

HAMLIN / LAKE ELEMENTARY

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT — February 2011



WORDS FROM MISS FALISKIE

Parents Can Help Children Learn Critical Thinking Skills

One of the best places to help children learn and practice critical thinking is right at home! Thinking takes real effort but it's worth it!

Here Are the Six Basic Critical Thinking Skills

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|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1.) Observing | 4.) Summarizing |
| 2.) Classifying | 5.) Hypothesizing |
| 3.) Comparing | 6.) Evaluating |

Let's take a closer look at each skill to see what it includes and how you can help your children learn it.

Observing- Good thinking depends upon careful observation. Watching, reading and listening (sometimes even tasting, smelling and feeling) are how we get the basic facts and information to use in thinking. If children are not careful observers they will miss getting the information they need. Then good thinking becomes impossible.

- **Observe** pigeons, squirrels, butterflies, ants or spiders. Look carefully. Can you see the purpose of what they are doing?
- **Watch** ants scurry in and out of their ant hill. Do they eat their food on the spot?
- **Use a magnifying glass** to find out the following:
 - * What is hidden in the soil or under leaves?
 - * What is on both sides of leaves?
 - * How many legs do different insects have?
 - * What do butterfly wings look like?
- **Look** around your house and track down everything that is sticky. How many sticky things can you find?



Miss Faliskie

pre-Kindergarten

The children anxiously awaited the early morning wake up call of our famous groundhog, Punxatawney Phil to see if he saw his shadow on February 2nd. Most of us had hoped for an early spring.

There are some famous birthdays to celebrate this month. We will begin with celebrating Abraham Lincoln's birthday. Lincoln was our 16th president and his face is on the penny. The children are looking forward to making a log cabin, just like Lincoln's home.

Valentine's Day will follow on the 14th. The children will have an opportunity to bring in Valentines for their classmates. The students will get a chance to read their Valentines with the help of Second Grade.

George Washington's birthday is on the 22nd, he was the first President of the United States. His face is on the quarter.

We continue to learn new letters each week. Please continue to practice identifying these letters and sounds as much as possible. Our letters that we have learned so far are A, C, D, M, N, P, R, S and T.

The children are also doing "Picture Talks" each week. Students look at a picture and give us a complete sentence about something in the picture, using color words, position words and adjectives. This would be a great language development activity that can be practiced at home.



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Kindergarten

The kindergarteners enjoyed a new reading theme called **Bug Surprises**. The students listened to **Butterfly**, a story that shows how a caterpillar becomes a beautiful butterfly. The story gave us time to reflect on the caterpillars we watched go through metamorphosis in the autumn. Another story, **Wonderful Worms**, gives very interesting and amazing facts about worms. In still another story, **Look Closer**, the students learned about various insect habitats.

In math the children are working on simple addition problems, and recognizing and comparing the value of coins. We continue to count by ones and tens to 100 and are beginning to count by fives and twos. Please practice counting with your child at home!

It's hard to believe that the 100th day of school is here already! On the 100th day, the kindergarteners have lots and lots of practice counting to 100 by ones, fives, and tens. Of course there is also a special 100th day of school story read in each classroom.



Valentine's Day is so exciting in Kindergarten! The children can't wait to open all of the valentine cards in their bags and read to find out who sent each one. Happy Valentine's Day to all!

Please remember to read with your child every night and fill out the reading log in the homework folder. Also, be sure to have your child practice reading the sight word list on the back of the homework folder.

First Grade

The third quarter is now upon us. In reading we recently began our fourth book called, **Time Together**. We began learning about long vowel and long vowel patterns. Students are learning about silent e words as well as different vowel pairs. Please reinforce these vowels at home. Also, we continue to learn new reading strategies. Students are learning the importance of rereading for understanding, retelling a story in their own words, and identifying the beginning, middle, and end of stories. We are also continuing to work on blends, digraphs, and word families.

In math, we are learning about 3D figures. We have introduced the students to cone, sphere, cube, triangular prism, rectangular prism, and pyramid. Students learn to count the faces and vertices on these figures. We are also continuing to work on counting coins. Please continue to work with your child on this skill.

In science, we have started our unit on liquids and solids. In this unit, students are learning about different properties of matter, as well as using their senses to identify a liquid they may find. Students are looking forward to our units on Air and Weather and Living Things.

Please continue to practice your child's sight words each night. This will help them become a better reader.

Also, please continue to read 15 minutes every night with your child.



learning about
not know.

become a better

Second Grade

The month of February brings the second graders a new reading theme entitled, "Imagine That!". In this theme the children have been reading fantasy and informational stories and have been learning how imagination and creativity help people solve problems and express ideas. Remember to keep reading every night! The students are continuing to work on improving their reading comprehension as well as their reading fluency. Please continue to have your children read for 15 minutes daily.

In math, the students have been working hard with interpreting bar graphs and pictographs, surveying, tallying, recording, and analyzing data, as well as determining probability by predicting and recording outcomes. The children have been enjoying these lessons and are developing a deeper understanding of how math is an important part of the real world. Please use opportunities in everyday life to show your children how math is used.

The second graders are aware of many of our current events by reading informational articles in our Weekly Reader. We are having some great discussions! Please continue these discussions at home when the children bring home their Weekly Reader. This is a great opportunity for the students to re-read informational text as well as analyze the material through conversation.

Valentine's Day is always an exciting day where the second graders help the children in Pre-K read and open their valentine cards. The children of all ages love this day!

As always, thank you for your continued support and cooperation!





Third Grade

February is the shortest month of the year, and fast the school year is going.

Third grade has begun the 2nd part of our reading series, and jumped into the theme "Tell Me a Story." Students are learning that storytelling takes many forms and serves many purposes. As they read stories and meet storytellers from around the world, they are discovering new ways to tell their own stories. We are continuing to practice writing persuasive selections and coming up with convincing reasons and details to help persuade our audience.

In math, we are busy estimating and measuring length, capacity, and weight using appropriate customary units, changing from one unit of measurement to another and estimating and measuring temperature in degrees Fahrenheit. We are still soaring through our Rocket Math facts. Students are continuing to work hard on all the skills to gain as many concepts as they can for the PSSA's next month. Please continue to reinforce these skills at home.

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

In Social Studies, we are talking about how Daniel Boone, Lewis and Clark, and Sacagawea contributed to the expansion of communities in our country.

Valentine's Day will be celebrated by exchanging cards with our classmates. Everyone had fun opening and admiring the cards, and reading to find out who sent each one.

As a reminder, we ask that your child continues to complete his/her homework each night, along with reading 15-20 minutes. With PSSA's coming up, we feel this reinforcement at home will help them do their personal best! As always, thank you for your continued cooperation and support!



Fourth Grade

Fourth grade is excited that February is here, and it is hard to believe that the 100th day of school will soon be here. We have been working hard as we move quickly toward the half way point for the year.

We are multiplying and dividing our way through the math series and focusing on division with remainders has been both challenging and fun. We cannot stress how important it is for the students to know their math facts. That is why Rocket Math and flash card practice is still a priority to everyone.

In reading we are in a new theme called Creative Minds. In this theme, students meet characters who overcome obstacles by thinking creatively. By using problem-solving abilities and creative imaginations, our students are discovering how we can enhance our environment for the better, just like our stories' characters.



In science we are continuing our exciting experiments with water. Using time in the lab and time in class we are exploring all the different ways water is involved in our environment. In social studies we are wrapping up Colonial Pennsylvania and moving on to The Birthplace of Independence. We are learning the important part Pennsylvania played in the Revolutionary War.

Please remember to fill in the reading calendars with your nightly reading. Twenty minutes of nightly reading can really help your child improve in all areas of school.

Fifth Grade

We are focusing on improving and maintaining our oral reading fluency. The fifth grade students have packets of stories they are practicing each day in school. They read aloud for one minute to try to reach our goal of 124 words correct per minute. They are really motivated to reach that goal and beyond. Great job!!

In Science, all fifth graders continue to be excited about science lab!! Recently we have been testing different solutions for concentration. The students learned that there are a variety of ways to test for concentration. You can observe the solution, you can weigh it, and our most favorite way-taste it!! Yes, we did test the concentration of different mixtures of Kool-aid. Science can be delicious!!

In math this quarter we will be studying various mode, and range. We will also begin fractions and encourage your children to practice these skills at school.

topics including graphing, mean, median, geometry. Parents we ask that you home to reinforce all of their learning at





Title I

January was a very busy month for students. Kindergarten through fifth grade were given the DIBELS benchmark assessment, one of our yearly benchmark assessments to monitor how our students are doing in reading. The second marking period also ended and report cards will be going home. If you have any questions regarding how your child scored on the DIBELS assessment or on his/her report card please contact your child's Title I teacher or homeroom teacher.

Many parents ask what they can do to help their child at home to improve his/her reading. Remember that one of the most powerful (and easiest) things that you can do is read aloud to your child. Below are some tips taken from the International Reading Association's website regarding reading aloud to your child.

- *Read aloud to your child every day, and continue after your child learns to read.
- *Answer your child's questions, even if they interrupt the story.
- *Talk as you read. Ask questions like, "What do you think is going to happen next?" "Why did that character do that?" and "What would you do?"
- *Don't use books that are not interesting to your child.
- *Encourage your child to write after reading. For example, ask your child to describe his or her favorite part or to imagine a different ending for the book.
- *Have your child retell the story in his or her own words.



*After finishing the book, talk with your child about what you read, and invite him or her to reread parts of the story with you

If you are interested in more reading tips for parents visit the International Reading Association's website at www.reading.org. And of course, contact your child's Title I teacher for input on your child's specific needs.

Keep warm and happy reading!!



HAMLIN ELEMENTARY

Early Intervention	14
Pre-Kindergarten	60
Kindergarten	80
First Grade	84
Second Grade	85
Outside	0
Total	<u>323</u>

ENROLLMENTS



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Third Grade	110
Fourth Grade	104
Fifth Grade	103
Outside	4
Total	<u>321</u>

