned about endangered animals and landforms.

In Math, we've been learning about solid and flat shapes. We tied in a previous science lesson to math when we tried to roll and slide some of the solid shapes. We learned that some solid shapes could stack on other shapes and some stack on themselves. We also got to try to fit multiple shapes inside another. For example, how do we use two rectangles and two triangles to make a hexagon.

First Grade:

Happy New Year! First grade started 2022 by making New Year resolutions. A new year is a great time to establish better habits in school and at home.

During phonics in large group reading, our first graders are learning about the long vowels. It is amazing to see how quickly the children can apply learned skills in their reading and writing. We are currently reading in our Unit 3 book of Wonders. During this unit, we focus on making predictions and identifying story elements through various genres. Our Grammar lessons focus on verbs. Our first graders can identify a verb in a sentence and can change the tense of given verbs.

In Science, first grade is getting ready to "visit" the rainforest. This is a loved unit for all students!

In Social Studies, our first graders are enjoying a "trip to Japan". They are learning all about the customs and culture of Japanese people. They even have a few Japanese words in their vocabulary!

First graders love birthdays! In January, we celebrated the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. King was the beginning of our school-wide study of famous African Americans in history. Each week we learn about a famous African American and then try to exemplify their character trait in our actions.

February will continue to bring a LOVE of learning! First graders are excited to celebrate the 100th day of school and Valentine's Day.

We are looking forward to a great 2022 with our first graders!



Second Grade:

The second graders were very excited to be get back from break and continue our learning.

In Language Arts, we have been continuing in our unit 3 in the Wonders program. Our whole group lessons have included reading narrative nonfiction, fiction, and expository texts. Key features of these genres included ordering events in the story, text features that include photos and captions to give additional information, key features to tell a story about a real person or people and real events, point of view, and facts, examples, and explanations about a topic. We are looking forward to what Unit 4 will bring!

In science, the second graders have really been enjoying the unit on changes. We have learned all about chemical and physical reactions. Some of these great lessons included mixtures, solutions, suspensions, dissolving, evaporation, and chemical changes. Ask a second grader to explain the words dissolve, settle, mixture, and solution.



In Social Studies, the second graders have started learning all about China. The children have learned all about the geography of China and how silk is made. We are looking forward to learning more about the Chinese culture.

We will be glad when warmer weather returns but in the meantime, we have so much to keep all of us busy! We are looking forward to many fun virtual Valentine's Day parties!

Third Grade:

The third grade was excited to get back from break and continue our learning adventure together! We were so excited to be able to kick off the month participating in Spirit Week and to have a Snow Day!



This month, Social Studies has been packed with finishing up our Indigenous People unit. The third grade also spent time learning about Martin Luther King Jr. this month. We listened as Mrs. Wills shared a book and talked about his leadership. The children learned that Martin Luther King Jr. protested for equal rights peacefully with his words, marches, and sit-ins.

In Science, we are wrapping our Land and Water unit! Students learned a lot about erosion, weathering, and how land is affected by water. They put it into practice when they had to develop a landscape that would protect multiple plastic homes in their stream tables.

In ELA, we have had themes such as Earth and it's Neighbors and What makes different animals unique. We have read pieces of fiction and non-fiction about astronomy and animals. Some of our favorites were the folktales! Students have been working on identifying the author's point of view and text structure of a passage. Our focus continues to be identifying and citing text evidence in our responses. We are proud of the effort our students put in each day during their whole group reading lessons and their small group meetings!

In writing, students continue to work on grammar concepts such as past and future tense verbs and creating good third grade sentences. We are excited to start our unit on opinion writing as well! This is always such a fun unit and a great way for students to express themselves.

The third grade is enthusiastic about the learning experiences ahead in February!

It has been a great start to 2022 for our fourth graders!

In science, students are learning all about electricity and electric circuits. They are creating these circuits using wires, batteries, lightbulbs, and have even designed their own switch! Soon, students will be using what they learned in this unit to wire make a flashlight and wire and design a room.

In social studies, we are wrapping up the causes of the Revolutionary War. Our next unit is the war itself. Students will learn all about the important battles and challenges America faced as it was becoming an independent nation.

In language arts, students are studying the essential question how one person can make a difference. We are reading biographies about different people throughout history that made a difference in their community and country.

In writing, students are writing realistic fiction stories. In each story, a character faces a challenge that makes him or her nervous. Look for these essays in our hallway towards the end of the month!



The fourth graders have been working hard on their cereal box book reports. They chose a fictional book to read over winter break and have developed a cereal based on that book. Then, the students will create commercials to advertise their cereal in a fun and creative way. The teachers are looking forward to seeing what the students have come up with!



Special & Support Area Updates

Media

Kindergarteners are continuing to develop visual literacy skills by paying special attention to the pictures in books and “reading” what the illustrator is saying. We all giggled through the antics of silly Epossumondas and are currently enjoying fiction and non-fiction books about bears.

Library students in first grade are in the middle of a unit on kamishibai stories from Japan. These “paper theater” stories have provided a wonderful vehicle to discuss Japanese culture, folktales and storytelling. We’ve also made origami paper creations and colored our own kamishibai story cards.

Through read-alouds, second graders are learning the distinctions between various literary genre. We continue to explore the sections of the library and identify where they can find the types of books they want for pleasure reading and research.

Third graders are continuing to demonstrate their abilities to utilize the catalog to locate books in the library. We are set to begin a unit on biographies. Once students have located, read, and taken notes from a biography, they will share what they’ve learned in a short written report using Word.

Fourth graders are engaged in our state research unit. In preparation for the spring PAL project, we are continuing our work on identifying and utilizing reliable resources for research. Students collected information on a US state from various resources. They are creating short PowerPoint presentations to share with their classmates in the library.

Students at all levels have heard or read books from the Pennsylvania Young Reader’s Choice Awards list and are gearing up to vote for their favorite. Many of the read-alouds can be found on the library course pages on Schoology.

The VFES library has circulated almost 15,000 books to students, staff, and faculty. We’ve added over 300 new and donated books to our collection. Thanks to the community for the continued support of our library program.

