



VFES MONTHLY REPORT

September 2018 – Team Updates

Kindergarten:



It's always so exciting and bit scary for our kindergarten students at the beginning of the year. We are well on our way to learning the daily routines. We learned how to write the date on our calendar each day, how to unpack our backpacks, and keep track of our mail. We celebrated Constitution Day, Peace Day, and Johnny Appleseed's birthday. Wow!

Each class developed their own set of rules for the classroom and created a classroom constitution which each member signed. We began our study of the alphabet and started our Writer's Workshop. We visited the Science room and learned about "thinking like a scientist". We used our sense of touch to feel different objects and made a list of describing words for each object. In Math, we got to practice numbers to 5 and learned some strategies to help us be detectives and spot small differences.

We have made some great new friends and are looking forward to a great year.

First Grade:

There is A LOT of GOOD to see in first grade! First graders have enjoyed getting to know one another this month. They are doing a wonderful job learning new first grade routines and building community bonds.



Each of them learned how to Think Like A Scientist during the first science unit of the year. The students learned the importance of making observations and were able to complete an experiment using milk, soap, and food coloring. It was awesome!

Students have also learned all about various helpers in our community including librarians, nurses, teachers, firefighters, and police officers.

Students have discussed how they get to school each day and the variety of transportations children all around the world use to get to school each day.

On September 26th, they learned about Johnny Appleseed and the life cycle of the apple tree.

Heading into October, students will start to learn about measurement, the solar system, pumpkins, and more! The possibilities are endless!

Second Grade:

The teachers were so excited to welcome in our new group of amazing second graders to the 2018-19 school year! We enjoyed meeting families during curriculum night and look forward to all the new exciting learning that will take place this year. We hope you had the opportunity to look around our hallway to find your child's "Who am I?" project. This project was the first of many other writing pieces our students will be writing this year.

In small group and whole group reading, we have been focusing on making connections to the text, visualizing details in the stories we read, learning new vocabulary, and exploring the genre of realistic fiction. The spelling list sent home each week is connected with our reading program, Literacy By Design.



We have started our science unit on balancing and weighing in the science lab. Our social studies unit has begun and everyone is enjoying learning about the dinosaurs and the three dinosaur time periods! Each student is choosing a dinosaur and will have the opportunity to research and write a report.

Math classes have started, and our students have been learning all about place value! In math, we have started comparing and ordering numbers. Our next chapter has begun and our students have started using addition with regrouping.

Over the past month we had the opportunity to celebrate Constitution Day and Peace Day in our classrooms. We connected the Constitution to our rules here at school and why rules are important to all. We hope that you had a chance to see the fun projects your children brought home after Peace Day. We enjoyed learning what peace means and how we can create peace in our school.

The second grade teachers are excited to have a fantastic year! Happy fall!

Third Grade:

All of the third grade students and teachers were very excited to begin the 2018-19 School Year! It will be filled with a lot of fun and exciting and new learning experiences!



In Language Arts, we kicked off our Reading series with the theme, "Community Spirit." Students read various fiction and non-fiction pieces about different types of communities and compared their similarities and differences to their own. We also engaged in conversation about what makes their communities, both school and neighborhood, so special! While reading each story, the students began practicing close reading. Close readers dig deep into the text and carefully examine the story they are reading. Ways to be a

close reader include repeating readings, using a highlighter, making codes and ideas on sticky notes, as well as sharing these thoughts with classmates during whole-group discussions. We look forward to practicing and strengthening this skill throughout the year in order to help our students become life-long readers!

In Math, our classes began the year working on the concept of place value. Problem-solving is also an important concept that will be incorporated into each chapter. Thinkcentral.com is the website for the Math in Focus Program. There is a multitude of activities available to students and parents to utilize at home. The VFES page of the school district's website displays this as well as other sites to visit for math practice.

In Science, we began the year with the unit, Rocks and Minerals. Students have been spending time exploring both rocks and minerals during science lab time, thinking about categorizing and classifying them. They are currently performing a variety of experiments on twelve minerals in order to identify which mineral is which!

In Social Studies, students have been examining various types of maps and globes as well as discussing where they live in the world. In learning stations, they will complete a variety of activities in the classroom that will help them to read maps and to identify the continents and oceans.

Decorating their Writers Notebook was a really fun way to kick off our Writer's Workshop time! Students had the opportunity to share these amazing notebooks they spent time decorating at home! This notebook will serve as an excellent place to create story ideas for the year. This year, we will mainly focus on writing personal narratives, opinion pieces, and informative pieces.

Third Grade celebrated Peace Day on September 21 as did the rest of the school. It was a great opportunity for third graders to bond as they rotated through four stations. They engaged in responding to what peace means to them on a butcher paper banner, painted their own peace plate, played Peace Bingo using different peace symbols, and played peace-themed games with Mr. Johnson outside! The day was a reminder to us all the importance of peace in our own lives.

The fourth graders have had a great start to the new school year! Together we have kicked off our new schoolwide theme, “Look for the Good”. We are reminding the students how to be respectful, resilient, and reflective as they work inside and outside of the classroom.

The students have completed many exciting back-to-school projects that have helped their teachers get to know them a little better.

We start the day off with math- the fourth graders were very excited to learn who their math teacher would be this year!



In Science, the students have really enjoyed learning all about ecosystems, food chains, and food webs. The classes have been busy creating their own terrariums and aquariums soon to be complete with guppy fish, snails, crickets, and pill bugs. We can't wait to examine how these ecosystems depend on one another and change over time.

We are wrapping up the Geography Unit in Social Studies and are looking forward to learning all about the Early Explorers and Settlements which will lead into our study of the Thirteen Colonies.

In Language Arts, the kids are doing great with our first comprehension strategy of the year, making connections. Fourth Graders have been focusing on the difference between a “surface connection” and a “deep connection”. In our small reading groups, we are using interactive notebooks to reinforce these comprehension strategies.

Our classrooms have been alive with technology! The students are beginning to use the iPads to check out some cool fourth grade apps.

A reminder that 4th grade lunch is at 12:50, so morning snacks are important! We are all looking forward to a fun-filled final year at Valley Forge Elementary!



Look for the Good!

Special & Support Area Updates

Art

Kindergarten artists have learned about the rules of the art room while making a class puzzle with a tessellating shape! We learned how we all fit together when we have respect for each other's feelings and artwork.

First grade artists are painting a sun inspired by artwork from around the world. We sketched first using many different shaped tracers to make rays and faces for our suns.

Second grade has begun an exciting unit on dinosaurs! We are currently drawing dinosaurs using simple shapes to sketch and plan. We are adding texture and background as we color in our awesome dinosaurs.

Third grade artists are making beautiful seascape paintings. We have learned about composition as we planned our painting with a quick sketch. We are enjoying mixing colors to create a beautiful horizon on the water.

Fourth grade artists are thinking about the beach also as we sketch seashells. We are drawing from observing real shells and will enlarge them for our final piece. We will look at Georgia O'Keeffe's large scale flower paintings for inspiration.

