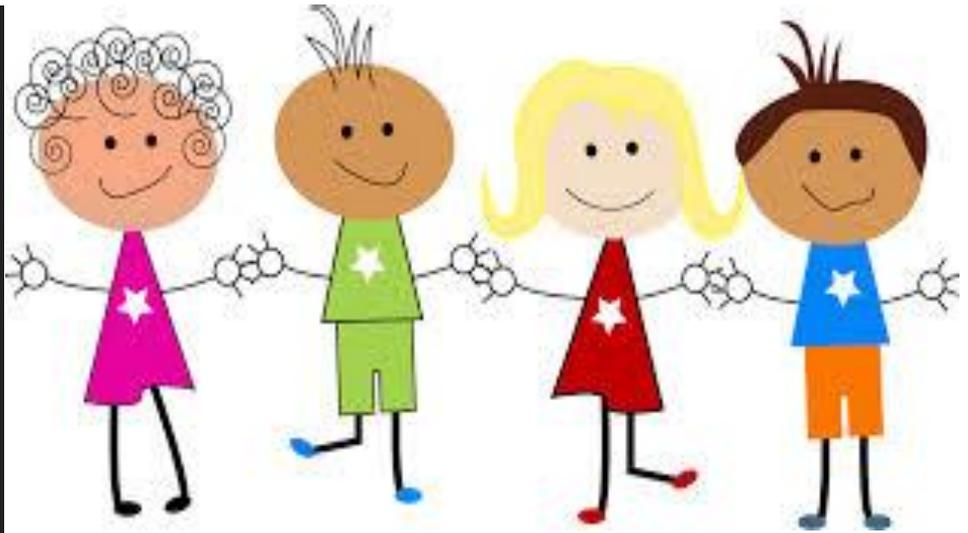




The Integrated Update



November 2016

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Notes from the Principal's Office

By Thomas Ford

Thank you for taking the time to read this year's first edition of *The Integrated Update*. With Thanksgiving on the horizon, this is an appropriate time to be thankful for the wonderful school community that we have here at John Lyman. Students, teachers, and staff have all been working hard, and we all appreciate the continued support of our parents and families. Thank you for all that you do on behalf of John Lyman School.

Grade Level Curriculum Updates

In curriculum news, kindergarten students are busy learning the structures of Reader's and Writer's Workshop. Along with the structures and procedures that go along with the Workshop model, students are learning about the elements of fictional text and narrative writing. Kindergarteners are working just as hard in math, learning about numeric concepts such as representing numbers, counting, and comparing the number of objects in a group.

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Fourth Grade Band

By Cheryl Wiener

Fourth grade band at John Lyman School is off to a great start. We spent the first few weeks of school playing "Recorder Karate" songs on our recorders and clapping rhythms during band class. All band students now have instruments and books and the lessons are also going well. During the past few weeks we have had band classes with our instruments and the band is starting to sound like a band! Students should be practicing five days per week around 15 minutes per practice at this point in the year. The instrument lessons give me an opportunity to work with smaller groups and sometimes one on one with students. I am able to assess how the children are progressing during their instrument lessons.

I definitely hear progress from week to week when band students are practicing regularly. We are learning to read music by counting it and singing it. The CD that comes with the instrument book, Measures of Success, is a wonderful practice tool. It is almost like bringing the band home for a practice session with your child. Practicing can be a lonely pursuit, but using the CD certainly makes practice more fun and motivating.

I also wanted you to know that I will be posting on Twitter this year:

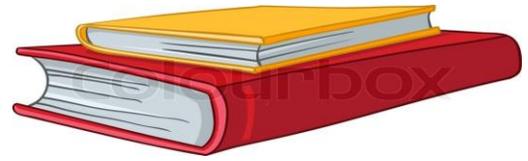
Cheryl Wiener@4thgrmusicRSD13

Here is a link to our Fourth Grade Band Website:

rsd13fourthgradeband.weebly.com

The website has quite a bit of information such as dates for our upcoming Informance (Band Open House) in January. Please check it out. It is also a good resource for K-3 parents who want to learn more about the instrumental program at John Lyman School.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to email me at cwiener@rsd13.org or call me at 860-349-7240 Ext. 5039.



Reading in Kindergarten

By Sharon Berndt, Kristen Blake, and Kerry Chernovetz

The overall reading goal for Kindergarten is to provide reading readiness skills and a love of reading. Students come into kindergarten with a variety of reading skills. Some students are learning letters while other students may be reading. Pre-reading skills such as letters, sounds, phonological awareness skills (rhyming and other word play), and comprehension strategies may be taught in whole group, small groups or one to one.

Students are read to everyday. The read aloud may be a story, song, poem or a non-fiction piece. Kindergartners will learn the difference between fiction and informational text. Children will learn to retell a fiction story by including story elements such as character, setting, and important events. An informational text retell would be identifying the main topic and key details. Songs and poems are read and recited together and then put into poetry books for students to practice and reread.

Students are assessed throughout the year to monitor reading progress. Some students in kindergarten may benefit from arts integrated approaches to learn beginning reading skills. In Kindergarten, these students participate in what we call HOT Readers. Letters, sounds, concepts about print and phonological awareness activities are presented through songs, nursery rhymes, games and music to small groups of children.

No matter where your child is on the reading continuum, we will meet your child where he/she is and continue to move your child forward. The best way to support your child is to read to him/her daily and enjoy discussions about the text!

HAPPY READING!

Native American Study in Mr. Moriarty's Class

By Tiana, Mya, and Alli

The third and fourth grade students at John Lyman have been studying Native Americans. We recently have had the pleasure of working with visual artists Anne Cubberly and L.B. Munoz as part of a five-day teaching artist residency. Three students in Mr. Moriarty's class, Tiana, Mya, and Alli, wrote an article about our experience so far and even interviewed some students! Here's what they reported:

In our class we have been studying Native Americans, where they live, and many other things about them. We went on a field trip to Bushy Hill. We learned at Bushy Hill about their houses, how they make water hot, about how they made clothing, carving stones and rocks. They would live in a teepee or a wigwam. A wigwam is a warm place that the native people lived in made from the bark of a tulip tree.

We have been working with our resident artists, L.B. and Anne Cubberly. We have been making bracelets that we designed first with graph paper. LB showed us how to make a bracelet that the native people would make with shells, but we are making it with plastic beads.

Students' comments about working with L.B.:

Matthew: I like the part how L.B. taught us how to use a needle at this age.

Sophia: L.B. does a good job explaining things.

Brooke: What I liked about the L.B. craft so far was putting the beads on the loom.

Silas: I like that L.B. is very nice and likes what we do. She is also very crafty.

Ayden: I like beading with L.B. because most resident artists don't teach beading.

Arianna: L.B. makes learning fun. Also, she never says, "No" to our answers.



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In first and second grade, three classes recently visited Mystic Aquarium to support the life science unit of study focused on oceans. Students participated in a classroom program that helped them to understand the differences between animal groups. In math, first and second graders are studying geometry. The children are beginning to explore the differences between plane and solid shapes, including different types of shapes and their attributes. As part of Writer's Workshop, 1/2 students are beginning to publish and submit writing to the Literary Board. The submissions represent various types of writing and the children are excited to share their work.

Last but not least, our third and fourth graders have been concentrating on narrative writing and are just beginning units on multiplication and division in mathematics. Students recently completed their study of monarch butterflies in science and will be moving into new units on circuits and ecosystems.

Teaching Artist Residencies

We currently have two teaching artist residencies underway. Three first and second grade classrooms (Mrs. Ciccone, Mrs. Sibiskie, and Mrs. Swiantek) are working with dancer Kim Thibodeau as part of the 10-day HOT Schools Teaching Artist Collaboration (TAC). The residency is connected to the children's study of ocean organisms and fully integrates movement and dance with curricular standards in English Language Arts and science. Thanks to the generosity of the John Lyman Parent Association (JLPA), all of our third and fourth grade students have just begun a five-day teaching artist residency with Anne Cubberly connected to their study of Native Americans. Students are learning Native American weaving techniques as part of this collaboration.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences will be held during the first week of December. Progress reports

will be distributed prior to your child's conference day and will be discussed in greater detail with you during the conference. If you are unsure of your conference time, please contact the main office. Please note that there will be early dismissals on Wednesday, December 2nd and Thursday, December 3rd because of conferences.

Book Fair

The John Lyman School Book Fair will take place during conference week. More information will be forthcoming, but please visit the PowerSchool Bulletin if you are interested in volunteering.

Morning Drop-Off

For those parents who drop off their children in the morning, I would kindly ask you to be sure to pull up far enough along the curb so as not to interfere with the busses. I understand that there is limited space and I appreciate your patience and understanding. In addition, please remember that if you arrive to school after 8:50 a.m. and there is not a Lyman staff member on the sidewalk, you need to park your car and sign in with your child at the main office.

Kindergarten and Grade 3/4 Concert on Tuesday, December 15th

The kindergarten and 3/4 Chorus concert will be held on Tuesday, December 15th under the direction of Mr. Meurs. Performance times are 2:15 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Mr. Meurs will send information home as we get closer to the date and we hope that you will be able to join us for a great evening. The snow date is Wednesday, December 16th.

Thanksgiving Winter Break

Please note that Wednesday, November 25th will be an early dismissal day in advance of Thanksgiving break on November 26th and 27th. In addition, Wednesday, December 23rd will be a half-day and Winter Break will run from December 24th to January 1st. Students will return to school on Monday, January 4th. I hope you enjoy the time at home with your children.

(Continued)

Websites and Electronic Communication

The Integrated Update is one way that John Lyman communicates with our school community, but it is certainly not the only way. Please be sure to visit teacher websites, follow staff members on Twitter, or like our Facebook page to stay up to date on classroom and building happenings. Here are the direct links to the John Lyman homepage (<http://lyman.rsd13ct.org/>) and our Facebook page. (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/John-Lyman-School-HOT-School/744497965606093?ref=bookmarks>).

“There is no app to replace your lap.”

By Christine Davis

I recently saw an awesome photo on Facebook that was shared by our former librarian, Mrs. Kohs. It was a sign on a bookstore that read, **“There is no app to replace your lap.”** And I loved it! It spoke to all the things that I have been “preaching” about for years. The importance of reading to your child can never be replaced with any electronic device.

There are many benefits to reading to your children well after the time they can read to themselves. This is a time where your children have your complete attention. They can see the importance of reading in your life. You are modeling reading fluency. You can talk about the suspense of what will happen next. You can discuss the characters and which ones you love the best. They can listen to stories well above their reading levels. You can introduce them to your favorite books as a child and they can share the great new books they have been reading and hearing at school.

But one of the most wonderful benefits of reading to your children is how it expands their vocabulary. There are many well-known studies that show reading to and with your child from a very young age improves their receptive vocabularies, words they understand, and expressive vocabularies, words they can use. This allows them to read more difficult text and to use a variety of language in their own spoken and written work.

I was rereading my daughters’ favorite books to my grandson, Jaxxon, and I was amazed by the rich vocabulary in even the simplest picture books. In Sandra Boynton’s book, *But Not the Hippopotamus*, she writes “The hog and the frog **cavort** in the bog.” In his favorite book (I know because he makes us read it every night at least 3 times), *The Little Blue Truck* by Alice Schertle, “The tires were stuck in **muck** and **mire**.” These are words that most elementary students would not hear in general conversations. But the rich language in books raises the level of what they hear and can understand and allows them to expand their own vocabulary. So when you are reading to your child talk about some of the interesting words the author chose to use. Make a game of it to try to use those words in your conversations for the night.

Most of all, close out the apps and gather your children on your lap and enjoy some great books. It is time you will never regret giving to your children and times they will always remember.

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