

4B Flight Update for the Week of October 1, 2018

This month's Catholic Virtue is Responsibility. This month's Gospel Value is Truth.



This day, Father,
may my eyes be opened
to see the beauty
in all that is ordinary, yet special,
around me.

May the glory of all that you have made
remind me of your presence
and lead me closer to you.

Amen.

Dear 4B Families,

Welcome to October and all it has in store for us! The days and weeks seem to already be zooming by as we continue on our learning journey together. As we begin this month of the Catholic Virtue of Responsibility, we look at the many ways we have settled into fourth grade, and set goals for the few things we have not arrived at yet. We continue to look at ways to help us stay organized, we find that as one size does not fit all, neither does one way of doing things, especially when it comes to helping us remember the many things we work with each day. There are several strategies that I have shared with the children and we are making an effort to see which one works best for each one individually. We still have the whole group routine of writing homework in our planner as it is posted and then checking through the list at the end of the day to make sure we didn't forget to write something down; but when it comes to things going to and from school, some of us are having a little difficulty remembering everything. I have recommended that we make use of the three little boxes that are in each square of our daily planner. Check the first one when we pack what we need for that assignment, check the second one when we complete the assignment at home, and check the third when we put it into our backpack; then we check our planner in the morning before we leave the house to make sure that all three boxes are checked. If the third one isn't checked, look on the kitchen table, or your desk to see if your completed homework was left behind! Another strategy we will be using is to put things right into our backpacks, mainly textbooks/workbooks, when the class is over and we know that we will need them for homework. Our binder is setup with the three color folders, and for many this seems to be working best to remember papers. Blue is for homework, Green is for study guides and checked work to be used for upcoming quizzes and tests, and Red has graded papers which you can review and keep at home (unless it is a sign and return...75% or lower). As we begin to add to our classroom jobs, I am going to add Gate Attendants who will use a checklist at the end of the day to ensure that everyone has what they need to take home. We will use this until we feel we have mastered the art of packing, and are ready to fly solo! Just another, check and balance, that takes little time, but will help grow strong habits. Please consider having a routine for packing completed homework each evening and also let me know if you find another system works better for your child, I am happy to incorporate this into their day.

This week we will be adding more independent work and challenges to our day. It will include personalized learning tasks for reinforcement, as well as stretching thinking, and help them to develop ownership of their work and pacing. While these will be independent activities, they will have several checkpoints with me each week to ensure progress is being made, as well as help them develop the art of taking responsibility for their learning. There will be a mix of hands-on activities, as well as use of technology for these. These are also important as we prepare to begin Genius Hour and Invention Convention where being able to manage independent work will be one of the requirements. Of course, these are still in the early stages of development for them, so long term tasks will be chunked into manageable units with interim deadlines with the goal of having them develop skills that will get them from start to finish within their own time frame, managing their work and ensuring that no task goes unfinished.

With Gratitude for all you do to support our children and school!

Mrs. B

Destination: ELA

Toothpaste Millionaire is our first class novel for the year! The children have been bringing in their copies and are excited to begin the reading journey with the novel. As we begin reading the novel, we will be working on strategies and tasks that we will use with all our novels. Vocabulary and comprehension tasks will be assigned as we read through the book and we will have periodic vocabulary and comprehension assessments. We will also work more on reader responses and how to best answer questions with the best and complete written responses.

We have started working with vocabulary skills in reading and other subjects, and focusing on the all important context clues, especially as we are stumbling upon words that have multiple meanings, as well as being identified as different parts of speech. This can be a challenging skill so we will be working with it throughout the year and the children will find it will become a valuable reading habit to pause, at unfamiliar words or when they think a word doesn't make sense because it is not used as the "usual" part of speech we usually see it, and take the time to read around the word to figure it out. This helps build a robust vocabulary for both writing and speech.

Last week, I gave a pretest on the week's planned words on Monday; anyone showing mastery of those words, was given a different list to work with for the week. The lists are related by spelling rules so we can work both as a class and in small groups. We are taking notes on spelling rules as we go so we can refer back to them and become better spellers without memorizing lists of words. This will help us as we continue to look for ways to offer more personalized learning for the children. As we move forward we will be doing this in other areas including math and reading.

Destination: MATH

We worked with rounding last week in our books, extension activities and a fun game of Scoot on Friday. Scoot gets the children up and moving around the room; it is a quiet orderly movement, and I think it is one of the most valuable activities as the children stop at a task card, have but seconds to complete the work and write their answer on their answer grid and move to the next on the sound of the bell or hearing "SCOOT". It builds focus skills, as well as helps them pace themselves, and increases fluency and stamina as they work through 25-30 tasks in a round. In the upcoming week we will be working with multi-digit addition and subtraction rules, patterns, and estimation. Regrouping is a common challenge with this topic, we will revisit our work with the base ten cubes in order to get a visual and hands-on practice on what regrouping is all about and why we need to perform this as part of our computations.

Destination: RELIGION

We will begin our chapter, "Sin in Our World"; which will begin our journey with the Ten Commandments. We will also be focusing on the Bible; we will be working with how to identify scripture verses in the Bible and practice using those scripture references to find what we are looking for within the Bible. October being the month of the Most Holy Rosary, the children will be learning more about the prayers and mysteries of the Rosary over the next few weeks.

Destination: SCIENCE

We are working with force, motion, and energy in science. The children are learning how to take notes with vocabulary and key concepts. We had a wonderful outdoor lab last week using paper airplanes. The best part was when the wind took some of the planes a few extra "miles" but it brought "smiles" to our preschool buddies who happened to be outside playing. It was the sweetest sight to see our fourth graders "accidentally" sending planes off course into the hands of the four-year-olds; the squeals and excitement as they caught the planes and then took ownership throwing them around; one of those priceless memories (and yes I have the pictures to share!).

Destination: WRITING/GRAMMAR

In Writing we are working on paragraphs. We are talking about the topic sentence and the details that follow to form a paragraph. We are working on putting our thoughts and details together on paper and in paragraphs. In Grammar, we are working on types of sentences, subjects and predicates, and complete sentences.

Destination: SOCIAL STUDIES

We are learning to locate and describe hemispheres, continents, countries and oceans.

Test jumps for Flight 4B:

Monday...Spelling pretest (no studying)

Wednesday...Science Vocabulary Test

Thursday...Religion Test

Friday...Spelling Test; Math Test