



# VFES MONTHLY REPORT

*October 2017 – Team Updates*

## Kindergarten:

October was a busy month in the kindergarten classrooms. We had a visit from Mother Goose who provided us with an interactive lesson that combined Mother Goose rhymes with the alphabet. She is very entertaining and educational at the same time. The children could hardly contain their laughter throughout her program. Thank you to the Cultural Arts committee for providing us with that.

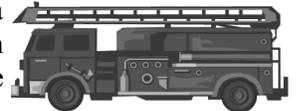


We learned all about fire safety through our visit from the Berwyn Fire Company! We were reminded of how important it is for us to learn our address, remember to get out and stay out when there is a fire, and to have a meeting place outside once we are out of our houses. It was really fun to see all the cool tools on their truck!

In language arts we continued working on our letters and sight words. We began working on stretching and writing words in our Writer's Notebooks. Our hallway is beautifully decorated with our scarecrows. The children used their fine motor skills and direction following skills to complete the scarecrow. Science was exciting as we learned about different types of farms and about all the things we get from a farm. In math, we learned about numbers, the concepts of bigger, smaller, taller, and shorter, and practiced writing numbers. We had fun visiting the Book Fair and topped off the month with Scary Gym and our very fun Halloween parties!

## 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 creating images and determining important information as they read. Readers who can determine important information, create images, visualize, and make connections better understand what they read, so please practice the strategies when you are reading at home.

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 finished 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 are busy learning different strategies for solving addition and subtraction problems. The children are getting very good at finding different ways to solve math problems. We encourage our first grade families 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. The Book Fair, Scary Gym, Halloween parade, and classroom parties all added to our exciting month. The children had a fantastic time celebrating! Thanks for helping make our October ARRGGHH-SOME! (VFE teachers were pirates for Halloween...couldn't resist ☺)

## Second Grade:

VFE second graders had a wonderful month of October filled with many engaging and meaningful learning opportunities.

The Berwyn Fire Company came to visit our school this month and we learned about proper fire safety and procedures.

We also has special PTO-sponsored activities such as an author visit from Gregory Mone and a music assembly that featured award winning music from Alex and the Kaleidoscope. Both had students engaged and involved.

In science, our students finished their unit on balancing and weighing and started our newest unit on sound. Students are learning about how sound waves travel and how the inner workings of our ear helps us to process information.

In social studies we are finishing up our unit on dinosaurs. Students have loved learning about the different types of dinosaurs and the time periods on which they roamed the Earth. 

Our students are continuing to work on language arts-based curriculum activities that combined whole group and small group instruction. Students read and practiced thinking strategies that help them to make connections, ask questions, and determine the importance of what they read.

We look forward to finishing the month with our Halloween celebrations, the book fair, and scary gym!

## Third Grade:

The third grade has had a busy and exciting month of October! The highlights included learning about writing from Author Gregory Mone, listening and participating in two concerts by Alex and the Kaleidoscope with 4<sup>th</sup> grade, visiting the Duportail House, and celebrating Halloween with a parade and parties.

The field trip to the Duportail House allowed students to learn about the history of Pennsylvania that is in our own backyard! They learned about the history of the home, and barn, the significance of quilts, and about colonial music and dance. They had a wonderful time! Students will be studying more about the history of Pennsylvania in the Spring!

In Language Arts, we have continued our practice of being close readers and focused on the skills of asking questions, making inferences, and synthesizing. Students were asked to think about things they could infer from the text based on what the text says. Our themes focused around light and electricity and we look forward to reading about how times have changed in our next theme.

In Writing, we started learning about ways we can “show not tell” in our personal narratives. Many classes read When the Relatives Came and noticed ways the author, Cynthia Rylant, used this writing technique by showing how happy the characters felt when they saw each other rather than saying they felt happy. Students began thinking about special memories they have with their own families and relatives and tried out examples they could use in their writing.



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 3. 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. First, 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.

Math classes have been working with addition and subtraction bar models and division and multiplication with a focus on problem solving. We encourage students to practice their facts and skills at home by using the websites that are attached to our Valley Forge homepage.

We are looking forward to a fun November!

October is always an exciting time at VFE! The fourth graders loved visiting the book fair with their class and had a blast making their wish lists and selecting new books. Scary Gym and the Halloween parade and parties were also 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 narrative writing projects and soon we will see beautiful fall poetry leaves hanging. In reading, we are focusing on the comprehension strategy of “determining importance” which helps our readers decide important information vs. unimportant but interesting information in a passage. This helps build our summarizing skills as well as locating the main idea in a reading selection. In our small reading groups, we are continuing to work on this strategy with both fiction and non-fiction pieces.

In the science lab, we have wrapped up our Ecosystems unit and had an exciting visit to the Adventure Aquarium! It was interesting to see how the different types of pollution affected our terrariums and aquariums. We are now beginning 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, the fourth grade participated in a super exciting and memorable residency with Alex and the Kaleidoscope. The students learned a lot about diversity, working together as team, collaborating, rhyme scheme, brainstorming, the process of composing music, and so much more! We all enjoyed watching their special performance.

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—Mrs. Himes, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Jones

We have had a great month of October! Kindergarteners are working on spatial awareness and locomotor skills and were introduced to kicking.

First and second graders have been working on more advanced ball skills, teamwork, soccer, and are starting many different fitness concepts.

Students in third and fourth grade have worked on throwing, catching, teamwork, cooperation, social skills/responsibilities, and more advanced fitness concepts.

All parents are encouraged to practice basic fitness concepts with their children. Jogging, running, climbing, and strengthening exercises are great family activities to do together!

The Falcon 5k is coming up on November 5<sup>th</sup> and many students are accumulating miles during their recess time in order to train for the fun event. Many students are close to getting over 18 miles in just 3 weeks! Thank you parents for helping during their recess laps. Excellent work, VFE!



Just another reminder - please remember to send your child to school with play clothes and sneakers on PE days so that they can participate. For safety reasons students need to wear sneakers that can be laced up or velcroed. Flip flops, “Crocs”, dress shoes, winter boots, or “Ugg” type boots are not acceptable.

