

Letters from GGM - April 2023

GEORGE GRANT MASON SCHOOL

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Terlecky Talk

This month's "talk" was written by our "Principal for a Day" Thatcher Givens, the winner of the Pick a Reading Partner Reading Challenge.

Thatcher Talk

Patience is an important virtue here in GGM. As you know, every month we have a character trait to help our students have unparalleled leadership and great characters. For April we found it wise to choose this month's character trait to be patience, especially because of the state tests coming up.

This year the state testing will be held April 19-20 for the ELA state test and math begins May 2. Students in GGM will not be taking the science tests this year. If there are parents or guardians that do not want their child/children to take the tests, please complete the state testing form sent home with your child and send it back to your child's teacher.

Yearbook forms also have been sent home with your children. If you are interested, please return the form or fill it out online.

Since April is poetry month, we thought we should tell you that from third to fifth grade there is a national poetry contest in which your child can participate. The contest has a grand prize of \$500.00. To qualify, the poem needs to be less than 20 lines in any style except concrete or blackout. GGM wishes your child luck. Information has been sent home.

For parents that are interested in registering their child for GGM's Pre-K, Pre-Kindergarten Orientation is on April 14 at 1:00PM in the multi-purpose room. Pre-k Orientation is expected to last about one hour. We hope you decide to start your child's academic career here at GGM with us.

Speaking of Pre-K, for the Pre-K students' enjoyment GGM has added a Pre-K only interactive playground that includes a crawl tube, 3 mini slides, and benches.

Have a great spring break!

Upcoming Events

April 3-7 Spring Break

April 12 BOE Budget Review 7PM

April 13 PTO Meeting at 7PM

April 14 3rd quarter ends for grade 5

April 14 Pre-K Orientation at 1pm in GGM Multipurpose Room

April 19-20 ELA State Testing for Grades 3-5

April 20 Board of Education Regular Meeting at 7PM



Pre-K: Mrs. Braffett

Pre-k welcomed spring with open arms! We made an egg shaped collage with colorful textured paper. We worked on following directions during a coloring activity and created a beautiful spring picture! Pre-k worked on number writing from 1-5 and really enjoyed drawing pictures to go along with each number. Pre-k worked on number order and had fun identifying missing numbers during our Smartboard game! We introduced the letters "K," "L" and "M". We had fun making kings for the letter "K" and a beautiful lighthouse for the letter "L". Pre-K had fun using their creative imaginations to create a monster for the letter "M". We worked on rhyming words and had fun taking turns during a rhyme matching game. Pre-k is so excited about our new playground. We had fun exploring and playing on our playground. We are having so much fun crawling through the tunnel and sliding down the bumpy slides. We can't wait for more adventures outside this spring!

Kindergarten: Mrs. Rush

April in Kindergarten: What do you need? What do you want? We all have needs and wants! Kindergarten is learning all about needs and wants – we are learning that all of our basic needs are all the same, but the things we want are different. We all need food to eat, but do we NEED that ice cream? In Kindergarten, we see that the things we need to survive are few, but we can certainly make a long list of things that we want, as we read in *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*. Kindergarten will use their Science, Social Studies, Math, Reading, Speaking, and Writing skills to demonstrate their understanding of needs and wants. Kindergarten is also realizing that we are lucky to have all the things we need and we are just as lucky to earn the rewards of the things we want often. Kindergarten is beginning to understand that they need to work hard to get the things they want.

First Grade: Mrs. Matthies

April is right around the corner! Can you believe it? First grade has been so busy. Here are some highlights: In ELA we are reviewing settings and character traits. We are learning to identify settings by what we read in the story, and not relying on just

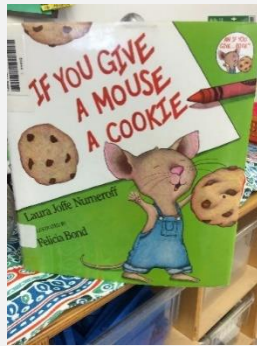
the pictures. We are also discussing the differences between character traits and physical traits and why they are so different when describing a main character. In phonics, the words are getting bigger. We will be using words to describe specific topics such as garden in spring and rabbits in Easter. In math, we are beginning a new unit. We are going to learn about measurement. We will learn that even though there are specific tools to measure with, such as rulers and measuring tape, we can also measure with objects at home. In social studies, we will be learning about the world around us. We will be using globes to find different countries and discuss their customs. Last but not least, in science we are discussing plants and their plant parts. We will also be planting. Get ready families. Spring has sprung in first grade. Yay!

Second Grade: Mrs. Blume

April brings National Poetry Month. This month students will have the opportunity to explore poetry through their reading and writing. They will be exposed to many different types of poetry; list poems, rhyming poems, shape poems, diamond poems and more. After investigating what poetry is, what poets write about, what poetry looks like, and how it can have rhythm and rhyme, they will begin writing their own poems. I love the freedom this unit brings for students. Reluctant writers often blossom due to the lack of restrictions poetry offers to the writer. Students will create an accordion style book that will hold a collection of their poems. In addition to writing poetry, students will be reading lots of poetry. Poetry is great for practicing fluency, reading with expression, inferring meaning or the author's message. It is one of my favorite units to teach!

Third Grade: Mrs. Rocklin

Yay for April, spring has sprung! This month we will be working on comparing fractions and being able to recognize how many parts there are to the whole number. We will continue to use our manipulative skills and work in our assigned groups on several math games and projects to reinforce our studies! In ELA we have been simultaneously working on character analysis in *The Broken Bike Boy of 33rd Street* and our ELA state exam practice. For our ELA test practice we are focusing on the main idea and the author's intent. We will jump into short answer responses and essay writing when we get back. Our constant hard work in class has prepared us for this test and I know our class will do a great job. We have come to the end of our plant



experiment. We will complete plotting and writing up our data and once our group has completed this they will turn their hypothesis into a short response and share it with the class in the form of a project and gallery walk. We will invite other classes to come see our hard work. Have a relaxing and great break to all!

Fourth Grade: Mrs. Bock

It is hard to believe that spring is already here. We have been continuing to work hard in 4th grade and it shows. This month in math we are going to start a new unit on geometry, starting with classifying lines and angles. We will then use this knowledge to classify different shapes. In social studies we are continuing to study New York State and will begin to discuss colonial life. In science, we have been completing labs, which the students love. We will also start a new topic of study: electricity. Please continue to have your student practice their math facts each night and keep up the great work!

Fourth Grade: Mrs. Rota

Fourth Grade continues to explore and practice new skills in ELA. We will be reviewing poetry and figurative language this month. Students will also be writing and illustrating some of their own poems. In addition to writing some poems, the students will be working on a broader writing piece in which they will make a claim and support their claim with reasons and evidence. We will also be keeping up with our spelling and grammar skills. In order to become stronger spellers, we are working on applying our spelling rules outside of our spelling lists. We have much to look forward to in April!

Fifth Grade: Ms. Valastro

This month we are looking forward to spring. Grade 5 will be digging in and learning all about poetry as we celebrate National Poetry Month! We will be finishing our fraction unit & exploring the world of measurement in math as we prepare for the state exams. Planting seeds is also on the agenda as we learn about energy transfer of plants in science. Lastly, we will be working on our character trait of self-control this month and doing our best to display this both in and outside of the classroom.

STEM: Ms. Klimowich

What can you do with 11,695 LEGO pieces? Turn them into a world map of course. Fifth Grade STEM students will be taking on the challenge to complete the largest LEGO set by piece count, LEGO Art World

Map. This map was kindly donated to our GGM STEM program from a community member. The students will need to carefully follow the pattern of tiny plastic dots on their base plates to recreate the continents, oceans and seas of the world. We will proudly display our map in GGM once it is completed.

Physical Education: Ms. Dowling & Mr. Brunner

This April, students in Pre-K to 2nd grade will continue working on their fitness skills. Jumping rope and other outdoor activities will be included at the conclusion of this unit. 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students will begin a Wiffle Ball Unit. With spring here, we are hoping to spend more time outside!

Music: Ms. Cienki

Hello to all! I hope that everyone has a great spring break. April is going to be jam packed in music. We're mostly doing more of the same concepts we've done all year, from marching to a steady beat, to reading music, to even creating our own songs. Also, we're going to continue on working to make our spring concert great for all to hear. Enjoy April everyone!

Spanish: Ms. Brusseler

¡Bienvenidos Abril! March was full of lots of fun in Spanish. In many of our classes we created projects where we traced and labeled the body parts of some of our fellow classmates. Our students did an awesome job at drawing and labeling. We also reviewed the month, seasons, and days of the week. We are starting to become very familiar with reading the date in Spanish as well! I am excited to see what April brings. I hope everyone has a wonderful Spring break!

Library: Mrs. Mui

April is full of celebrations! From School Library Month, to National Poetry Month and Earth Day, it will be a very busy three weeks in Digital Literacy. Show our library media center some love by visiting each day to read our "poem of the day." Each day students will be exposed to different forms of poetry such as haiku, cinquain, concrete, and theme written by different poets. Students will write their own poems as a way to express themselves, using poetic elements that include rhyme, rhythm, imagery, simile and metaphor.

Multi-Subject: Mrs. Donnelly

GGM Yearbook News! Our new yearbook provider, TreeRing, offers the option to order online very

easily. Parents will also have the option to create 2 FREE custom pages for their child, which will print only in their child's yearbook, creating a very personalized yearbook. (This is available for ONLINE ORDERS ONLY!) If you have any questions, please reach out to TreeRing Customer Support via email at support@treering.com or by phone (877) 755-TREE, Monday - Friday. If you have GGM Yearbook specific questions, please email me at nancy.donnely@tuxedoschools.org.

Math Specialist: Ms. Stack

Happy April! I hope everyone has a great spring break. The students have been working hard and really trying their best with their math work. We have been focusing on fractions, learning about money, and practicing our shapes. Students are actively participating and are excited to learn. April should be a great month in the math room. What did the triangle say to the circle? "You're pointless!"

Reading Specialist: Mrs. Sayles

We are segmenting, blending, and writing in the reading room. Students are skywriting, writing, and saying our letter sounds EVERY time we write a letter. This helps us as we read and spell. We are also using tools to help us as we write. We use an alphabet chart or phonics chart to help recall letter sounds or blend sounds. Students also use space sticks to help us remember to leave a space between words when we write sentences. We are getting to be stronger readers and writers every day!

Art: Mr. Stankiewicz

This month in the Art Studio, as well as class projects, students worked on Doodle for Google, pieces for the "On The Radio" musical, and started an Art to Remember project.

Pre-kindergarten students worked hard on a kite project. There was cutting with scissors, beading of pipe cleaners, numbering, and drawing. In the end, we ended up with a colorful artwork with students matching the number of beads to the number they had written on the kite.

Both Kindergarten and 1st grade worked on a clay animal. They learned about slab built ceramics and texture. When we return from break, they will be able to glaze them.

Second and third grade finished off the season with cups of steaming hot chocolate. We hope it gets

warm soon! They learned about the concept of oil and water not mixing. They created a three-dimensional object with cotton steam coming out of it.

4th and 5th grade learned about African Masks. They created a project about contrast, making a black and white construction paper mask of their own.

In the Art Club, students made a variety of original projects, including a pencil box and beading to create animals. Also, students helped fix the Tornado from the cafeteria. We patched, repainted, and glued our mascot to a new surface. Unfortunately, art club will end soon. The last two meetings will be April 10 and April 13 when we return from spring break.

Soon parents will be able to purchase their students artwork on a variety of material. We have started the Art to Remember project where students' creative pieces can be printed on ceramic trays, T-shirts, coffee, mugs, calendars, and more. Parents will receive a personalized order form at the end of April. While we have just started, I can't wait to see what the students create.

PTO on the GO

Thank you to everyone who came to our Retro Movie Night at the Lafayette Theater. We wish everyone a restful Spring Break and we look forward to upcoming fun events before the end of the school year.

