

FOURTH GRADE BULLETIN

Making Memories

For their English Week projects, the fourth graders made creative predictions! Each student assumed the perspective of a favorite character from a previous class book, and from this perspective, re-wrote the ending to the story. On the day of the presentations, each student came dressed in character and orally presented the re-imagined ending to their classmates. These third-graders are enthusiastic and hard working, so their presentations were absolutely spectacular! Now, the children have become engrossed in E.L. Konigsburg's classic book, *From the Mixed Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*. Through this delightful story, they follow the adventures of two children, much like themselves in age and curiosity, who experience the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City in a most intriguing way!

Joining fellow mathematicians throughout the school, the fourth-graders turned in extraordinary math projects in celebration of Math Weeks. The grade-level theme was "Click Three Times," corresponding with the Math Weeks theme, "If I Only Had a Brain" from *The Wizard of Oz*. Students showed off their critical thinking skills as well as their artistic abilities by creating and displaying impressive, three-step story problems.

Easing into the study of graphing and functions, the fourth-graders are now pros when it comes to these skills and concepts. The students not only graphed functions, but also graphed functions that involved decimals as well as negative numbers. It was exciting to finally incorporate all four quadrants of the graph!

The fourth-graders then embarked on a more in-depth investigation of fractions and decimals. The students are always amazed by the relationship between decimals and fractions. All this knowledge will help them in their Continental Math League contests. Each contest consists of six higher-level thinking questions, and the students may not take more than thirty minutes to complete the contest. The problems are quite challenging, requiring the combination of different types of math skills. The students with the highest scores receive a special award at the end of the year. One way students can keep on their toes is to read their monthly "Math and Science Connection" (Intermediate Edition), which is sent home with the students at the beginning of every month. There are some fantastic activities which can be done at home, so be sure to check it out!

Tales of adventure, heroism, piety, and deception highlighted the fourth grade's second quarter in history. The students were surprised to find that many of the themes and ideas of the Greeks are things that people still wonder about today. The students have become adept at recognizing recurring themes and lessons in the mythology of the Greeks. In the myth of Prometheus, students discovered that sometimes you have to do something because you know it is right, even if society tells you differently. When reading the stories of Andromeda, Niobe, and Narcissus, students learned about hubris and the dangers of being too prideful. In the tales of Acrisus and Oedipus, fourth-graders thought about whether or not it is possible to change your destiny. They also considered whether knowing your fate ahead of time was a good thing or a bad thing. The fourth-graders have come up with impressively sophisticated dialogue about these stories. Ask them to explain some of the myths and demonstrate their expertise to you!



Visit to Wegmans



The fourth graders at Luray Caverns

This study of mythology has led the fourth grade into an examination of the history of the Greeks. The students will develop an appreciation for the culture that created the myths that have contributed so much to Western civilization. They will study all aspects of ancient Greek culture, including government, art and architecture, philosophy and theater.

Food is always a welcome topic in French class! Fourth-grade students learned about holiday recipes for their French project this year. The students now know that certain dishes are associated with certain holidays. The "crepe" is associated with la Chandeleur (Candlemas) and Mardi Gras! The wonderful projects during Language Weeks made everyone hungry. Everyone is excited to become a chef de cuisine! The students are also seeing and hearing a very humorous side of French: animals speak French too! The class now knows that onomatopoeias are different in English and French. For example, an English cow says, "Moo," but a French cow says, "Meuh." It's easy to learn more animal sounds in a French song that is just like "Old McDonald!"

During the second quarter, the fourth-grade students delved into Earth Science, including the history of astronomy, stars, galaxies, and constellations. Their studies were highlighted by an October field trip to the National Geographic Museum in Washington, D.C. The exhibit, entitled "1001 Inventions," focused on inventions from ancient Middle Eastern civilizations. One area was centered on the history of astronomy and discussed many of the astronomical instruments fourth-graders learned about this quarter. During one of their labs, students made astrolabes and used them to measure the angle of a "star" in the classroom. There was also an interactive display where the students could stand in a type of planetarium and match up pictures of constellations to their corresponding stars in the sky. The constellations that the children study in earth science are the very ones whose mythological stories are included in their history curriculum. A classically educated student understands that all areas of learning are interrelated!

The fourth-grade scientists have recently turned to studies of the physical world. In the coming weeks, they will learn about many of the elements that make up our world as well as how to use the periodic table. Students will examine different properties of these elements and what happens to them when they are combined in different ways. Before the year ends, the fourth-graders will also explore different types of energy, sources of energy, and how the different types of energy relate to one another. Now, that's exciting!

"When I approach a child, he inspires in me two sentiments; tenderness for what he is, and respect for what he may become." ~ Louis Pasteur