



# January & February



Dear Kindergarten Families,

January and February are busy months for Kindergarten! In Language Arts, we will focus on digraphs and word families. In Foundations, we will begin Unit 2. We move on to the formation of uppercase letters. Uppercase letters also use the sky, plane, and grass line. This unit will also include blending, segmenting, and manipulation of sounds using three-sound short vowel words. We continue to learn decoding strategies to increase our reading skills. We will be talking about making connections when reading. As readers, students are encouraged to always think as they read and ask if what they are reading looks right, sounds right, and makes sense.

We will be learning about winter and use our knowledge to finish our TIDE writing unit. We will then begin an opinion writing unit using the mnemonic TREE. This involves thinking of a topic to write and giving supporting reasons.

In math, we will discuss numbers to 100 by reading, writing, and counting as well as begin to understand addition and subtraction. We will have fun lessons and activities for the 100th day of school! The students will learn that joining groups together is addition and separating is subtraction.

Warmly,  
The Kindergarten Team

Happy New Year!

Please remember that we have one half-hour recess each day. Most of the time we DO go outside. It is very important that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather. Please send your child with a winter coat, winter boots, hats, and gloves. If your child wants to play in the snow, please include snow pants, also. Please pack these items in a separate bag to make it easier for your children to access their stuff.

In **math** our first graders are working on place value. We are learning the value of digits beyond one hundred (100). The learning target for our next unit will be to compare two digit numbers using the symbols greater than ( $>$ ), less than ( $<$ ) and equal to ( $=$ ). For enrichment the students are challenging themselves to write numbers through one thousand (1,000). How exciting! Don't forget to ask your child about his/her number scroll and the number that he/she has reached.

In Foundations we are also working on welded or glued sounds (ink, ank, unk, onk, ing, ang, ung, ong). We will also be learning about closed (short vowel) syllables and suffixes, such as -ed and -ing. Please continue to read to or with your child **every day for 15-20 minutes**. After reading it is helpful if you ask engaging questions to check for comprehension. When your child is reading, encourage him/her to:

- Check new words for parts they know
- Tap out shorter words and split longer words into smaller chunks
- Monitor reading by asking these questions:
  1. Does it look right?
  2. Does it sound right?
  3. Does it make sense?

Enjoy this time together, and please call or email your child's teacher with any questions.

We will start learning about the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. We will also study other African-American leaders, such as Rosa Parks, Barack Obama, and Ruby Bridges for Black History Month in February. February is also Dental Health Month. Brush and floss those teeth! Groundhog Day is February 2<sup>nd</sup>. Will we have six more weeks of winter? We will also

be learning about some of our US presidents, such as George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and others. So much to fit into the shortest month of the year.

We will be handing out Valentines in the classrooms. If your child chooses to share valentines, please be sure to include one for each child. Be mindful that candy cannot be part of the valentine. More information and class lists will follow soon!

## Second Grade News - January, 2024

Happy New Year! We hope you all had a very happy Holiday!

We are looking forward to exploring many exciting new topics this month.

In math we will finish Topic 6, subtracting two digit numbers, with and without regrouping. We will then move on to Topic 7 which focuses on understanding place value to one thousand. We will also continue working on solving multi-step word problems.

In language arts, we will finish our unit on character traits then begin reading non-fiction stories. Students will learn how to identify and utilize non-fiction text features. This will coincide with our social studies curriculum on Black History Month. We will learn about many African -Americans who have had a great impact on American History including Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, and Ruby Bridges.

On February 14<sup>th</sup>, we will celebrate "Love to Read" day. Students will be able to bring in a favorite book and stuffed animal. More information about "Love to Read" day will be sent home at the date approaches.

Dear Parents/Guardians,

## Literacy

In Language Arts we continue to read fiction books, this time with a focus on realistic fiction. We will be learning about how these stories are not real, however, they feel like something that can happen in real life. We will be discussing the characters, setting, and problems and solutions that the characters are involved in.

We are continuing our study of narrative writing. Our narratives will include a retelling of a story we have read from a different character's point of view or be a continuation of a story we read. One thing we are working on is lengthening and strengthening our stories by stretching out the events. We will continue to revise our writing for content and edit for capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and spelling.

In phonics we studied the many different sounds like vowels make including their unexpected sounds called schwa. Next up will be learning about prefixes and roots that we put together to make meaning.

## Math



Your mathematicians have been learning all about place value concepts and addition and subtraction of 3-digit numbers. Many strategies such as counting on an open number line, compensation, making a ten and partial sums were reviewed. We also introduced the traditional algorithm for adding and subtracting 3-digit numbers. You may be familiar with the term "borrowing" or "carry the one." We call it regrouping and are becoming experts in both addition and subtraction with regrouping. In our upcoming units we will be moving into multiplying multiples of ten and understanding fractions.

While we have moved away from our daily practice of multiplication, children should continue to study their facts each night to build accuracy and automaticity.

## Science

Third grade scientists will be busy learning about animals. Our focus is on heredity and how animals change over time in order to survive. Your child will explore changing environments which led to whale fossils being found in a desert, learn how human selection of traits caused the many different breeds of dogs we enjoy today, travel to lizard island to learn how an invasive species of lizard caused the native species to become better climbers, and study how animals communicate with others in their group to ensure pack survival. We will work through this unit in January. In February, we will switch back to Social Studies to explore the arrival of the Pilgrims and Puritans in North America and how their arrival impacted the Native People living here in Massachusetts.

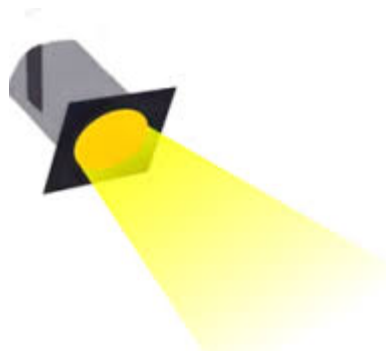
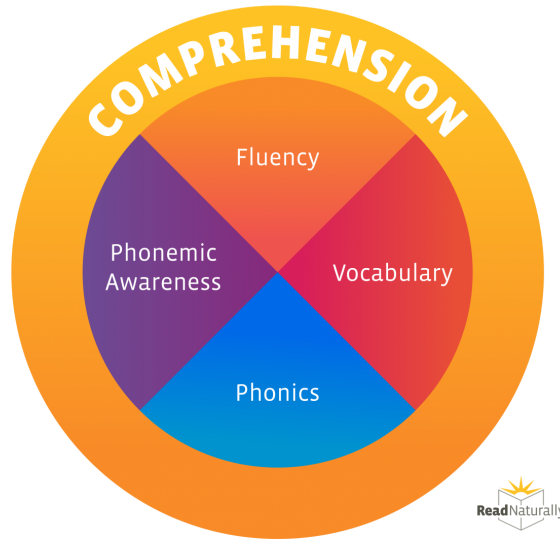
## Wrapping Up!



A friendly reminder to have your children bring in jackets and sweatshirts as the weather gets colder as we will have the windows open in the classroom and will be heading outside for recess every day we are able to. Your child will need a coat, gloves/mittens, a hat, snow pants, and boots if they wish to play in the snow.

Sincerely,  
The Third Grade Team

## Essential Components of Reading



### Today's Spotlight Is On: **Phonics**

**What is Phonics?** Phonics is instruction on how to connect letters, or groups of letters, to the sound that they represent. Sounds are then blended together to make words starting with consonant-vowel-consonant or cvc words, and continues on through instruction on reading multisyllabic words as students advance through the grades.

Visit this link [Phonics-Everything Parents Need to Know](#) for more details about Phonics Instruction.

**How do we work on Phonics here at Major Edwards?** The Foundations Phonics Curriculum from Wilson Reading System is used in Grades Pre K - 3 for all students. Students in Grades 4 and 5 receive Phonics/Spelling instruction using Megawords. Additionally, there is a vocabulary focus on words with Greek and Latin roots to understand the morphology, or the study of the structure of words, to aid comprehension.

Visit this link from Reading Rockets for additional information: [Phonics: In Practice](#), and this link for a demonstration of [sound pronunciation](#).

# Fabulous in Fourth!

January/February 2024



Welcome! We are so glad you're here!

## Reminders:

-Please request work when you report your child's absence. It can be sent home with a sibling/neighbor or it can be picked up at the office after school.

-Students have a "working snack" at approximately 10:30 a.m. Please send in a small, healthy snack and reusable labeled water bottle with water only.

-Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for outdoor recess with a warm coat, hat, gloves/mittens and boots.

## SCIENCE & SOCIAL STUDIES

Students are...

- Studying changes to Earth's surface - plate tectonics, volcanoes, earthquakes, weathering and erosion.
- Starting to learn about renewable and non-renewable energy resources.
- Collecting items that can be recycled for an upcoming "Building Project" such as cardboard tubes, tiny boxes and washed yogurt cups.
- Looking forward to the Environmental Justice Virtual Field Trip enrichment program.
- Continuing to practice their Map Skills.
- Looking ahead to topics on the Native Peoples of North America.

## Looking Ahead:

No school - January 15 and 22

Literacy Night - January 24

Environmental Justice Virtual Field Trip - February 13

Valentine's Party - February 14 - details and class list coming soon!



## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Students are...

- Annotating text as they read
- Finding evidence to support answers in a text
- continuing to work on reading and writing narrative stories
- writing focus will shift to story development in response to literature
- continue to develop and practice reading skills such as determining themes, character traits and points of view within a story
- continue to concentrate on developing detailed setting and character descriptions using rich verbs and descriptive adjectives to effectively help our readers visualize the story better
- word work lessons will focus on spelling rules when adding vowel suffixes
- discuss the three sounds of -ed
- 

"Reading should not be presented to children as a chore or duty. It should be offered to them as a precious gift."—Kate DiCamillo

## MATH

As we begin the new trimester, our focus is on everything Multiplication.

Students will ...

- recognize multiplication as repeated addition of equal groups.
- use and draw models (arrays) to represent multiplication facts.
- use strategies for solving the facts such as finding number patterns (multiples).

We are very excited to start multiplying multi-digit numbers!

Students will...

- learn both the breaking apart method of multiplication and the traditional method.

Each night, students should be practicing multiplication facts through the 12's until they are mastered. Quick recall of basic math facts is necessary to keep up with the pace of the class. Help your child to be successful! Practice! Practice! Practice!

Your Fourth Grade Team,

MRS AVERY, MRS. LEMAY, MRS. MILLER,  
MRS. HEIDEMANN, MRS. ATKINSON







# Grade 5 January & February Newsletter



## What We Are Learning

### Reading

Greek & Latin Roots: Unit 15 (non/nov, deci/deca, cent), Unit 16 (anim, carn, phys), and Unit 17 (fals/fall, cert/cred, phob)

Reading and analyzing two similar poems with a writing response comparing the two speakers' point of view

### Math

Geometry – classify and understand the attributes of two-dimensional figures

Fractions – fraction “boot camp” to review 3rd and 4th grade fraction skills, add and subtract fractions and mixed numbers, and more word problems

### Science

Finish water unit- how water changes states, amounts of water on earth and the water cycle! \*Make sure to ask the 5th graders to sing you the water cycle song.

Matter Unit- solids, liquids, gasses, mixtures, solutions, physical and chemical properties

## Announcements & Reminders

On February 13, fifth grade students will travel to the Patriots Hall of Fame at Gillette Stadium to participate in a STEM Helmet Challenge.

Permission slips and the \$20 fee are due by Friday, January 5.

## Dates to Know

**Jan. 5** – Field trip permission slip due

**Jan. 15** – No school

**Jan. 22** – No school

**Jan. 24** – Literacy Night

# Reading Corner



Mrs. Bokankowitz:

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Mrs. Gangai:

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## January/February



Check out these links for book recommendations for your family.



[School Library Journal](#)

common sense  
media

[Best Books of  
the Year 2023](#)

BookTrust  
Getting children reading

[Read these books  
before they come to  
the screen in 2024](#)

SCHOLASTIC  
SPRING 2024  
PREVIEW

[Scholastic Spring  
2024 Video Book  
Preview](#)





# SPECIALIST NEWS

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

In PE this month our focus will be on Throwing and Catching skills, specifically in activities that are designed for students to be throwing an object at a target or to another student with success. As an introduction to these games, students will participate in activities such as "Build a Throw" where they are tasked with throwing a foam dodgeball to a partner. Every time a catch is completed, they move further and further away. Students who are able to complete two handed catches practice one handed catching or catching items in a small bucket. Students in K-1 are reintroduced, or learn for the first time, the classic game of Rock, Paper, Scissors. Students practice by mingling around the room playing against others. When they get comfortable with the game, we introduce "Evolution" where students can transform from "egg" to "chicken" to "eagle" and "superhero". Each level has a motion for students to copy so they know who is on the same level as themselves.

Over the next couple of months, "Target Games" (2-5), "Cooperative Games"(K-1), "PE Throwback Games"(K-5), and "Physical Fitness" (4-5) will continue to be the focal points that are integrated into every activity the students will participate in. I look forward to a fun time with your students!



## MUSIC

Happy New Year!

I just want to congratulate all the performers for the terrific work they did for the Winter Concerts—they did outstanding! It is always such a joy to hear the students come together to share their voices in song and music. Thank you to everyone for coming to support the students. During the months of January and February we will be continuing to build upon the students musical skills through a variety of games and song. Students will be using drums and percussion instruments to explore rhythm and beat. Using instruments is always a favorite!

## ART

Happy New Year! The young artists have been busy making some winter themed art work to kick off the new year. K-1 artists will be finishing their clay pieces and taking them home at the end of January. 2-3 artists will be learning about how artists use the seasons to inspire their artwork and how they can stay creative during the winter months. Drawing, painting, and multi-media collage will also be explored. 3-5 artists will also be introduced to textile arts which will allow them to explore using fabrics, cloth and yarn to create artwork. This is a time to get cozy and create together, whether it is outside when we have snow for sculptures or inside building with legos, painting and drawing. It's a time to celebrate togetherness. Enjoy the season.

