

# SHUTTLE EXPRESS

*Dec 2019 edition*

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## **From the Principal's Desk**

Hello Challenger Families,

We want to wish everyone a Happy Holiday Season filled with joy and happiness. It is a pleasure to be able to serve your children and this community each and every day. November flew. December is here. We have a very busy month ahead of us with lots of activities. We have a "Filling Your Bucket" assembly, numerous field trips and our annual Sing-a-long.

**Holiday Sing-a-Long:** On December 20, at 2:30 we will have our Annual Holiday Sing-a-Long. We invite parents and younger siblings to join us.

**Nutcracker Ballet:** Students in grades 2-5 will be going to see the Nutcracker Ballet at the Hylton Performing Arts Centers on December 18.

**Holiday Shop:** Our PTA will be hosting a Holiday Shop on December 13 from 5:30-8:00. Students are given an opportunity to shop for gifts for their family members.

## **Calendar of Events**

December 4: Fifth Grade Trip to the Planetarium

December 5: Filling Your Bucket Assembly at 2:15

December 13: PTA Holiday Shop 5:30-8:00 with Craft/Vendor Fair

December 18: Grades 2-5 attending the Nutcracker at Hylton Performing Arts

December 20: 2:30 Holiday Sing-a-Long

December 23-January 3: No School

January 6: School Reopens

Thank you,

Mrs. Herritt, Principal

## Kindergarten News

The kindergarten children continue to work hard on gaining literacy skills. Many students know the letters of the alphabet and letter sounds. This knowledge has helped them with their writing during writer's workshop and with using strategies during guided reading lessons. They have enjoyed big books, *Moccasins* and *The Farm Concert*. They have read refrigerator stories about Thanksgiving to help gain sight words. The students participate in word study activities from Letterland where the students compare letter sounds by sorting pictures and drawing and labeling their illustrations.

Making butter from heavy whipping cream was the perfect science experiment for our lessons on long ago and today. In social studies, the focus has been on informational text about past and present in relationship to the first Thanksgiving. Students worked on research to introduce them to the structure and layout of nonfiction text.

In math, the students have had been learning about geometry. They are creating pictures with shapes and finding shapes in their world. Pattern block puzzles, geo-boards, counting vertices, and making clay shapes have helped them to describe the attributes of shapes. There is a continued focus on number sense strategies as the students are subitizing numbers between five and ten. We have introduced patterning. The students used manipulatives to create and record patterns. They used this knowledge in making their placemats and headbands for the Thanksgiving Feast.

The Thanksgiving Activity Day was the highlight of November. The students wore their hats, played games, and made crafts. Thank you to all the parents who were able to volunteer their time. You helped to make the day extra-special. The kindergarten children never fail to amaze their teachers and we look forward to our gingerbread unit in December.

## First Grade News

First grade is a year of tons of learning experiences!

In December, we will be learning...

- Language Arts: Our focus is identifying key details to help us find the main idea of non-fiction text.
- Writing: We are learning to read nonfiction and write our own informational books.
- Math: We will be continuing to work on mastery of addition and math facts to 10. Students will begin to master subtraction facts to 5.
- Science: We will continue science experiments with learning about the three states of matter.
- Social Studies: We will continue to study economics and identifying producers and consumers.

## Second Grade News

We can't believe it is already December! As December rolls in, please remember to send your child in with a coat that reflects the weather. We try to get outside for recess as much as we are able. In math, we will be continuing to work on 3 digit numbers and also learning about measuring length to the nearest inch. In writing, we will be focusing on writing persuasive letters. Students will need to identify their audience and the important things their audience needs to know, as well as state opinions and reasons behind their opinions. In reading, we will be using our asking and answering skills to help us understand fiction and nonfiction texts better. As a reminder, 2nd graders are expected to complete 20 minutes of reading every night for homework. They can also use MobyMax and iStation at home for extra support in both reading and math. These programs have a combination of lessons assigned by the program at their level and lessons assigned by the teacher that cover topics they are learning in class. These are great programs to help keep your student sharp over the two week holiday break!

## Third Grade News

Third grade is rolling right along after so many breaks in November! In Reading, we are finishing our unit on theme, drawing conclusions and identifying narrator and will begin studying how to compare & contrast characters, settings & plot events after the new year. We will continue studying affixes this month as well. In writing, the students loved writing about how to disguise their turkeys for Thanksgiving and have started their Informative Writing Unit. In Social Studies, we finished our Geography Unit and have moved into Economics. We will soon begin our first Ancient Civilizations Unit, which will be on Greece and Rome. In Math, we completed our unit on Data & Probability and moved back into Multiplication and Division again, but with double digits this time. Finally, we ended our Science unit on Simple Machines with a trip to see how they were used at a farm, and we have started our unit on Animal Adaptations. Please make sure that your third grader is reading over the break and remember that iStation.com is available for reading and math lessons as well. Happy Holidays from the third grade team!

## Fourth Grade News

We can't believe it is December already! In fourth grade our reading skills are continuously worked on in all of our subject areas. We are working on the skill of theme with our poetry unit. We are continuing to work on realistic fiction stories. We have also worked with the technology teacher to learn how to make an informational text page using our regions of Virginia. Each night your child should read 20 minutes of reading. Ask your child higher level thinking questions such as making connections and inferences.

In social studies, we are learning about life in Virginia's colonial times. We learned tobacco was a major cash crop and how our capital has moved. Later in December we will study the American Revolution. Students should also use [www.solpass.org](http://www.solpass.org) to study on a regular basis.

In math, we are working on fractions. Students will be comparing, ordering, adding/subtracting fractions. Have your child follow a recipe at home to practice with fractions in the kitchen! Please continue to have your child practice their multiplication facts! There are plenty of apps and websites to use. Ask your child about their gingerbread house!

In science, we are working in our outer space units. Beginning with solar system and then into our Earth, moon, and sun unit. Students will be researching on a specific planet. Ask your child about the fun lab experiments we are doing weekly!

## **Fifth Grade News**

Math we have finished unit 3 on Measurements and are beginning our unit 4 on Fractions and Decimals. Parents please discuss and identify the fractions and decimals you experience during your day at home and work with you student. Science has moved onto Geologic Process. We will study the layers of the earth, plate tectonics, human impact, and weathering/erosion/deposition. The students all did super on Unit 2 The Rock Cycle.

### **Mrs. Hargest-Room 111**

Winter is just around the corner! Everyone in Mrs. Hargest's room is excited about Winter Break and the possibility of snow. Students will have the opportunity to see a performance of the Nutcracker at the Hylton Performing Arts Center. All students will be working hard on their individual goals in reading, writing and math. They are also working on identifying main idea or topic of non-fiction reading material for their Virginia assessments. In math, students will be working on computation, place value and patterns. The theme for social studies in December will be needs and wants. In science, students will participate in experiments in which they have to make hypotheses and begin a unit on force, motion and energy. As always, students practice good work habits and social skills daily.

### **Mr. Dieruf-Room 112**

This month we have welcomed two new friends to our classroom. They are already making friends and getting into our new routines. In science we are continuing to observe our seeds and waiting for them to sprout. We are on track to finish working on our place values in math and are still working on mastering word problems. Most of our friends are pushing into Mrs. Page's class and are having a great time learning with new friends.

### **Mrs. Armstrong & Mrs. Allen-Room 128:**

Welcome Winter! We hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday and break. This month we are excited to have the opportunity to attend a performance of "The Nutcracker". The students are very excited to attend. In Math, we have wrapped up units on multiplication and division. In Language Arts, the students are learning about theme for fictional texts and main idea for non-fiction text. The students also continue to work hard on their individual academic and social goals. Remember that students have access to RAZ Kids and iStation at home for extra math and reading practice. We hope everyone has a happy, wonderful, and restful holiday season and winter break!

### **Mrs. Bampton-Room 131**

In the month of December our students are busy mastering their Aligned Standards of Learning to prepare for their end of the year assessment. In Science, the students will be studying the interior of the Earth.. During Social Studies, the students will be exploring the difference between a want and a need. They will also learn that one must work to earn the money to buy the things that they want. On December 18th, my students will be going to the Hylton Center to see the Nutcracker., "The Polar Express." The students are so excited!

## Mrs. Woughter-Room 129: Woughter's Wonders

November's cold weather and changing colors helped get us excited about Thanksgiving. What a feast we had with Mrs. Bampton's class! Traditional Thanksgiving foods with student's family favorites added in; it was an international feast! Thank you to all our families for contributing. What a joyful show of support. We are thankful for your generosity.

For history we spent November studying about the history of the 1st Thanksgiving. Did you know it was not about a turkey dinner, but all kinds of wild game and foods native to the New World? We focused on how people all worked together to survive that long first year and how we can work together as a class to help one another be successful and achieve our individual and group goals.

In science we have been focusing on matter. We're beginning to learn about the distinguishing characteristics of solids and liquids, what dissolves and what doesn't, and textures of objects and how they feel. Everyone continues working on their individual reading and math goals and objectives. We are all thankful for school and the fun learning activities we share!

## PTA News

Thank you to everyone who's joined the PTA! If you haven't joined us yet, it's never too late to become a member!

Congratulations to Mrs. Page's class for bringing in the most BoxTops! We sent in over \$184 worth last month. We'll send them in again at the end of February. In the meantime, please keep scanning your BoxTop receipts and sending in valid clipped BoxTops. Each purchase contributes 10 cents toward the school.

You guys absolutely ROCKED the Believe Fundraiser!!!! We went PAST our goal. Absolutely amazing job! Our top winners are Major McCray from K-2 and Cohan Roe from 3-5th. Major won \$100 in Visa Gift Cards and Cohan won an electric scooter. Way to go! Ashley Flores Ramos was the winner of the "Principal Taxi." All of our participants will have the chance to DUCT TAPE one of our administrators to the wall during the Holiday Sing-Along on December 20th.

We'd like to say a big thank you to MOMs Organic Market and the Mapledale Giant each for contributing a \$25 gift card as Bingo prizes. We truly appreciate it.

There will be no PTA meeting in December. Our next scheduled PTA meeting is January 14th.

Upcoming dates to be aware of:

Dec 13th – Holiday Shop – 5:30 – 8 pm

Dec 20 – 2:30 sing along

Jan 14 – PTA General Meeting – 6 pm

Don't forget to "Like" us on Facebook!!! <https://www.facebook.com/VAMcAuliffeElementaryPTA/>

Reminder: If you have any photos that you would like to be included in the 2019-20 Yearbook, please email them to [vamcauliffepta@gmail.com](mailto:vamcauliffepta@gmail.com).



With Mrs. Jampole & Mrs. Weinhold

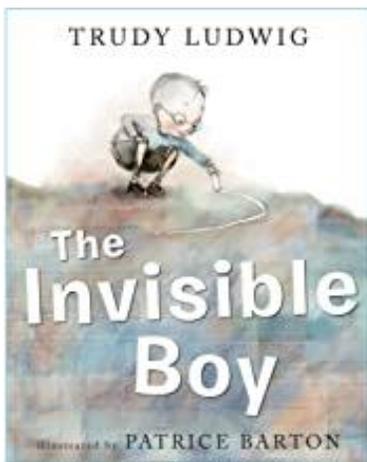


### SHOWING EMPATHY AND CARING IN THE LIBRARY!

We recently read the book, Ricky The Rock That Couldn't Roll. After seeing how kind and caring the rocks were to Ricky we decided to paint kindness rock. We've placed our rocks in front of the school to help put a smile on your face. Please do not take these rocks. We'd like to keep them here to spread joy and happiness!

## It's story TIME

## Reading Suggestions for December:

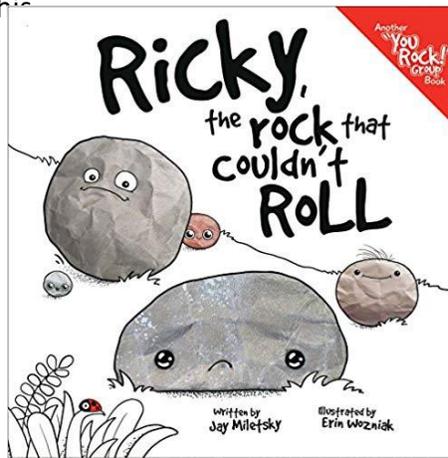


Join us at this

### The Invisible Boy by Trudy Ludwig

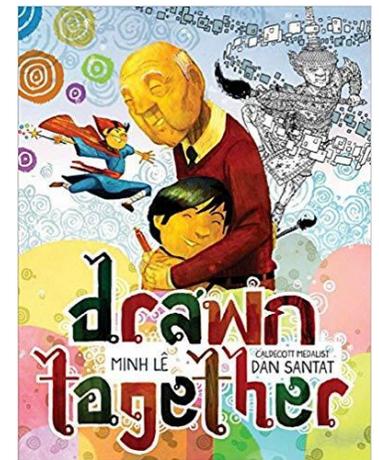
Meet Brian, the invisible boy. Nobody ever seems to notice him or think to include him in their group, game, or birthday party . . . until, that is, a new kid comes to class.

When Justin, the new boy, arrives, Brian is the first to make him feel welcome. And when Brian and Justin team up to work on a class project together, Brian finds a way to shine.



### Ricky, the rock that couldn't roll by Jay Miletsky

Get ready to meet a new rock group! From zippy, little pebbles to big strong boulders, the rocks get together to play and roll around their favorite hill, only to find that one of their friends, Ricky, can't roll with them. Unlike all of the others, who are all round, Ricky can't roll because he's flat on one side. *His friends didn't get it. "Come roll!" they would chant.* Determined not to leave their friend behind, the rocks and the ladybug set out to help Ricky roll around - one way or another.



### Drawn Together by

When a young boy visits his grandfather, their lack of a common language leads to confusion, frustration, and silence. But as they sit down to draw together, something magical happens-with a shared love of art and storytelling, the two form a bond that goes beyond words.

With spare, direct text by Minh Lê and luminous illustrations by Caldecott Medalist Dan Santat, this stirring picture book about reaching across barriers will be cherished for years to come.