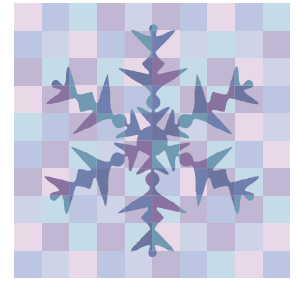




NEWS FOR THE WEEK OF
January 18, 2010

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News and Notes

Report on Teacher In Service Day

Teachers worked all day with Wendy Davenport. Some of the time was spent preparing for Literacy Night on Wednesday evening February 3. Some of the time was spent on “book talk” with teachers sharing their impressions of *The Secret Garden* and discussing how to use it with children. The teachers used the afternoon to work on the Language Arts curriculum.

Students Learning Conflict Resolution

Building on the presentation Jane made to the Parent Group, the first of several conflict resolution lessons will take place on Thursday in the 4th-6th class. Students will learn basic skills including how to mediate conflicts. They will be asked to define conflict, and to describe the kinds of conflict they observe. They will practice ways of listening to each other. Students will explore ways of talking in order to be understood. Brainstorming win/win solutions will be part of the lesson.

K-6th Reports and Conferences

Reports go out this week for K-6, and next week K-6th Parent-Teacher Conferences take place. The preschool is open but there is no school for K-6 on Thursday, January 28.

Open House flyers to post

Saturday February 6th, from 10-12 is our next Open House. Please post flyers *everywhere*. Flyers are on the hallway table. Some parents have been assigned specific places to post flyers, you will get an email to let you know if you have an assignment. Reserve the date, both for baking for the Open House, and for hosting. Parents and children - you make the best hosts!

Literacy Night Wednesday February 3 6-8 p.m.

Put this on your calendars. You will get an exciting inside view on the Language Arts curriculum and how our students develop into motivated and accomplished readers and writers.

Preschool

This week we continue our exploration of castles with the story of *Rumpelstiltskin*. When a miller brags to the king that his daughter can spin straw into gold, the king is impressed and sets the daughter right to work in the castle. She is distraught at first, but is relieved when a funny little man appears who knows how to spin straw into gold. In payment the man wants her first born child but says that she can keep her child if she can guess his name. Luckily for the daughter (now queen) she gets help from her servants and finds out his name. This is another preschool favorite. Last week the class made bread

with Leanne and many children learned to braid their bread dough like Rapunzel’s braid. We celebrated Hannah’s birthday last Friday with a delicious snack of oatmeal and yogurt with maple syrup and sprinkles. We are proud of our healthy birthday snacks. This week the class will continue to write castle stories inspired by our castle stamps. In Art class this week the class will make 3-D sculptures with pipe cleaners and beads in a base of playdough. Next Monday, January 25th the preschool will participate in a dance class at the Royalston Town Hall sponsored by the Royalston Library.

January 2010				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
18 NO SCHOOL Martin Luther King Day	19 8:45 Book Buddies Music Classes 2nd-6th knitting begins	20 Spanish	21 Art classes K-6 Reports mailed	22 Yoga 4th-6th Greek feast 1st-6th Cross country skiing
25 8:45 All School Sing Preschool in dance class at Royalston town Hall	26 Rise & George back 8:45 Book Buddies Music Classes knitting	27 Spanish K-6 Conferences start 1:30	28 Preschool open For K-6: NO SCHOOL Parent Conferences	29 Yoga 1st-6th Cross country skiing

Kindergarten—1st Grade

This week we continue our birds theme with the story *The Koninderie Weedah* or *The Rainbow Bower Bird*, an Australian Aboriginal tale about a magical bird who arrives one day to teach a lesson to a tribe who are squabbling. We will tell the story, journal it and act it out. We now have many bird items in our classroom. For theme share we have had toy birds, bird books and two bird call clocks brought in, so we hear different birds call each hour. We have enjoyed looking at and listening to the book *Bird Songs*, which pictures 250 North American birds along with recordings of their songs. The call of the Screech Owl is a favorite. Last week during a nature hike we saw three robins close up as they hunted for food - they didn't seem to notice us watching them. Last week in art the class made bird mobiles. They began by cutting out templates then coloring and fitting the tail and wings to the body. To finish, they stuck on bird feathers. During recess Renee hung the birds from the ceiling, which delighted the class when they returned and saw their birds in flight. The flock includes a Cardi-

2nd - 3rd Grade

We have been having a lot of fun with our recent read-aloud, *Violet and the Mean and Rotten Pirates*. This is a light-hearted story about a crew of pirates who discover a toddler—Violet—left alone on a ship that had been raided by another pirate crew. So the crew decides to take her on board and teacher her 'piratical' ways.

This week in reading we will pair up and read the same mystery as our partner. This will give the children the chance to play detectives together and engage in some great discussions. The children will create reading plans together so that they stay together in the book. It is especially important that the children do their reading at night so that they are prepared to discuss what they read with their partner the next day. Also, please encourage your child to write in his reading log each night. This is an important link between home and school.

The children's rebus stories are all sketched out and everyone is ready to begin writing their stories. This week we will focus on getting our story written while attending to the story structure. Then the children will think about where they should add the pictures. We had a treat in Music last week when four college students came and played the cello, bass, viola, piano, melodeon and drum for us. 6th grader Marissa also played her violin. The children were impressed by the low sound of the bass and by how you could feel the deep vibration of the instrument. It was a fun morning filled with listening, asking questions, and singing. We then divided into groups and each of the college students read a story in Spanish to them. Thanks to Cella, Isaac, Emmet and Liz for taking the time to come in and share their talents with us.

Last week we heard the story *The Rabbit Dance* in Theme and we worked on our medicine bags. The children worked on sewing them and adding more decoration to them. We will work on braiding a strap that we will sew on this week.

If you haven't done so, please sign up for a conference time this week. There will be no school on Thursday, January 28th because of conferences.

Where are George and Rise?

George and Rise are in Italy this week, attending a seminar on the movements, the same as the 4th-6th children practice on Thursdays, culminating in a public demonstration. We welcome Sheena Butler, who is filling in for George.

nal, a Blue Jay, a Raven and Rainbow birds. In music we are continuing the bird theme with the songs *Three Ravens*, *Mr Woodpecker* and *Ah Bright Bird*.

Last week in science Katrina bought in pine cones, peanut butter and bird seed for the class to make hanging bird feeders. We hung an extra feeder to the garden shed and await the first visitors. We also listened to the children's book describing how two ladies from the Massachusetts Audubon Society in the late 1800's launched a campaign to stop the use of birds and bird feathers in women hats. The class were riveted from beginning to end!

In math, the kindergarten is continuing work with patterns and learning to identify the unit of a pattern. When they make pattern "trains" they break the pattern into "cars" or units. 1st graders are continuing work collecting and representing data. This week they will work on surveys on a subject of their choice. Last week the class thought up bird surveys for example "Would you rather be an owl or an eagle?"

4th - 6th Grade

The newsletter this week (and next) is assembled from contributions by the children themselves, since George is in Italy this week. He is attending a seminar, on the same movements that we teach the children on Thursdays, culminating in a public demonstration near Pisa. We welcome Sheena Butler as the substitute for George.

Last Tuesday, music teacher Jocelyn's sister Cella visited to demonstrate and play the cello and string bass. She was helped by two friends on drum and accordion, and by Isaac Richardson on penny whistle and piano. It was a wonderful chance to hear instruments played live, and we are grateful to all our visitors for sharing their enthusiasm for music. This week in music, we will practice songs to prepare for a live recording session in the classroom next Monday. Jocelyn plans to make a CD of the children's singing.

In art we have been working on our art portfolios, which we are decorating with designs of Greek temples, using acrylic paint on white or silver paper. We also included our names, written in Greek letters. Renée told us about the different styles of Greek pillars and how to draw steps so they look realistic.

Our painting of the week last week was Christina's World, by Andrew Wyeth. Most of us thought the painting felt rather strange and lonely. And we still can't seem to figure out how old Christina (in the painting) really is. In writing most of us have finished up our short stories that we've written for our reading buddies. We wrote things that a four to seven-year-old would enjoy.

In math week, 5th graders will compare fractions and list them in order according to their value. Students will justify their reasoning using equivalents and relationships between fractions. The 6th graders finished the unit on fractions last week and this week we will begin a new unit on area and perimeter.

In science some people have already started doing experiments. Matt is measuring people's reactions. He dropped a ruler though people's fingers and measured how far it had dropped before they caught it. He is wondering whether children have better reactions than adults.

We look forward to starting knitting on Tuesday with Lynn.

This Friday we will be cooking a Greek feast for lunch, with Renée. We will eat at 12 noon and all the 4th-6th grade parents are welcome to join us. If you intend to come, please let Renée know by Wednesday.