

## December News

### **Kindergarten**

Kindergarteners have just started a new writing unit- "Writing for Readers" where they are putting their phonetic spelling skills to work. They are sounding out words and hoping to have the beginning sound, middle sound, and end sound to enhance their work and sentences. As readers, they are finishing up their last Star Books and shifting into learning and applying key reading foundational skills. In math, they are composing and decomposing numbers to 5. In social studies, the students are learning about winter holidays including Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa, and New Year's Eve/Day. Additionally, students are engaging in a deeper study of families in social studies, discussing traditions and what makes their family special. We wish everyone a wonderful winter holiday and a happy and healthy 2020!

### **First Grade**

First grade writers recently finished up their personal narrative writing unit and have moved on to writing to express their opinions. In reading, they have been working on growing their visualizing skills and developing greater fluency and expression. First graders are currently working with both, plane shapes and solid figures this month in math. Lots of fun centers have been planned for math, such as "shape searches" around the classroom and "free builds using the blocks", identifying which block shapes have been used. In science, we are finishing up our unit on sound and light. Everyone has had so much fun exploring the way sound and light travel. Our first grade show was a tremendous success and the students loved performing for their parents. Finally, first graders are looking forward to our class trip to the Wyckoff Public Library and police station on Monday, December 16th.

### **Second Grade**

Second grade has started publishing their second writing workshop story! We are practicing retelling stories we read and identifying cause and effect for big events happening in stories. Second graders are also learning the bar model strategy as a tool for helping them know whether to add or subtract in word problems they are solving. Lastly, we are excited to continue being chemical engineers in science as we test out recipes to create the perfect play-doh! We hope our families enjoyed our holiday show!

### **Third Grade**

Third graders are having a wonderful December, and not just because we enjoyed our first snow day.

Writers are now researching a topic of their choice, and they are developing an informational research writing piece.

In math, students have been learning different strategies to multiply and divide. They are also analyzing word problems to determine what operation is required to reach a solution.

We are concluding first science. Students are using the knowledge they have acquired about hazardous weather to design and create a hazardous weather shelter. We will test the shelters to determine whether they can truly stand up to windy and wet "weather" conditions.

We look forward to implementing our plan to raise money for The Seeing Eye organization in the new year.

We will all start anew in 2020 after a refreshing holiday break.

Happy New Year!

#### **Fourth Grade**

Grade 4 writers are digging into a brand new genre, the personal essay! We are drafting essays about times in our lives when we've learned meaningful life lessons, adding lots of reflection, and angling our writing to share with our readers. During Reading Workshop, we are recognizing different types and structure of nonfiction and practicing important note taking skills before focusing on a research project. This week we are wrapping up our third unit in math on multi-digit multiplication and long division. Students have learned a variety of strategies to use when computing. Our next unit in math is fractions. In our first science unit, we learned about how our earth has changed over the years. We observed water erosion by building a stream table in class. Most recently, we have learned about Earth changes by studying fossils. Finally, Chorus students are very excited for our holiday concert on December 19th! All of our busy 4th graders are looking forward to the long holiday break and rest before taking on our New Year's resolutions!

#### **Fifth Grade**

In language arts, the fifth graders are beginning to publish their narrative poetry collections. They will celebrate their work at a poetry cafe in early January- parents are invited to attend. 5P's poetry cafe will be held on January 7th from 2:30-3:15 and 5B&5C will hold their cafe together, January 8th from 2:00-3:15.

*5th Grade Math* - We recently started working with fractions (adding and subtracting fractions with unlike denominators). Before the break, students will also be working with fractions, mixed numbers and division expressions. Students will use fraction circles to work on these concepts.

*5th Grade Science* - Students will be exploring patterns in the sky: shadows, night and day, and the appearance of stars. Students will learn how the position of the sun influences shadows with an in-class demonstration. Students will record their observations and measurements as they go. They will then create a graph and analyze data to discover patterns. We will then work to answer the question "Why is there day and night?" Students will also work to answer "Why do different locations on the Earth experience different amounts of sunlight during the year?" Students will use video clips and articles to help them. They will also create a "chart" on Google Sheets using the average hours of daylight by month and latitude and look for a pattern. Finally, we will do a class activity that will model that not every constellation is visible throughout the year.