

HAMLIN / LAKE ELEMENTARY

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT — March 2011



WORDS FROM MISS FALISKIE

Classifying Critical Thinking Skills

Once we have the needed facts and information at hand, the next important skill is classifying them—or sorting them out. As a parent, you'll be delighted to know that putting away the dishes can teach your child skills in classification. Matching plates with others of the same size or putting forks and spoons into the right places helps your child see how to group things that are alike. Sorting clothes is another way to teach these skills.

So the next time you remind your child to clean her room, remember—you aren't just assigning a chore. You're teaching an important thinking skill, too!

You can also ask your child to help you organize a shelf in your cupboard. Talk about the best way to organize the shelf. Which would be more helpful?

- You could put short cans with short cans, tall cans with tall cans.
- Or, you could put food groups together. Then all vegetables would be in the same place, all fruits in another.
- A third idea would be to organize by the type of container—putting boxes together and cans together.

Build classification skills in school subject areas with these ideas:

To further promote classification skills in school subject areas, ask your child to organize the following into appropriate categories. Make sure you ask why and how each item belongs in a particular group.

Language Arts

- The spelling words in several assignments. (Long words, short words, names of things, descriptive words)
- Books reading during the year. (Mysteries, fiction, and non-fiction)
- TV Programs

Science

- Different types of vehicles.
- Fur-bearing animals.
- Rocks of various kinds.

Math

- * Containers of various shapes
- * The numbers from 1 to 50.
- * All the things used to tell time.

Wishing U A HAPPY SPRING!



Think Spring, Miss Faliskie

pre-Kindergarten

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It's March and spring is just around the corner! Our Pre-K children are looking forward to warm weather as well as some new games and art projects this month. We will learn a few new letters and we'll even get a surprise visit from a very green friend!

At the beginning of the month, we read Dr. Seuss books, like The Cat in the Hat. The children made their very own cats, top-hat and all! They had a great time coloring Dr. Seuss' famous character.



We started the month by learning a new letter – K! Some of our new words include kangaroo, king, keys, and kite.

The Pre-K children will celebrate a very special holiday on March 17th - St. Patrick's Day. A Leprechaun will pay a very special visit to Hamlin's Pre-K classes!



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Kindergarten



Winter sure has been long! However, spring is right around the corner. Our kindergarteners are working with lions, lambs, raindrops, umbrellas, rainbows, and kites to help strengthen their reading, phonics, and math skills.

March brings Kindergarten a new reading theme called "Around the Town". This theme is all about different places in a community, and how people join together to help protect one another.

We have three fun stories in this theme. **Shapes**, by Dayle Ann Dobbs, is a review on identifying geometrical shapes. **Bennies Pennies**, by Pat Brisson, helps us make predictions as we read a story. The story titled, **Hello, Goodbye**, by Barbara Shook Hazen, makes us aware of a character's feelings.

In math, the students continue to work on identifying and counting coins. St. Patrick's Day brings shamrocks, leprechauns, and pots of gold to help our kindergarteners practice addition, and counting by fives and tens along with other math skills.



Please continue to practice sight words with your child every night. Don't forget to read every evening and sign your child's reading log. Your support and encouragement are so important for your child's success in school!

Spring, is almost here but, remember to dress your child appropriately. Hats, gloves, warm coats, snow pants, and boots are still needed for recess.

First Grade



With the spring weather fast approaching, first graders are looking forward to many new and exciting things happening.

In reading, we are finishing up our 4th book, **Time Together**. We have been learning about long vowels, blends, digraphs, and vowel teams. Please continue to practice these skills with your child at home. Sight words are also very important to your child being a successful reader. We also are continuing to practice Oral Reading Fluency with the students. Students practice reading a passage and are timed for one minute. The students are checked to see how many words they can read in that time. Students are expected to be able to read 40 words per minute by May. Please continue practicing at home.

In math, we are focusing on addition and subtraction facts. We are also continuing to learn about measurement, geometry, and time. Students are preparing for standardized tests they will take in April called "Terra Nova." It is important that your child be in school on time for these days.



Please continue to read with your child for at least 15 minutes each night.

Second Grade

March is proving to be a fantastic month for second grade. We wrapped up February by celebrating Valentine's Day. Our students loved having the opportunity to read valentines to our friends in Pre-K. We also learned that Puxatawney Phil did not see his shadow on Feb. 2. We are all hoping that the end of this long winter is in sight and Spring is just around the corner.

We have started a new reading theme, "Neighborhood News." Students are discovering that members of a community are connected in a variety of ways and that each person plays an important role in making that community function. Each week we continue to focus on a reading strategy that will help mold them into life-long readers and critical thinkers. For example, we are challenging our students to make inferences as they read, and self-correct when they misread a word. Having your child work on these strategies at home as they read each night will help solidify these behaviors and improve their comprehension and fluency.

In math we are working on measurement. Students are learning how to use and manipulate a ruler to find the measurement and perimeter of different objects. Challenge your child to use measurement in their everyday life. Whether it be in the kitchen or maybe working on a home improvement project, showing your child how we use math in a practical way can help them make powerful connections in their world.

We had a great opportunity to do an interactive virtual activity with a museum in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Students learned about different animals that can survive in very cold environments. They got to use real feathers to experience how down feathers keep animals warm. They also had the opportunity to act as penguins and try to pass an egg with a partner using only their feet. A special thanks to Gail Barna for working with our team in setting up this activity.



Third Grade

This month third grade has the theme "Tell Me a Story." Students will be given a chance to recall stories they have heard recently or may have told, and what the purpose was of telling or hearing them. We will also continue to practice writing persuasive selections and coming up with convincing reasons and details to help persuade our audience.

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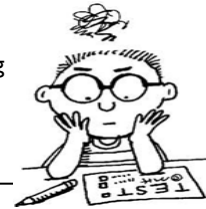
In math, we are soaring into measurement of customary units and metric units, which students have become very enthusiastic about. We are still flying through our rocket math facts. Students are continuing to work hard on all the skills to gain as many concepts they can for the PSSA's next month. Please continue to reinforce these at home.

In Science, we have started our unit on The Solar System. We will be discussing all of the planets, the sun, how the sun and motion of the planets affect us.

In Social Studies, we will finish up our discussion on new communities that were built by the immigrants, and continue our discussion on immigrants and how they helped changed communities over time. We will talk about how Daniel Boone, Lewis and Clark, and Sacagawea contributed to the expansion of communities in our country.



As a reminder, we ask that your child continues to complete his/her homework each night, along with reading their best.



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Fourth Grade

March is here and we hope that means signs of spring and warmer weather, will soon be on their way. In the fourth grade, we are continuing to work hard. We are enjoying our new theme in reading which is all about "Community Ties". In this theme the students are discovering both the joys and responsibilities of belonging to a community. We hope to gain a better understanding of the interactions that bind and strengthen our community and society.

In math we are learning how fractions and decimals effect us everyday and how grocery shopping and cooking, both are everyday uses for math. We are also using decimals while we work with money. So this is a great time to have your child help with counting change and adding items up while shopping. Remember to encourage your child to practice their math facts because this plays and important part in our current and upcoming units.

We are continuing our exciting experiments in the science lab and the water unit is full of hands on opportunities. We look forward to those rainy days of April and the opportunity to observe the water cycle in action. In Social Studies we are studying about the "Birthplace of Independence" and how Pennsylvania played and important part in our reach for independence.

Finally we are working very hard to get ready for the PSSA which will be coming up at the end of the month and we know that the 4th grade can and will do a great job. Please continue to be attentive of your child's nightly reading. We can see great improvement, and know by working together we can help our children achieve great things.



Fifth Grade

As we head into the third quarter the Lake Elementary 5th grade is making the most of the final year in our school. The student council has been working hard to make sure this last year is a memorable one. They've been working hard on a newsletter as well as a "NO BULLYING" campaign which has been a real help.



We are also preparing for the upcoming PSSA testing. Students are learning all the necessary skills needed for these important tests. In reading we have been working with our guided reading groups to help students work on specific strategies, such as main ideas and details, sequence, and making inferences to name a few. The students' improvement is already showing. In Math we are wrapping up our chapter on geometry and will continue to cover the content needed to succeed on the testing.



Lastly, as we head into spring we ask that students continue to work on their reading fluency at home. We've seen a great deal of growth from the beginning of the year to now and we'd like to see it continue.



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Please continue to have your child

read at home at least 30 minutes a night!



Title I means that we spend more time indoors, this is a great time to read some great books with your children. As with anything in life, practice makes perfect! Children need opportunities to practice all of the reading skills they learn at school. Reading is the best practice! Here are some suggestions to make the most of your child's reading at home:

Only use these steps if your child is reading a book on his/her level. If the book is too difficult for your child, please read with them and help them as needed.



Sit right next to your child so you will know if your child is reading the words correctly.

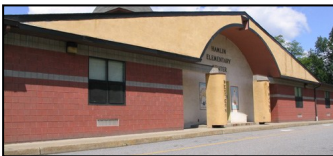
If your child is reading a book on his/her level and he/she makes a mistake, let your child read to the end of the sentence. He/she may figure out the mistake and correct it.

If your child doesn't figure out the word, point to it and say, "You said _____ here, but it's a different word."

5. If the word is short (only 1-syllable) say, "Touch under each letter and say the sounds. Now blend and read the word. Now that you know the word, go back and read the whole sentence so it makes sense."

If your child makes a mistake when sounding out the word, point to that letter and say, "What sound does _____ make? Now go back, touch under each letter again and say the sounds. Now blend and read the word."

If the word is long (2 or more syllables) say, "This word has a lot of parts or syllables, so let's break the word down." Cover up all of the word except for the part you want to read. Say, "Touch and say the sounds for this part. Now blend and read this part." Uncover the next part of the word and say the same thing. Then say, "Now blend both parts together and read the word. Now that you know the word, go back and read the whole sentence so it makes sense."



ENROLLMENTS



HAMLIN ELEMENTARY

Early Intervention	14
Pre-Kindergarten	61
Kindergarten	81
First Grade	84
Second Grade	86
Outside	1
Total	327



LAKE ELEMENTARY

Third Grade	110
Fourth Grade	103
Fifth Grade	104
Outside	3
Total	320

