



Lovin' English Language Arts

What is currently on your nightstand?

Person	Book Being Read
Mrs. Brammer	<u>The Phantom Tollbooth</u> by Norton Juster
Ms. Bunyan	<u>Dream Big Little Pig</u> by Kristi Yamaguchi
Ms. Hanks	<u>From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler</u> by E.L. Konigsburg
Ms. Holbrook	<u>The Book Thief</u> by Markus Zusak
Mrs. Taylor	<u>Unbroken</u> by Laura Hillenbrand

What would you recommend?

Person	Book Recommended
Mrs. Brammer	<u>The Everest Trilogy</u> by Gordon Korman
Ms. Bunyan	<u>Pete the Cat</u> by Eric Litwin
Ms. Hanks	<u>Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH</u> by Robert O'Brien
Ms. Holbrook	<u>Those Shoes</u> by Maribeth Boelts
Mrs. Taylor	<u>The Indian in the Cupboard</u> by Lynne Reid Banks

Websites to Encourage Reading:

- 1) www.whatshouldireadnext.com This site is like Pandora for books! Get book recommendations by entering authors and titles that you have enjoyed!
- 2) www.bookpig.com This site is where librarians suggest books for kids to read by grade, genre, and favorites.
- 3) www.auth.grolier.com This site has books read aloud online! Username: elv and password: bookflix .
- 4) www.readkiddo.read.ning.com James Patterson has created this site dedicated to making kids readers for life. Amazing site to explore and find your next favorite author, series, or book!

"The more that you read, the more things you know.
The more that you learn, the more places you go." –Dr. Seuss

Math

To be prepared to work in the 21st century, all students need to be confident and competent in mathematics. Today, the working world requires understanding of mathematics including problem solving, statistics, logic, geometry, and probability. To be successful in these areas, students must know their basic facts, compute, and be able to effectively and efficiently solve problems.

At home, you can assist your child in mathematics problem solving, without revealing the answers, by using the questions below:

Getting Started

How might you begin?

What do you know now?

What do you need to find out?

While Working

How can you organize your information?

How can you make a drawing (model) to explain your thinking?

What approach (strategy) are you developing to solve this?

What other possibilities are there?

What would happen if... ?

What do you need to do next?

What assumptions are you making?

What patterns do you see in...? What relationships?

What prediction can you make?

Why did you... ?

Checking Your Solutions

How did you arrive at your answer?

Why do you think your solution is reasonable?

What did you try that didn't work?

How can you convince me your solution makes sense?

Good questions will help your child make sense of mathematics, build confidence, and improve mathematical thinking and communication.

(Question Sampler from "Nimble with Numbers," Dale Seymour Publications.)



Music News

Kindergarten and **first graders** will be studying music from around the world beginning with China as we think about the New Year and our goals for 2014! **Second** and **third graders** will also begin their study of music from various countries. We will set music goals for learning vocabulary and playing instruments for 2014! **Fourth graders** will continue their NC history units to songs for their recorder belts. **Fifth graders** will continue their challenge of earning black belts by year's end. They will continue preparation for middle school musical opportunities such as band, orchestra, and chorus.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION NEWS

Kindergarten students are working on basic kicking and trapping skills. **First graders** are working on kicking for distance and accuracy. **Second graders** are working on passing, kicking, and trapping. **Third graders** are working on Frisbee skills including basic throwing techniques. **Fourth graders** are working on ways to move and successfully catch the Frisbee. **Fifth graders** are working on using all of these skills in game-like situations.

MEDIA NEWS

Please take advantage of a variety of e-books that are available both through Cornelius Elementary and the state of North Carolina. Click here for details.

<http://corneliusmediacenter.cmswiki.wikispaces.net/E-Books>

Kindergarten and **first grade** students are identifying appropriate sources of information. **Second graders** are learning to use the online catalog to locate books in the library. Students in **grades 3-5** are learning basic research skills such as narrowing a topic, determining the best strategies for finding information, using information ethically, and evaluating their work.

INNOVATION LAB

In innovation lab, students in **grades 1-2** will use critical thinking skills to build a table that can sustain the weight of a book. Students in **grades 3-5** are creating working circuits.

ART NEWS

Kindergarten will work on their Art by Me lesson using shapes and lines to create a fish. **First grade** will also work on their Art by Me lesson. They will read "How Turtle's Back Was Cracked". They will create patterns using lines, shapes and colors on a turtle's back. **Second grade** will begin their Art By Me. They will be working on self awareness as they begin their self portraits. **Third grade** will learn about Vincent Van Gogh. They will create sunflowers in his style for their Art by Me lesson. **Fourth grade** will begin a lesson on North Carolina lighthouses for Art by Me. They will research the lighthouses and choose the ones they would like to draw in perspective. **Fifth grade** will learn about the Mayan civilization. They will create Mayan sun faces for their Art by Me lesson.



Kindergarten News

We would like to wish you all a very Happy New Year! We hope that your holidays were enjoyable and refreshing. Here is a preview of our learning this month!

ELA: We will continue to work on the essential skills in literacy: phonemic awareness skills, identifying letter sounds, blending sounds to read a word, and sight words. We will also be integrating our Science and Social Studies units. In Writing, we will write a small moment story to tell something about our winter break. We will continue with opinion writing and begin writing responses to nonfiction books about animals, America, and the ocean.

Math: We will continue working on rote counting to 50, counting sets of 15, and writing and identifying numbers to 15.

Integrated Studies: In Science, we will continue our study of animals as we explore the different ways in which animals move. We will begin our new unit on winter weather and animals. In Social Studies, we will explore different types of landforms and bodies of water.

Skills to Practice at Home:

- Call out sight words and have your child write them.
- Call out words your child can *stretch out/sound out*. Your child has been taught how to stretch out all the sounds in a word to assist with spelling.
- Have your child practice reading the decodables he/she has at home. Once he/she has mastered reading the decodables, call out the sentences for your child to write.
- **Math:** Give your child story problems to solve. Please see your child's homework for some examples. Ask your child to explain his/her thinking or reasoning. Ask him/her how he/she knows the answer.

Please remember to have your child wear a coat or jacket to school each day.

first grade News

ELA: Word Study: We are continuing our study of long vowel patterns with a look at "vowel teams." This is when two vowels come together to say one long vowel sound. The students know that when two vowels are together, you hear the first vowel. Common vowel teams include ee, ea, oa, ue, and ai. Please look for vowel teams in poems and familiar books.

Reading Comprehension: Our reading comprehension focus is identifying the central message or lesson of stories. The students will read a text and retell what happened to the characters. Then they will think, "How can this story apply to me? What can I learn from the characters?"

Writing: We are studying opinion pieces. The students must introduce a topic, state their opinions, give reasons to support their opinions, and provide a sense of closure. We will study winter Olympic sports and consider the question, "Which Olympic Winter sport is the best and why?"

Math: We are studying measurement this month. We are measuring objects using things around our classroom like paperclips and tiles. The students are describing and comparing the lengths of objects and considering what happens when they change the size of their unit of measurement. We will also discuss the vocabulary terms **one half** and **one fourth**.

Integrated Studies: In social studies, we are finishing a study of the relationship between literature and culture. The students are reading stories from around the world and investigating the cultures from which they come. They are looking for cultural influences within each story. In science, we are studying the needs of plants. We will identify the parts of plant and how each part helps the plants survive. Then, we will investigate what happens when plants do not have their needs



SECOND GRADE NEWS

We are continuing to have a great year in second grade, igniting innovation and learning!

ELA: In English Language Arts, we will be finishing up exploring nonfiction texts while asking and answering questions. We will also look at finding an author's purpose within the text. We will then move into comparing two versions of the same story. We will also continue focusing on the following skills: identifying the main idea and key details of a text, text features, story elements, and asking and answering questions such as who, what, when, where, why, and how. We will also introduce the concepts of retelling, and comparing two or more versions of the same story. In writing we will be exploring informative and explanatory texts in which students will introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points, and provide a concluding statement or section. In grammar, we will focus on demonstrating command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking, collective nouns, irregular plural nouns, reflexive pronouns, irregular verbs, using adjectives and adverbs, and producing, expanding, and rearranging complete simple and compound sentences.

Math: Students will measure the length of an object by selecting and using appropriate tools such as rulers, yardsticks, meter sticks, and measuring tapes. Students should be able to identify and name the appropriate tools used to measure the length and weight of objects. Students will measure the length of an object twice, using length units of different lengths for the two measurements and then describe how the two measurements relate to the size of the unit chosen. Students will also practice measuring objects and finding the difference between lengths, estimating lengths, and choosing the right measuring tool. Students will also continue to practice word problems, problems with money and telling time to the nearest hour, half hour, and even nearest 5 minutes.

Integrated Studies: In social studies, we will be studying how various culture influence communities. We will be looking at how cultures contribute to the community with stories, art, music, food, etc. We will also focus on historical figures and events that are associated with various cultural traditions.

The second grade team would like to thank all of you for our commitment and support to help ensure a successful school year!

third grade News

Welcome back; we hope everyone had a restful break! We are continuing with our universal theme of "Structure and Exploration".

ELA: In English Language Arts we have been focusing on dramas and stories. Students will use the terms of chapter, scene, and stage directions to describe how each scene/chapter builds on one another. We will also be acting out our plays/stories in Reader's Theater. We also will be incorporating our argumentative and informative writing skills through responding to the text by stating our opinions. To help your child grow at home be sure your child is reading an appropriate level text. The text should not be too easy or too hard. Students should be able to read and understand the text and feel challenged by some of the vocabulary on each page. In writing, students will begin to explore researching and constructing informational pieces. Your child will be using a variety of tools to conduct research including books, magazines, and technology. We are continuing to improve our grammar skills with a focus on coordinating and subordinating conjunctions; simple, compound, and complex sentences. Students will continue to write across the content areas on topics related to science, mathematics, ELA, and social studies.

Math: We will measure area and perimeter of regular and irregular shapes. Along with this topic we will measure the mass of various items. We will utilize standard and metric measurements. Please continue to spend time having your child memorize his/her multiplication facts.

Integrated Studies: After learning about historical narratives we are taking a look at our community and historical figures that have impacted our community over time. Further, we are using this information to gain an understanding of how people, places, and events have changed our community throughout time.



FOURTH GRADE NEWS

ELA: Poetry is the focus of our ELA lessons this month. Students will be exposed to a variety of poetry pieces. They will examine the structure of poems and they will write several poems. They will learn about lines, verses, stanzas, rhythm, meter, and rhyme. This unit will prepare students for the Carl Sandburg Poetry Contest in early February.

Math: In math we will start a new unit on fractions and decimals:

- Comparing equivalent fractions
- Ordering fractions on a number line
- Identifying fractional parts of an area or group
- Reading, writing, and interpreting fractions.

We will also continue multiplication and division fact tests. It is essential for students to know these facts fluently.

Integrated Studies: Social Studies this month will concentrate on economics. Students will learn basic economic facts. In preparation for J.A.Biztown, students will create a business, complete with a CEO, a budget, and advertising.

In science we will be beginning our unit on magnetism and electricity.

During our investigations students will:

- Recognize why an object that has been electrically charged pulls or pushes on all charged objects that results in motion
- Identify why magnets attract some metal objects but not all of them
- Understand why electrically charged objects produce motion.

FIFTH GRADE NEWS

ELA: Students using multiple skills to analyze fiction and nonfiction texts. We are continuing to focus on the steps to close reading in nonfiction and finding the theme and main idea of fiction. This nine weeks we will really be looking at what the author wants us to know from a nonfiction text and why he/she includes certain details in their writing.

In Writing, we are giving students creative freedom to draft their own narrative piece. Students will be writing poems, essays, and other texts to express their knowledge of their chosen subject.

Math: In Math, we are moving into coordinate planes, geometry, order of operations and patterns. Students will be doing multiple performance tasks incorporating different math concepts we have already covered and new skills we are learning. Students will still be reviewing fractions, decimals, and volume.

Integrated Studies: We are continuing to work in our Science unit about energy conservation and transfer. This concept involves students' explaining how the properties of some materials change as a result of heating and cooling. In Social Studies we will begin to see conflicts arising in our original thirteen colonies. This unit will lead us into the social issue that caused so much conflict that it impacted the development of the United States through Reconstruction.

Reminder: D.C. field trip forms are due soon.



TALENT DEVELOPMENT NEWS

Parents, start off this New Year with your gifted learners' academic, social, and emotional needs in mind!

The following websites provide a plethora of information and resources for parents of gifted learners:

National Association for Gifted and Talented

<http://www.nagc.org/>

Visit the "Parents" link on this website to learn more about "giftedness" and promoting high potential. You will also find answers to frequently asked questions as well as current facts and figures regarding gifted education in the US. This website provides a great starting point for learning more about gifted education, including how the new Common Core State Standards in Math and Literacy relate to programs for the gifted.

North Carolina Association for the Gifted and Talented (<http://www.ncagt.org/>)

The NCA GT serves as the premier advocacy group for gifted and talent students in North Carolina. Please visit this website often for current NC legislation proposals and acts that impact the future of gifted education in our state. Information about "Gifted Education: Kick it UP a Notch!", the 39th Annual NCA GT Conference in Winston-Salem can also be found on the webpage.

Hoagies' Gifted Education Page

<http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/>

On this website, visit the link via "Parents" -> "Hoagies' Kids and Teens" for suggested high-ability reading lists categorized by genre, games and toys that encourage deep levels of thinking, and lots more of interest to gifted learners and their families! There's also an extensive list of links to articles on various topics relevant to gifted students available via "Parents" -> "Don't Miss...the Best of Hoagies' Education Page." This website is an invaluable resource for all things gifted!

SCHOOL COUNSELOR NEWS

Expect the best

Setting high expectations for your child is a key to his/her success in school. Set the tone by letting your child know what you expect from him/her and helping your child see what he/she can expect from him-/herself.

Be Realistic

Match expectations to your child's abilities and interests. For example, if he/she is strong in math and science, you can expect him/her to earn good grades in those subjects. Then, consider overall standards, such as finishing his/her work on time, listening to his/her teachers, and doing his/her best. Finally, think ahead to long-term plans. You may feel it's important that your child goes to college or volunteers in the community, for instance.

Be Clear

Remember to communicate your expectations to your child. You can weave them into everyday conversations. Examples: "We'll play catch after you do your homework," or "The science fair is coming up. I can't wait to see your project." Talk regularly about long-range expectations, too. Your child will see him-/herself as a future college student when you say things like, "You'll be able to learn more about that when you're in college one day."

Be Supportive

Work with your child to help him/her meet your expectations. For instance, provide materials for his/her projects and help him/her set aside time to work on them. Let your child know that you expect his/her best and that you're certain he/she can do it. You'll build his/her confidence and encourage your child to make it happen.



IMPORTANT DATES

- **January 14** – Science Fair/STEAM Night at 5:30 p.m.
- **January 16** – 3rd Grade Parent Meeting with Principal Holbrook regarding Read to Achieve (Media Center)
- **January 20**- No School/Holiday, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- **January 21**- No School/Teacher Work Day
- **January 22**- Principal's Coffee at Waterbean Coffee in Cornelius, at 9:00 a.m. This meeting will focus on NC and CMS testing.
- **January 22** – Parent Meeting with Principal Holbrook in the Media Center at 6:00 p.m. This meeting will focus on NC and CMS testing.
- **January 23**- 3rd Quarter Begins!
- **January 28**- PTO Family Night at Chick-Fil-A
- **January 31**- Character Education Programs: Grades K-2-9:00 a.m., Grades 3-5- 10:00 a.m.
- **February 5**- 2nd Quarter Report Cards Distributed
- **February 8**- PTO Father/Daughter Dance