



George Grant Mason School

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Terlecky Talk

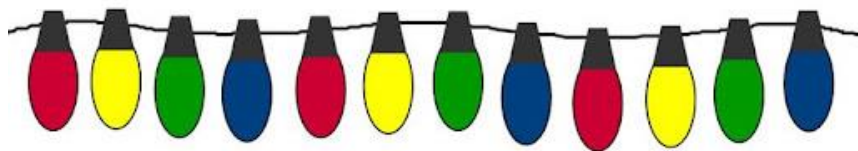
Dear Parents,

As I write this, the days are getting shorter and darkness comes earlier every day. We leave in the dark and get home in the dark, it seems as if spring is very far away. Then, in the early weeks of December, things start to change. The days start getting longer again. It's imperceptible, seconds really, but it's there. And there, quite literally in our darkest moment, comes a little bit of light, then every day a little bit more.

Similarly, when we see our children every day it's hard to discern how changes happen in them. But it's also there, still imperceptible, but changing for the better every day. In these times which seem more fractured than ever, it's important to remind ourselves that light always returns and our children are growing stronger and better every day.

I leave you with one of my favorite quotes by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. "Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that."

I wish for all of you and your families good health, sweet memories, and much, much light.



Happy Holidays!

Upcoming Events

December 3 School Picture
Make-up Day

December 9 GGM Parent
Teacher Conferences

December 10 Progress Reports for
Grade 5

December 15 Board of
Education Meeting

December 16 Winter Concert
PK-5 at 1:45 in the GFB High
School Auditorium

December 24-31 Winter Recess –
School closed

PTO on the Go

Thank you to everyone who came out to support the PTO during our Dine to Donate at Dottie Audrey's, and for those who purchased items from our Charleston Wrap fundraiser.

Our online spirit wear store will be up and running soon and will feature vintage logos that our president, Kelly Spranger, was able to track down from the Tuxedo Historical Society.

Please join us for our next meeting on Wednesday, Dec. 1, at 7pm at Seven Lakes Station, to hear more about our upcoming plans.

We wish everyone a happy, healthy holiday season!

Pre-K: Ms. Braffett

I am so excited to be teaching Pre-K here at GGM! We have been very busy getting to know each other and practicing our new daily routine. We learned an alphabet stretch to do together as a movement break during morning meeting. We had fun saying our AAB pattern on the calendar and jumping the months of the year. We've been working on identifying and writing the letters "H", "I" and "J". We made a letter "H" art activity and traced our hands, we did a fun letter "I" dot art activity, and worked together to list letter "J" words. We also had fun reading the story "Gobble, Gobble Mr. Wobble" and played a silly letter recognition game called Mr. Wobble's Alphabet Soup! Pre-K had fun learning about their 5 senses. We used our sense of touch to describe different textures and played an eye spy game. We made predictions on how our play dough would feel and used our sense of smell to guess the scent. This month we will continue to practice tracing and writing our letters, work on letter sound recognition, and introduce a new pattern for the calendar. We can't wait to read the Gingerbread Man and work on size and color sorting using gingerbread people. We will also learn how to follow step by step instructions to create our very own gingerbread play dough. I think it's safe to say we will have an awesome December!

Kindergarten: Mrs. Rush

Kindergarten continues to learn every single day! We have been learning something new about our school community since September! In the upcoming weeks, we will be learning about all the helpers in the Tuxedo community, from police officers, to dentists, to sanitation workers, to ourselves! Kindergarten continues to do our part of being good citizens in the classroom and extending our community building throughout GGM and Tuxedo by making Holiday cards for our friends at The Promenade and St. Joseph's. We will do our part of being community helpers while learning about all the other great community helpers that help us out each and every day!

First Grade: Mrs. Matthies

Greetings families! December is right around the corner and it will go quicker than we can say Merry Christmas! It's going to be super busy but also super fun! Ms. Rohe and I are both loving the new ELA unit. We have begun to learn about living things compared to non-living things. In the classroom we have started to grow a sunflower from seed so that we can chart its growth and write about it. We do

this by recording observations and measuring the growth. We will also be learning about our bodies and how they work, how we can keep ourselves healthy and strong, and the best foods to eat to maintain health. We are reading about lots of fruits and vegetables. For some we can't even pronounce their names! :) In math we are into our new unit 5! Unit 5 will be challenging! The focus is subtraction and addition relationships. This is talking about fact families and how you can solve equations in the same fact family by just finding similar patterns. For example: $5+4=9$, $9-5=4$ etc. Our science will be connected to ELA in learning about animal growth and human and animal adaptations. This is so important because different adaptations help us all to survive in different environments. In social studies, we have focused on how life was for the Native Americans a long time ago. We compare the tools they used to tools we use today to make our day-to-day living easier. Families, hoping there is lots of love and happiness during this holiday time! See you all next year!

Second Grade: Mrs. Blume

Students in second grade participated in a STEM activity after reading the book, *Balloons Over Broadway*. Second grade students were tasked with designing and creating a prototype of a Thanksgiving Day Parade balloon. The students used the engineering design process to plan and prepare a sketch of how they would use the materials provided to create their prototype. The class looked at balloons from the past and noticed that there were always some of the same characters over the years and some new balloons each year representing what was popular that year. Following their sketch, the students put their plan into action to create their model. After assembling their models, the students presented their prototypes to their classmates and reflected on their projects. Some characters created by second graders were: the Grinch, Baby Yoda, Elf on the Shelf, Olaf from the movie *Frozen*, and Slimer from *Ghostbusters*!

December means second graders will be increasing their math fact fluency through quick one minute sprints to support solving double digit addition with regrouping. Second graders will be practicing two new reading comprehension skills, asking questions while reading and inferring. We will continue to walk to the Tuxedo Park Library every three weeks to exchange books. We hope the weather holds up so we can continue through the winter!

Third Grade: Mrs. Bock

We have been very busy in third grade! In math, we are continuing our study of multiplication and will begin relating it to division. The students will continue to practice their facts each week! In ELA, we have continued to work with a variety of texts from Scholastic. We will be starting a new unit on fables and folktales. In social studies, we are going to continue our study of communities by exploring the different continents. With the holidays quickly approaching, we will start to study holidays around the world. In science, we are going to learn about different environments and how various animal can survive there. My third graders have been doing an amazing job! Keep up the great work!

Third Grade: Ms. Valastro

Grade 3 remains busy as we head into the month of December. We are continuing to learn our multiplication facts and how we can use math in real life situations. We have touched briefly on division as well!

The children have been busy extending their skills with writing as we continue to respond to information texts that we have read and compare factual text to fiction text.

Lastly, we have been enjoying exploring the world of physics, learning about force and motion in science. In the next few weeks we are excited to be working on measuring how far our "marbles can go" and getting a bit more hands on allowing us to really delve into many different scientific topics!

Fourth Grade: Mrs. Rota

Fourth Grade is doing a wonderful job learning all about multiplication. Over the past few weeks we have learned a variety of different strategies to help us understand multiplication. We still have a few left and we are looking forward to wrapping up these chapters in December! Students will be completing a few math projects and then we will move on to division.

In ELA we have been working on several key skills, starting with learning about figurative language. It's been fun identifying it and explaining what it means in the different texts we are reading. The students have also been practicing responding to questions with details. We will be learning about holidays around the world this month.

In science, we just completed our Animal Research projects. Each student researched an animal of their choice and gathered information and details about

the animal. We will be sharing our "published" reports with the class to celebrate our writing. We have lots going on in December!!

Fifth Grade: Ms. Finrock

Our Food Drive was so successful! Thank you to everyone who donated. We have begun a unit on figurative language, and it is so amazing listening to all the creative ways your children can use language to create imagery. They have been taking doodle notes and seem to be loving it. They have also been working hard on the beginning of our decimals unit and have been making connections with things they have learned in the past. They are becoming better readers, writers, and spellers by the day. Thank you all for your hard work at home and let's continue to foster a love of reading together.

Library: Mrs. Mui

During Digital Literacy, 5th graders have joined the website Pixton, an online comic creator. Pixton provided multiple learning opportunities for students. In discussion of digital citizenship, students created avatars and shared how an online representation of themselves was a strategy to staying safe online. We also engaged in digital storytelling by creating a comic in Pixton. We made sure to choose our words and images carefully and with intention like the library's most popular genre, graphic novels. Panels, gutters, speech and thought bubbles, motion lines, and sound effects were utilized to create professional looking comics.

STEM: Ms. Klimowich

The GGM STEM program has recently received a grant through Pet Care Trust to purchase fish and a class aquarium! Pet Care Trust helps promote understanding the value of pet companionship and knowledge of animals through research and education. With the grant, we will be purchasing a new class aquarium, fish, food and supplies to maintain the aquarium environment.

In class, students will be able to observe animal behavior, discuss and learn about freshwater vs. saltwater habitats and the importance of recycling to help reduce greenhouse gases and water pollutants that can affect ecosystems and animal habitats. After making our aquarium observations, classes will be working on a recycling project. Students will be repurposing common household items that are typically recycled or only used once and turning them into small closed terrariums!

Physical Education: Mr. Brunner and Mr. Landro

Grades K-2: Students have been working on their locomotive movements such as running, skipping, galloping, and hopping. Students have also been working on their chasing and fleeing movements through a variety of tag games.

Grades 3-5: Students have just finished the volleyball unit where they learned the basic skills of the sport such as bumping and setting. Students also learned the rules and sportsmanship with the game. The next unit will be basketball where students will be learning the basic skills with dribbling, shooting, and the rules of the sport.

Multi-Subject: Mrs. Donnelly

This month my students have been listening to a variety of "trickster tales". These folktales typically feature a clever animal or person who plays a trick on other characters, causing them problems. Interestingly, we found out that many cultures have their own versions of trickster tales: Africa has Anansi, the spider; the Southwest Native Americans have Coyote; the Irish have the leprechaun and many more. Some common tricksters in pop culture are Bugs Bunny and even Bart Simpson! Now that we have studied and compared trickster tales across several cultures, we will be writing our own trickster tales, with a holiday twist!

Music: Mr. Stelmach

Welcome back to the music corner. We have been having fun with various songs and activities in all grades and classes, including a couple Thanksgiving tunes.

Our Winter Concert is coming up on December 15 & 16 during school hours. On Wednesday, December 15, the students will be performing for the other students and their teachers. On Thursday, December 16, families will be invited to see the students perform in the high school auditorium. Unfortunately, we will have to limit it to two family members per student. The students have been learning songs about winter and various winter holidays and are looking forward to sharing them with the school community. Students will also be playing some classroom instruments in a few of these songs. More information will be sent home soon.

The fourth & fifth grade band students have also been working hard with the flute, clarinet,

saxophone, trumpet, & percussion. Most of them have mastered five notes and have begun learning simple songs. Please encourage your band children to practice, even if it is only 20 minutes 3-4 times a week. Obviously, the more they practice, the better they will become.

Reading Specialist: Mrs. Sayles

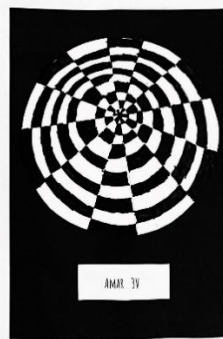
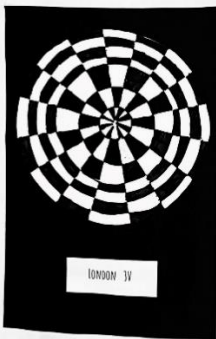
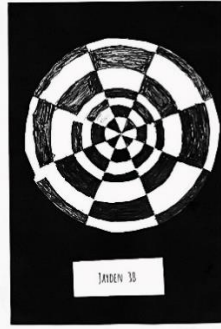
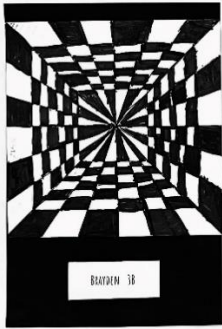
We are working hard in the Reading Room. Students are reviewing letters and sounds. We are reviewing sight words and remembering to use strategies as we read. Students are working on decoding and tracking as well. Soon, we will begin to check out books at our "just right" reading level from Mrs. Sayles' leveled library. We can't wait to practice our reading with all our families at home!

Art: Mr. Stankiewicz

Building up the confidence of students is what the art program is all about. Touching on some of the basics, the younger grade art classes are practicing tracing, outlining, and skills with scissors. Students will make art with line, shape texture, and space while learning these skills. The Pre-K class painted, collaged and traced and cut-out a yellow hat for a Curious George project. The example shown is by Wajid Dorcely. Mary Blair Shape Castles are an exercise in making different lines and patterns. 1st grade explored more artwork using Geometric and Organic shapes. The 3rd grade created Optical Art after viewing and learning about that art movement. This may be the first real 3-D artwork they have created. Students in the 4th and 5th grades are working upon building skills in isometric and one-point perspective drawing. While there are several displays in the school, in the coming weeks, GGM artwork will be back in the public library!



3rd Grade



Op Art

