

# Fourth Grade Forum

October 2014

## **IMPORTANT DATES for OCTOBER**

- Tues., Oct. 7— Fire Prevention Assembly 9:00am
- Wed., Oct. 8— Student Counsel Meeting-Art Room 3:05
- Mon., Oct. 13— Columbus Day-**NO SCHOOL**
- Tues., Oct. 14— PTO Meeting 6:30 PM in library
- Tues.-Thurs., Oct. 14-16—Scholastic Book Fair in auditorium
- Wed., Oct. 15—Open House and Student Council Bake Sale 6:00-7:30
- Tues., Oct. 21—Field Trip to Plum Creek\*\*see included permission slip\*\*
- Thurs., Oct. 30—”Leap into Fiction” Assembly 10:00 AM
- Fri., Oct. 31—Halloween Parties in the classroom and **END OF FIRST GRADING PERIOD**

### Current Read Aloud:

James and the Giant Peach by Roald Dahl

## Reading

Students will start October reading the narrative poem *Danitra Brown Leaves Town*, by Nikki Grimes. We are focusing on comparing and contrasting texts as well as identifying figurative language. They will then read the historical fiction story **Kai's Journey to Gold Mountain** by Katrina Saltonstall Currier. The skills we have focused on in 4th grade so far have been determining theme and identifying and supporting character traits. We will continue to practice these skills all year. We will now spend time learning ways to intelligently compare 2 different texts. The students will learn to move beyond simple comparisons of the content of the story to more complex comparisons focusing on the author's purpose, the theme, the point of view, or the genre of the stories.



By the end of the month we hope to begin our first author study (see the box below).

## Beverly Cleary/Richard Peck Novel Study

As October finishes and November begins, the students will conduct a novel study of Beverly Cleary or Richard Peck. During novel study, the students will be assigned one of Beverly Cleary's books to read. They will be expected to read a chapter or two from their book each night, write a summary of their reading nightly, and to answer one response question in their journals. They will be given time in class to complete this, but they will need to finish work nightly at home. Each day, we will discuss their work from the previous night, so it is important that they keep up. Students who see Mrs. Ogradowski will be reading a book by Richard Peck in class instead. They too will complete assigned reading nightly, do several response questions nightly, and meet with their teacher daily for discussions.

After they complete one book, they will need to read one more book by their author. Students will finish this novel with an activity that uses their knowledge of characterization to develop a character project.

### Grammar

The students will continue learning about subjects and predicates in sentences. They will then separate them into simple subjects and simple predicates. Once students are secure with these skills, they will combine the parts of a sentence to make compound subjects, compound predicates, and compound sentences. Toward the end of the month we will begin discussing different types of phrases.

### Writing

The students are finishing their Biographic Sketches and will move on to the computer part of this project. Please look for this at Open House.

When complete, we will start our first official memoir. Students will read "When I Was Little" a memoir piece by Jamie Lee Curtis. We will then try out some of the techniques in this picture book as we write our own "When I Was Little" memoir.



### Social Studies

Mrs. Sather

Students will begin discussing Chapter 3: "The Peopling of the United States". Students will identify five major racial and ethnic groups that can be found here. They will investigate the settlement stories of Native Americans, Latinos, European Americans, African Americans, and Asian Americans. In addition, they will study the contributions that each group has brought to this country and will create a collage celebrating those contributions.



Finally, students will begin to study a map of the 11 states in the Northeast region. Please encourage your child to study the states on the map.

### Spelling

Mr. Campbell

Students will receive a spelling packet weekly to help them practice their words. Please encourage your child to complete the entire packet by test day.

### Math

We have recently started chapter 2 which has been reviewing place value. We will now move on to find landmarks (maximum, minimum, mode, range, mean/average and median) of data sets. The students will conduct a survey, and then use their results to make bar and circle graphs. We will review multi-digit addition and subtraction problems. We will finish Unit 2 this month. Check your child's Homework Planner or their teacher's website later in the month to see a specific date for the test. We will then move on to **Unit 3: Multiplication and Division: Number Sentences and Algebra**. In this unit, students will review strategies for solving multiplication facts and explore the relationship between multiplication and division. They will learn a simplified approach for solving number stories and will practice using it. Finally, they will review the use of parentheses in number sentences and how to solve open number sentences.



### Science

Mrs. Lowe

During October, we will continue investigating the interactions between land and water. The students will observe and explore the four soil components: clay, sand, humus, and gravel. They will then study the pore space in between each particle. We will look at the speed of the water flowing through a stream and how that affects erosion and deposition. The students will then make drawings of their streams. We will use this drawing to begin labeling the important parts of all streams. The students will then conduct an experiment in which they run water through their stream table again. This time, they will use a cup with 3 holes to help simulate tributaries. Classroom participation and procedures are evaluated during each experiment.



It is important for your child to recall basic facts almost instantly. Songs and counting are helpful, but at this point basic recall should be as second nature as reading the word "the". Please continue to practice basic addition/subtraction facts and multiplication/division facts at home. The Just the Facts portion of the website **firstinmath.com** is an excellent way to practice. All of the students have a login and password to this program. Please encourage your child to visit this site several times a week

**Classroom Halloween parties**

will be held on Friday., Oct. 31 from 2:00-3:00. There will be a sign-up sheet to contribute goodies for the party sent home in Graded Papers next week. If you would like to send something in, please let us know. Remember, there will be two more parties throughout the year (Winter and Valentine's Day), if you would prefer to send something in for one of those.



**Accelerated Reader/SRA Update**

- All students are required to earn 8 AR points during the first grading period. They will have to earn 9 points for the second grading period.
- All students are required to complete 6 SRA cards for each grading periods. (Students are only asked to do 3 SRA cards this nine weeks since we started several weeks into school.) Students may work ahead to finish SRA cards earlier. As soon as they are finished with cards for the first grading period, they may begin working on cards for the second grading period, and so on.

**Online Tools to Help Your Child Academically**

[www.firstinmath.com](http://www.firstinmath.com) is an excellent site to practice basic math facts and problem-solving skills. Your child will receive a unique username and password to access this program in the near future. They are encouraged to use this site frequently. *(Some of the 4th grade students have already received these logins, all will have them before the end of October. Passwords are attached inside your child's planner.)*

[www.studyisland.com](http://www.studyisland.com) provides test-taking and multiple choice question practice. This program is designed to mirror the types of questions found on the PSSAs. All skills can be assessed in "game mode", as well, adding an element of fun to this site. Your child knows their username and password for Study Island.

[www.multiplication.com](http://www.multiplication.com) is a website that has fun games to practice basic multiplication facts.

[www.lizardpoint.com/fun/geoquiz/usaquiz.html](http://www.lizardpoint.com/fun/geoquiz/usaquiz.html) is a website to practice the locations of U.S. states and their capitals.

**Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Fall Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled for all day **Tuesday, November 4**. We will have a sign up sheet posted at Open House. Please be sure to sign up for a conference at this time.

**Environmental Field Trip to Penn Hills Park**

On Tuesday, Oct. 21, we will spend the majority of the day at Penn Hills Park studying Plum Creek and its surrounding areas. Students will go on a nature hike and compare their observations to the expected topography of the area. They will examine the macro-invertebrates that live in the creek and the pelts, skulls, and footprints of larger animals expected to live close by. They will also complete an art project that draws inspiration from nature and play a fun game to help illustrate the concepts of predator and prey.

Students from the Ecology class at the High School will be assisting us, so we will not need additional chaperones for this field trip. Your child will need a bagged lunch on that day, or you should have made arrangements to order a bagged lunch from the cafeteria—contact your child's teacher if you would like a form for this.

We will be going on this field trip rain (light) or shine. If the weather calls for rain and your child has a poncho or other rain gear, please send it along with him or her. Additionally, since we will be spending so much time in and around the creek, clothes may get muddy or wet. It will be appropriate to wear older clothes and bring along waterproof/water-resistant boots, if your child has them. We look forward to a fun and educational day!