



VFES MONTHLY REPORT

March 2018 – Team Updates

Kindergarten:

Wow, March has just flown by. In celebration of Dr. Seuss' birthday, we listened to and read many of his rhythmic stories. The classrooms were full of children engaging in Dr. Seuss rhymes and word games.



The children practiced various literacy skills embedded in the theme of St. Patrick's Day. Each child colored and cut a leprechaun and practiced their writing skills by completing sentences about their leprechaun.

We learned about fact versus opinion during our Pet unit. The students learned many facts about dogs, cats, hamsters, fish, and birds.

In math, we practiced counting to 100 by 10's, 5's, and 2's as well as counting on from any number.

Finally in Science, we learned about landforms such as mountains, valleys, rivers, lakes, and plains. To demonstrate our understanding of these concepts, we created our own landforms using playdough.

First Grade:

March was certainly more like a lion than a lamb this year.

While first graders eagerly await the arrival of spring weather, we have been very busy in and out of our classrooms. First graders completed an author study of Dr. Seuss. Our students had fun themes to look forward to each day during our week-long study. However, our week was shortened due to our snowy weather. Our first graders did get to wear silly socks to school, learned all about Horton, and made Oobleck. These are just a few of the fun activities from our author study.

In Language Arts, we have been working on finding the main idea in stories that we read. This is a difficult concept for many first graders so practicing this at home will be helpful.

We have started our study of Africa. The children are learning where Africa is located and the size of this continent. Our first graders are excited to pack their suitcases for their next adventure. When we return from Spring Break, we will begin our journey.

Our biggest March event took place on March 16th. What a perfect day to work with GREEN paint! Our first graders spent the morning painting our rainforest murals. Thank you to all of the parent volunteers who helped make this day a success. Please feel free to come and visit our tropical rainforest when you are in the building. Admission is free!



April showers bring May flowers . . . may our showers (rain or snow) be few and our flowers plenty!

Second Grade:

This month at VFE second grade students learned about digital citizenship. These lessons taught children about internet safety, how to navigate the web safely, and what to do if something seems suspicious online. These lessons are important to have for our young students as they are growing up in a digital world.

Second grade students also had their family life health curriculum this month. Students learned about heredity, different types of families, stereotypes, and why we are who we are. These lessons had students engaged and hopefully sparked conversation at home about subjects taught. The alternative family life curriculum taught about bones and muscles.

 This month in science students finished their study on soil and began their solar system unit. During this unit, students will be learning about the sun, the moon, neighboring planets, and the understanding of distance and space. The solar system unit is always a popular and fun unit for our young learners.

The month of March also had students engaged with assemblies, themed writing projects, and special guidance lessons presented by our school guidance counselor, Mrs. Swetkowski. These lessons taught about self esteem and how to handle peer pressure.

As we prepare for Spring Break, we look forward to all the fun learning opportunities April will bring. We hope everyone enjoys the time off with family and we are excited for warm weather, spring projects, and an exciting third marking period!

Third Grade:



This month Valley Forge third graders have been busy learning and reviewing reading strategies and applying skills they have learned to better understand passages and answer questions based on the text. Since the PSSAs will take place in April, we have also helped the students prepare by teaching and reinforcing test-taking strategies and reviewing the types of questions that will be on the test. We are proud of the efforts the students have put in all year to be close and careful readers and also in being resilient math problem solvers!

In Language Arts, we have been working on a variety of topics such as: point of view, comparing and contrasting, and cause and effect. We have been carefully working on not only providing text evidence in our responses but also supplying our analysis which helps completely answer the question being asked. In writing, third graders focused on how-to pieces and some are starting to be introduced to writing opinions. We will be using the acronym OREO to help us remember to state our opinion, reason for the opinion, evidence of the opinion and restating the opinion in our writing. Students have enjoyed sharing their how-to and look forward to responding to a variety of opinion questions including which special in school is best!

In Science, we continue to perform our chemical tests with our five chemical unknowns. It is so exciting to see which chemicals have a reaction to the various liquids we mix them with! In Social Studies, we continue to focus on William Penn and the history of our great state of Pennsylvania. Students have received an assignment that asks them to research a famous person in history at home. Then students will dress up as their famous person, share a speech as this person to their classmates, and then share later in the day during our "Wax Museum" for parents and families. It is certainly one of the most memorable days of the year and we look forward to sharing it with you. Please contact your child's teacher if you need more information.

As a grade, we look forward to warmer weather and even more exciting learning adventures to come!

The fourth graders are thinking that the “lion” part of March is not quite ready to leave!

In science, we are working hard in our Motion and Design unit. The students are working together in teams to learn about force, movement, and how friction and weight can change these things. In social studies, we are studying how our new nation was formed now that the Revolutionary War is over.



The kids are continuing to work on informational writing pieces in the classroom as well. Many of the 4th graders are researching endangered species and will turn their research into a published book about that animal. We are also learning more about different informational text structures.

In language arts, we are beginning to learn how to synthesize while reading. We are also starting to apply our reading strategies to novels in the classroom.

The P.A.L. (personal achievement in learning) project has kicked off for us and is in full swing. Each student has chosen a topic that they are researching. They are very excited to learn more about their selected topic and present it to us later this year. The teachers really enjoy learning from the kids during these presentations!

We know that the rest of the year is going to fly by. There is so much to look forward to for the fourth graders in the coming months!



Special & Support Area Updates

Music



The music classroom at VFES this month was filled with singing, dancing, and playing instruments! Here are just some of the things we have been doing and learning in each grade...

This past month, the Kindergarteners have been exploring the differences between long and short sounds and fast and slow sounds in music. We explored these sounds through singing, playing instruments, and moving.

The 1st graders have been learning to read rhythms like the quarter note, eighth note, and quarter rest. We are also learning about music from Japan and Africa to prepare for our spring show on May 3rd at 2:15 PM.

In 2nd grade, we are also preparing for our spring show called “Bugz!” It will be on April 27th at 9:30 AM. In addition, we are learning to read and sing solfege pitches (do, mi, la, and sol). Most recently, we learned about a famous composer, Johannes Brahms, and performed a movement activity to some of his music.

Our 3rd graders have been working on reading and playing 3 notes on the recorder. We have been learning many 3 note songs and we wrote a composition using those notes. We are also preparing songs for our Pennsylvania Play on June 8th at 2:00 PM.

The 4th graders are learning about a new syncopated rhythm and playing that rhythm using various instruments. They also learned about Rondo Form, a way to organize music. They created a rondo form composition with other classmates and performed for the class. The 4th grade show will be on May 17th at 10:00 AM.

The chorus, orchestra, and band students have also been working very hard to prepare for the Spring Concert! Don’t forget to mark your calendars! Parents are invited to the 7:00 PM performance on Wednesday, May 9th at Valley Forge Middle School. The students are very eager and excited to perform for their family, friends, and teachers!

