

Class V Newsletter

Fall 2007

*****VOLUNTEERS NEEDED*****

- **PETS TO VETS** drivers
- **PET FOOD** retriever (you would be golden if you did this)
- **HOSTS FOR CLASS BREAKFASTS AND SPECIAL EVENINGS** (help set dates)
- **GARDEN SUPPLIES** (pruning saw, native plant bulbs, native ferns, flat rocks for stepping stones, stones to mark flower or fern beds no smaller than brick size, pea gravel, mulch *(in order of need)*)

CLASSROOM NEWS

Science

Botany, Gardening, Junior Master Gardener By Wils

We have a butterfly garden. The garden is big, green, and has lots of flowers. We go out to weed it. We study the plants. We have looked at parts of the plant, parts of the flower, dicots and monocots, two different kinds of roots (reticulate and tap). Flowers are cool!

Third year students go to Junior Master Gardener (JMG) classes. We do experiments with plants. This past week we made flower pots out of gallon milk jugs.

Physical Science By Philip and Henry

We are doing light experiments. In the first experiment we rubbed chalk on two erasers, then smacked them together in a dark room. We turned the flashlight on the chalk dust. It looked like a tractor beam; like something from Star Wars. It also looked like the Milky Way because of all the particles or like a laser beam. It showed us how light travels. It was cool.

With the second experiment, we looked at how light reflects and how some objects are luminous and some nonluminous. The room was dark. We couldn't see much. We shined the light on a clock and the clock reflected light like a mirror. In the dark, a clock would not be visible without the help of a light

Animal Care by Doug

I will be your tour guide for today, so follow me and get ready for a trip. Our first stop is the salamanders. One is black and one is white. The white one could lose his eyes because he is a Mexican cave salamander and usually lives in the dark. In our classroom, the white one may not lose his eyes because he is often in the light. They hide behind rocks. We feed them worms.

We have a common household rat in our classroom. He is a very fast, active creature. Watching him is fun. He likes to eat anything.

We have a fish called a cichlid. He has a blue mouth and a gold and blue body. He is large and uses his front two fins to swim.

The tarantula likes to eat crickets. She may look mean but is just a big lover. When we give her water, she backs away.

Our cockatiel is very friendly and loves people. He likes to fly around. He enjoys whistling.

Our last stop is our rabbit, Tanner. She loves to hop and is very friendly. She really likes her carrots. She loves to get brushed.

Zoology By Doug and Wils

We study classification of animals like chordates and we've studied the needs of animals. We draw pictures of the parts of chordates and have a game called Predator to help us learn food webs. We have a lot of animal specimens that we learn about.

Language

Grammar

By Olivia

Grammar is fun. You study articles, adjectives, nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions, and interjections. I'm on adjectives. They describe the noun. Sometimes in other boxes you act out what the cards say. Let's say you have a card that says 'run'. You act out what the card says and the other people have to guess.

Word Study

By Olivia

You can get really far in the boxes of word study and it is fun. In word study there are compounds, contractions, categories, antonyms, synonyms, homophones, abbreviations, prefixes, suffixes, root words, similes, proverbs, capital letters, periods for abbreviations, sentences/phrases, possessives, commas, quotation marks, guide words, alphabetical order, dictionary, and thesaurus. You also do syllables. It is fun to write the words down. You match the cards together.

Spelling

By Presley

Every week on Fridays, we get a list with spelling words on it. The next week on Thursday we take a spelling test.

Creative Writing

By Bryce

Creative writing is fun because you get to write stories. You also get to write poems. We like writing in special notebooks. Typing up a final draft and reading it to the class is the best part.

Junior Great Books

By Presley

Junior Great Books has lots of stories that third year work on. Every Monday we start a new story. We look up words that we don't know, then we get our discussion question. After we answer the question, we have a discussion meeting.

Readers Theatre

By Bryce

Readers Theatre is fun because you get a script to read and you do a little play.

Math

Math and Word Problems by Noah

Math word problems are fun. They're usually easier than plain old math. Sometimes, however, they are challenging. You have to figure out how to solve the problems.

Math Facts

By Kassie

In math facts, we try to memorize our tables. To learn them, we think a lot. Math facts are fun. When you're practicing, you write the answers down. You can also use 'wrap-ups'. Wrap-ups are small plastic boards with problems on them. You wrap string from the problem to the right answer. A lot of first year students use wrap-ups. We take timed tests to see if we've learned the math table. When you pass the test, you move on to the next number. Second and third year have a sheet of paper for the table they are working on. We try to finish the table in twenty seconds.

Routine of the Day and Special Lessons

Routine of the Day

By Jacob

When we get to school, the first thing we do is work. Then we have lunch and go outside to play. When we come in, we read books, then go back to work. At the end of the day, our parents come to pick us up. On special days like Tuesday, we get to go to Art and P.E.; on Wednesday, we go to Music. On Friday, our routine changes. We have Writer's Club (creative writing), and then we go to Library and Spanish. When we come back, we have a peace meeting. For lunch, we can order pizza.

Peace Meeting

By Gareth

Every Friday, we have a peace meeting. We have a gong, talking stick, and a candle. We meditate and we tell one another things we liked or did not like. Students in our class say they like talking about their week, listening to the peace music, lighting the candle, and hearing the gong.

Daily Message

By Jacob

Daily Message is written on a whiteboard. It may have questions that you answer or just a message to write down. It is fun. Some students do it first. Sometimes we must write our answers in paragraphs and then edit them. We especially look at punctuation and spelling.

Snack

By Jacob

Please do not bring sweets or nuts for snack. Send nutritious foods.

Lunch

By Gareth

We have lunch after work time and before play time and quiet reading. We have table leaders at every table except the teachers' table. They also keep the table 'civilized'. We eat for 20 minutes to a half hour. Some of my classmates said they like lunch because they get to talk and eat dessert. They like the Subway sandwiches.

Playtime

By Gareth

After lunch, work time, and snack, we walk to the playground to play for about 30 minutes. We have monkey bars, swings, tether ball, play structures, and a field. Afterwards we all come in and do quiet reading or sometimes we have Specialists.

Specialists

Library

By Meredith and Ashlee

When we walk into the library, we get our folders. We take a piece of paper out of the folder and work on it. When we get done, we get free time. In free time we get to read books.

Spanish

By Ashlee

Spanish sounds cool. I like learning new numbers, colors, and picking Spanish names. It was fun coloring the piñata in our Spanish workbook.

Art

By Meredith

Art is fun because you get to use your hands. I liked doing the blind contour drawing. We looked at our thumb and drew it without looking at the paper. It was cool when we get to draw the fire truck. A real truck came and parked in the parking lot. We sketched it and then we filled it in with watercolor paints. I like using the paper mache. You got to get your hands all gooey.

PE

By Meredith

PE is awesome. I like dodge ball and the "hoppy" balls (they're big and have handles on the top. We bounce on them.). We have fun passing basketballs back and forth. I also like to jump rope and I like to play kickball and soccer.

Music

by Ashlee and Meredith

In music, you get to learn new songs like "Let's Fly a Kite". We get to use all kinds of instruments too. It sounds good when we play instruments together. We also get to act out the songs.

MATH FACTS ‘HOMEWORK’

Students are continuing to work on math facts at school. We do a timed test (20 seconds per table). Practicing math facts is done in numerical order. When we test, we ‘jumble’ the facts. We start with addition and subtraction, and then move to multiplication, and division.

Feel free to work on math facts at home.

A variety of memorization tactics may be employed, for example –

- Skip counting
- Combining memorization with a physical activity like ball bouncing or jump roping
- Computer games for math facts
- Practicing memorization during car rides or other ‘down’ times

Third Year Junior Great Books

The JUNIOR GREAT BOOKS program describes itself as “[t]he interpretive discussion program that moves students toward excellence in reading comprehension, critical thinking, and writing”.

The process leading to the “Shared Inquiry” discussion has several steps -

- a first reading where unfamiliar vocabulary is noted so that it can be looked up. Students are encouraged to collaborate in class on vocabulary.
- a second reading where the new vocabulary is integrated into the story and where students begin thinking about the why of the story. Questions students may have about the story should be noted at this stage.
- the Shared Inquiry discussion where the group works together to discover meaning by thinking and talking about an interpretive question.

We give the interpretive questions out ahead of time because many children like more time to ponder the question. The program suggests it could be given right before the discussion. Please do not consider it assigned homework. Students may choose to work on the question at home but it is not required. It is intended that new ideas and ways of interpreting the reading selection will come to light during our discussion of the interpretive question. There is not a right answer per se. Helping your child think about the story is beneficial but please don't feel they should come in with a correct answer – a well thought out idea is the desired result.

Families can best support their students by

1. reading the story together, or have your child read the story to you.
2. Asking your child to tell you about the story.

Questions for your child could include

- Tell me about the story. What happened next?
 - Who is your favorite character? Why?
 - What do you like about the story? What don't you like about it?
 - Does the story remind you of anything you have done or seen?
3. Listen to and enjoy what your child has to tell you.

Reader’s Theatre

After the delightful performance of “The Walrus and the Carpenter” by last year’s students, we are trying out Reader’s Theatre. It is an oral interpretive reading activity which builds student reading fluency by

- Providing repeated reading practice
- Allowing students to delve deeply into a story, poem, etc.
- Providing writing experiences for older students as they transform a story or poem into play form
- Making reading fun by focusing on acting and oral expression

Readers theatre does not require stage sets. Props and costumes may be used but the main focus is on oral expression. We will be increasing our work on scripts and look forward to some future student performances.