



# VFES MONTHLY REPORT

October 2021 – Team Updates

## Kindergarten:

October was a busy month in the kindergarten classrooms! We read stories and used our fine motor skills to complete activities to help us remember the fire safety rules.



Our hallway is swarming with “shape” bats. We reviewed the basic shapes and practiced following directions to make a bat out of the shapes!

In language arts, we continued working on our letters and sight words as well as isolating beginning, middle, and ending sounds in a word.

In math we practiced counting groups of objects up to ten and practiced writing the numbers to 10. As a fun October activity, we practiced number order by putting 10 ghosts in the proper order from 1 to 10.

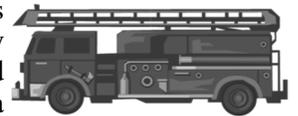
Matter is everywhere! In Science we learned about states of matter; solid, liquid and gas. The children got to experiment with changing the state of matter. We watched ice change from a solid to a liquid as it was warmed up.

What would October be without the exciting Halloween parade and party? The children had fun dressing up and celebrating Halloween in school!

## First Grade:

October is so much fun when you are in first grade!

We celebrated fire safety month with a visit from the Berwyn Fire Company. Firefighters came to our school to teach the children about fire safety. The children had the opportunity to see a fire truck and learn about the equipment on the truck. The teachers then continued the study of fire safety in the classroom. Each first grade student was able to pretend to be a firefighter with a paper-made firefighter hat!



In reading groups, the children have been working on visualizing and determining key details as they read. In spelling, we have been focusing on short vowels. For the month of October, we covered short o and short i words along with l blends. Every spelling unit introduces a new phonics skill. The children love to be detectives and figure out the skill of the week when they receive their spelling list each week.

Our Science unit on the Solar System is in full swing. The children have enjoyed learning about the planets, stars, sun, and moon. With each lesson, the children created a project that coincides with what they have learned. Be on the lookout for a souvenir from our trip to the moon.

We have almost completed our Social Studies unit on Maps and Communities. The students will now use these map skills as we “travel” to Japan. The children will learn about the geographical location of Japan as well as the culture of Japanese people.

In Math, our first graders completed a unit on Geometry. The children can identify both flat and solid shapes as well as make patterns and models using these shapes. We encourage our first grade families to continue to practice math facts at home...practice makes better!

While October consisted of many exciting lessons, the most anticipated events were connected to the end of October. Halloween parades and activities added to our exciting month. The children had a fantastic time celebrating! Our Halloween was SPOOKTACULAR!

## Second Grade:

If you are a Valley Forge second grader, October is a fantastic month!

During Language Arts, the second-grade students completed the first unit in our Wonders program. The students learned about realistic fiction, fantasy, and expository texts. The key features in unit one included sequencing stories, character traits, and setting. The children also wrote their own expository text. They did a wonderful job!

In math, students have been learning about numbers to 1000 and regrouping. The classes also focus on the application of these skills in “real world” problems.

Second graders have been very involved with the study of dinosaurs. Dinosaur time periods, fossils, and how paleontologists learn about dinosaurs are some of the topics we have presented.



We recently completed our first science unit, Balancing and Weighing. Students expanded their understanding of the relationship between balance and weight as they explored hands-on activities. Density was a concept presented as students discovered why split peas weighed more than the same amount of oat cereal. One favorite activity was constructing a mobile. We also read a biography of Alexander Calder, the artist who invented the mobile

Please remind your child to bring a jacket and other cold weather gear to school each day. The days are getting chilly and we go outside every day, even in the cold weather. We are looking forward to November and many more exciting learning opportunities!

## Third Grade:

October was a busy month for 3rd graders as we continued to settle into our schedule and routines. Throughout the month of October, we read multiple books about friendship and standing up for ourselves and our friends if others aren't being kind. We ended the month celebrating Halloween with a parade and parties!

In Language Arts, we have continued our practice of being close readers and focused on the skills of asking questions, visualizing, sequencing, and identifying the author's purpose. Students were asked to use clues such as the title, headings and other text features to help them identify the main idea and supporting details of a passage. Our units focused on cultural traditions, how landmarks help us understand our country's story, and how people make government work.

In Writing, we completed our personal narratives after peer conferences and learning about revising and editing. For some Fall fun, students were asked to create an acrostic with the word Autumn or Halloween. These now decorates the hallways in the 3rd grade wing of the school! We also ended unit 1 by creating a postcard, encouraging others to go visit a landmark by sharing some factual information about the landmark!



In Science, students figured out which mineral was which by putting together all of the results from our mineral tests over the weeks. We tested the minerals for their hardness, luster, magnetism, light, color, and texture. To further students' learning, they are asked to collect rocks and create their own rock collection at home. They will be completing the same tests we completed in school. This project is due on Friday, November 5. Please feel free to reach out and ask your core teacher if you need more information! We are now moving into our Land and Water unit!

In Social Studies, we are wrapping up our study of maps and globes and moving into Native Americans. Third graders will explore many popular tribes of North America then each class will focus their studies on one tribe and share their research with the rest of the third grade in December.

Some math classes have been working on problem solving with addition, using bar models as a tool, while others are working on division and multiplication with a focus on problem solving. We encourage all students to practice their facts and skills at home.

We are looking forward to a fun November!

October is always an exciting time at VFE! Trunk or Treat, the Halloween parade, and parties were super spooky and fun. Thank you to our PTO and all of the volunteers for making each of these events so memorable!



Our fourth-grade hallways are lined with haunted house advertisements and personal narratives. Soon we will see beautiful fall poetry leaves hanging.

In reading, we are wrapping up our first reading unit. Throughout the unit, students learned about different text genres including expository, realistic fiction, and argumentative texts. Passages we read throughout the unit focused on questions about how to respond to natural disasters, how our actions affect others, and how small businesses help the community. In our small reading groups, we are continuing to work on reading strategies with both fiction and non-fiction pieces.

In the science lab, we are just wrapping up our Ecosystems unit! It was interesting to see how the different types of pollution affected our terrariums and aquariums. We will soon begin our next unit, Electricity.

In social studies, we are continuing our study of the early colonies. The students are learning how the colonies were established and are working in groups to make brochures and presentations for five of the early settlements.

Last, but certainly not least, students have been loving the new gaga pit added to our recess yard. A big thank you to the PTO for gifting our school with such a fun game for our students to play at recess.

As you can see, we have been very busy and are looking forward to the fun and exciting things to come in fourth grade!



## Special & Support Area Updates

### Physical Education

VFE students kicked off the Month of October by beginning a Throwing and Catching Unit. The students had a blast participating in our Halloween Unit at the end of the month!



During our Throwing and Catching Unit – Kindergarten students learned how to perform an underhand throw with proper form. They also worked on using hand-eye coordination by completing a self-toss and catch. First and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders continued to improve their hand-eye coordination by completing many underhand and overhand throwing practice challenges. Focus was on using a correct overhand throwing form, as well as catching various objects. Many activities were participated in such as Flip the Hoop, Clean Your Room, Battleship, and Swamp Ball.

Third and 4<sup>th</sup> graders began by participating in throwing and catching challenges focusing on aim, accuracy, and using the correct throwing form. Students reviewed the proper ways to complete these skills and practiced under several conditions further developing, refining, and enhancing their hand-eye coordination. Many activities were participated in such as Boom City, Battleship, and Hula Hut Throwdown.

During our Halloween Unit – 1<sup>st</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> grade participated in several Halloween-themed activities over two class periods. Students enjoyed our chasing and fleeing activity, Zombie Tag, where they had to work cooperatively with a partner to be successful. Students also continued to practice their throwing and catching skills during the activities Pumpkin Ball and Monster Ball. Our main activity Ghosts in the Graveyard was a huge hit. Students got to experiment with scooters attempting to cross the “graveyard”, while avoiding being tagged by the ghosts in order to earn “candy”.

The students showed great effort and teamwork during all activities. Mr. Johnson and I were very proud of how the students conducted themselves during the entire unit!

Happy Halloween!

