

The Buzz

A Newsletter from the Classroom

April, 2009



Herndon Elementary School

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Head Start

Thank you to all of the parents who joined us on the field trip to the National Zoo. The students had a great time and saw a lot of zoo animals. Talk to your child about the animals we saw. We will be looking at pictures from the trip. We have a field trip in May; be on the lookout for more information.

In April, we will talk about spring and umbrellas. We will also read The Three Little Pigs.

You are welcome to visit and volunteer in our classroom as this will help you understand your child's school day. Please give us a call if you plan on coming to visit so we know to expect you.

We want to remind parents to take a few minutes every day to talk to their child about their day at school. This helps them develop their language skills. If you have any questions, please give us a call 703-326-3165.

Kinderbees

The kindergartners are becoming animal experts during the month of April by studying a variety of wild and domesticated animals. Our budding zoologists will be introduced to the seven continents as we learn about animals from around the world. We will read both fiction and nonfiction books that will help us extend our knowledge of animal facts, as well as provide opportunities for story retelling and character identification. Our classroom dramatic play areas will soon be transformed into animal hospitals for our kindergarten "vets" to care for sick or injured stuffed animals.

Our focus in math will be on mathematical problem solving involving addition and subtraction. We will also sort and classify animals into various categories and use graphs to help present the results. In science, we will learn about ways that we can help protect the environment. We will also identify items that can be recycled.

Our letter identification and sound emphasis will be on the letters Ll, Ww, and Yy. Please continue to review the letter names and sounds at home.

First Grade

Spring has sprung in the first grade classrooms! This month we'll be focusing on seasonal changes by observing seeds and plants as we grow our own corn plants. As a part of this study we will be going to Cub Run Nature Center to observe seeds and plants in their natural environment. Mrs. LeReche, Mrs. Shackelford, and Ms. Mellender will go on Wednesday, April 29. Mme. Hamez and Mme. Taylor will go on Thursday, April 30.

Our reading focus this month will be on retelling stories by answering who, what, when, where, and why questions along with making connections. In writing workshop, we are beginning to write stories that have a beginning, middle, and end. Capitalization and punctuation are the focus for our writing lessons this month.

We are continuing our study of maps including the compass rose and map legend. This will lead into our study of the seven continents and five oceans.

Time and money is our focus in math – the students will learn to tell time to the hour and half-hour. They will also learn to count pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters up to \$1.00. Please help your child practice by counting change at home.

Second Grade is Buzzing!

In science we are beginning our study of the wetlands environment and the animals that live there. We are looking forward to our field trip to Ellanor C. Lawrence Park to observe a wetland environment. In health we will learn about the food pyramid and making smart food choices.

In math we have started a unit on money. The students will learn to count and compare a collection of coins and one dollar bills whose total value is \$2.00 or less. The students will learn about the proper use of the cent symbol, dollar sign, and decimal point. The students will practice making change to \$1.00.

In language arts we will be working on identifying the main idea, the author's purpose, and reflecting on our reading selections. April is National Poetry Month. The students have been listening to and reading a variety of poetry through the year.

In social studies we have been learning about important people in history: Helen Keller, Susan B. Anthony, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King Jr., and Jackie Robinson. Our

next unit of study will be the early explorers: Christopher Newport, Christopher Columbus, Juan Ponce de Leon, Jacques Cartier, and Marco Polo.

News from the Third Grade Team!

REVIEW, REVIEW, REVIEW!

Now is the time when we use all of those skills, facts, and figures that we have learned throughout the year, as we prepare to take those SOLs! Of course, there is still new information to be learned, but now we get the chance to hone those minds! Parents, please make sure that your child is ready, alert, and prepared each day!

In a few weeks, we will be asking for each student to bring in a one-inch binder. We will be reviewing in a very special way, but we will explain later. Look for that information!

AND... WHY WERE THEY IMPORTANT?

Soon, we will be learning about some very important people and their accomplishments, as taught by our very own students. Our students will do their own research, and plan their projects very thoroughly and neatly. Each teacher will be presenting the information in their own unique way. Check with your child's teacher.

IT'S ABOUT TIME FOR A FIELD TRIP!

We have planned a wonderful field trip experience for our little people for the end of our school year. This field trip will be to the National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C! Look for information to come shortly. Spring is in full bloom!

And, Finally...

Just a reminder to make sure that your child has enough supplies, appropriate clothes for the weather, and plenty of rest for the challenges that are faced each and every day. We count on you!

Keep up the good work, Third Graders!

Thank you!

Fourth Grade

We hope everyone had a great spring break and that students are ready to focus on preparing and studying for the reading, math, and Virginia history SOL tests in May. In social studies we are now studying Reconstruction and then move on to 20th century Virginia. We have plenty of games and activities planned to help review SOL facts.

During the month of March, the fourth graders had the honor to observe a presentation from Mr. Godart and Mr. Meisky regarding the Civil War.

All the students have worked very hard on their biography projects about famous Virginians! Students continue to read a variety of genres to better prepare for the SOL tests. These genres include nonfiction, realistic fiction, biographies, and poetry. They are practicing comprehension skills such as making connections, questioning, visualizing, inferring, and drawing conclusions. Regular trips to the public library will encourage and enrich your child's reading development.

In math we completed our geometry unit and now we are working on probability. We are using manipulatives as well as interactive computer programs and games.

Finally, we will be studying ecosystems in science. This is a wonderful hands-on unit of study which we are sure our 4th graders will love.

Fabulous Fifth Graders

We had a fabulous time on our field trip to the Baltimore Aquarium. Thank you to all the parents that helped make our trip a great success!

In science we are studying landforms. This unit introduces students to the Earth science concepts of the Earth's structure and processes, both constructive and destructive that creates landforms. Students will investigate and understand how the Earth's surface is constantly changing, explain how fossils show evidence of Earth's history, delineate the rock cycle, demonstrate the effects of weathering and erosion, and explain how humans impact landforms.

In social studies we are studying Ancient Greece. Students will learn how geography influenced the expansion of Greece, how to write a Greek myth and participate in classical plays, identify the similarities and differences between classical Greece and present day United States, and list the contributions of classical Greece.

Students will continue to work in their reading groups (some reading groups have been changed to meet individual needs). We will focus on character development, describe plot development, including problem and solution, major events, and supporting details.

We are studying geometry as well as learning how to measure. The metric system has been introduced and students will be asked to measure and convert units within this system. Students are required to have a protractor and a ruler for math class.

We are looking forward to our upcoming Medieval Feast! However, we need your help to make it a success. Students received a letter explaining the date, time, and items needed from each classroom. Please review this list and return it to your child's homeroom teacher as soon as possible. Thank you for your continued support.

6th Grade Super Stars

In language arts we continue to work on grammar and writing. We are using Time For Kids articles to write summaries and pick out the main ideas. We are also reading novels and completing various book projects.

In math, we are finishing our unit on geometry and will begin a chapter on probability. In compacted math, we are studying geometry and the volume and area of figures.

The sixth graders went to the high school to visit the planetarium which was a fabulous introduction to our final unit in science, astronomy. Key concepts we will explore are the organization of the solar system and the relationships among the various bodies, like the sun, moon, and planets that comprise it.

In social studies we are discussing the events in history that led to the Civil War and the reconstruction period after the war up to 1877.

Kid Lab

Congratulations to Nasier Best, 6th grade, Reeman Nour, 5th grade, and Ian Boll, 4th grade, for representing Herndon Elementary at the cluster level 24 game competition. Special thanks to Mme. Durant for accompanying them to the tournament. We are proud of each of you.

In March students in K-2 played a variety of games including our popular and new Keva Planks as well as old favorites such as Batik, Chairs, Honey Bee Tree, and Triazzle. Third - sixth graders played Rush Hour, an all time favorite by the ThinkFun Company.

In April the lower grades will play Loose Change, a card game focusing on their money counting skills and the upper grades will try to solve the puzzle in TipOver, another new game to the KID LAB. Herndon ES teachers and students send many thanks to the PTA for providing funds to continue expanding our KID LAB options. Please stop by room 104 during Math and Science Night to see what we play with our classes.

Calendar

- April 16 Math/Science Night 6:30pm
 17 SCA Spirit Day – Mismatch Day
 20-24 Spring Book Fair
 Administrative Assistants Appreciation Week
 20 Ice Cream Social 6pm
 PTA Mtg 7pm
 23 Field Trip – Gr 2 (Taylor, Hamez)
 to Ellanor Lawrence Park
 Report Cards Go Home
 24 Celebration Assembly 9:30am
 Field Trip – Gr 2 (Ryan, Dezee, Dyer)
 to Ellanor Lawrence Park
 27 PTA Spirit Night Foster’s Grille 5-9pm
 28 Field Trip – Gr 3 to the Smithsonian
 Natural History Museum
 29 Field Trip – 1st Gr (Mellender, Shackelford,
 LeReche) to Cub Run
 30 Field Trip – 1st Gr (Taylor, Hamez) to Cub Run
 K (2009-10)Orientation – Cafeteria 6pm
 K (2009-10)Registration 7pm
- May 1 Gr 6 Panoramic Photo
 Medieval Feast Gr 5 1:30pm
 4-8 Teacher Appreciation Week
 4 Teacher Appreciation Lunch 2pm
 6 School Nurse Day
 K (2009-10)Registration 5-7:00pm
 13 Field Trip – Gr 4 to Manassas
 Battlefield
 15 SCA Spirit Day – Colors Day
 18-22 Educational Bosses Week
 18 SOL Test Gr 3
 PTA Meeting/1st Grade Program 7pm
 19-22 SOL Tests – Grs 3 & 6
 25 Holiday – No School
 26-28 SOL Tests Grs 4 & 5
 28 Field Trip – K to Junie B. Jones
 29 SOL Make-ups