

Robertson News



Mrs. Courtney, *Editor*

Principal: Mr. Wolf
Secretary: Mrs. Hegenauer

April, 2015

Volume 10, Issue 8

Message From the Principal's Desk

Thank you to all of the parents, guardians, and grandparents that came to school for your child's March report card conferences.



As you know, when you participate in your child's education, students are more likely to perform to their fullest potential. Being present for report card conferences is one great way to participate! It shows your children that you care about their school performance and that you want to work as a partner with the school to help your child.

Conferences offer both you and your child's teacher a chance to exchange information and to plan strategies for helping your child. Even when children are doing well academically and socially, it is important for you to participate in report card conferences because this shows them that their hard work and accomplishments are being recognized!

Regular and on-time attendance at school is an essential ingredient to academic success. At Robertson, we continue to make a strong effort to have all of our students improve their attendance.



We have discovered some patterns of students missing school frequently and/or being late to school (tardy) frequently. We will continue to communicate with parents when students show a pattern of frequent absences and/or frequent tardiness.

If there is any way that we can help you to ensure that your child attends school regularly and/or gets here on time, please contact our School Social Worker, Mrs. Beverly Prager, at (860) 647-3372.

Reminder: Snow storms have caused school to be cancelled for a total of 6 days this school year. The updated last day of school is now Monday, June 22.



ROBERTSON SCIENTISTS

Congratulations to Shriya Krishnakumar, Michelle Rodriguez, Saarah Tapkirwala, Ola Taha and Te'ajha McDade for representing Robertson School at the District-wide Science Fair/Invention Convention. All of them did a fantastic job presenting their projects!

After the judges made their decisions, both Saarah and Ola qualified to move on to the State Invention Convention to be held in May at the University of Connecticut. The entire Robertson Community is very proud of them. We all wish you good luck at the state level!

(Continued on page 2)

Message From the Principal's Desk, Cont'd.

(Continued from page 1)

SPRING SAFETY TIPS

With the onset of warm weather and the increase in daylight, everyone will be spending more time outdoors. Here are a few safety reminders that you may want to review with your child:



Please remind your child that when walking to and from school or to his/her bus stop:

- It is safer to walk with a buddy rather than alone.
- Never talk to strangers. If a stranger approaches you or asks for your help, walk away quickly. Report this incident to an adult immediately.
- Avoid all contact with strangers in cars.
- If you think someone is following you, seek immediate help from an adult that you know.
- Stay on sidewalks and cross at designated crossing areas only. Obey traffic signals, signs, and crossing guards. Always look both ways when crossing a street.
- Do not cut through vacant lots and/or backyards. Do walk where you can see and be seen by other people.



Manchester Public Schools wishes to ensure the safety of all of its students. All parents are asked to do their part by reviewing these guidelines with their children. Please contact the school office to report any unusual occurrences.

Additional safety information is available through various Public Safety Web Sites on the Town of Manchester Home Page as well as the Public Safety Home Page of the State of Connecticut Web Site:

Town of Manchester:

<http://www.ci.manchester.ct.us/dept.htm>

State of CT Department of Public Safety:

<http://www.state.ct.us/dps/>

ABSENCE NOTES

Please remember that whenever your child is absent from school, for any reason, they must bring a note from their parent/guardian explaining the reason for their absence. It can be a simple note that states that they were ill.



Even if you call in and report the absence on our absence line, state law says that you must still send in a note when your child returns to school.

BOXTOPS FOR EDUCATION

This is just a reminder that we still collect the "Box Tops for Education" that can be found on many of the General Mills products. Please continue to clip them and save them for our next "Box Top Race."

We are able to trade-in the box tops for a monetary reward that we can use to purchase extra equipment and supplies and help defray the cost of field trips.



Thank you to so many of you who have participated in our "Box Top Races" so far this year.

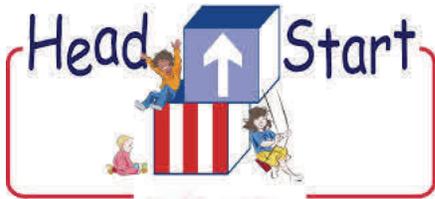
HEAD START ENROLLMENT

The Manchester Head Start program is a federally funded, town supported, child development program now enrolling children born in the years 2011 and 2012. Manchester Head Start provides:

- Pre-School Education
- Family Support Services
- Parent Involvement
- Nutrition
- Health & Mental Health Services
- One Full Year/Full Day Program

To be eligible, families must be Manchester residents, meet the Federal Income Guidelines or have a child with Special needs.

Please call 860-647-3502 for further information or enrollment.



STUDENT INSURANCE

The Manchester Board of Education makes student health insurance available to families that would like to purchase it. You may go to either of the following links to access the insurance brochure and sign up.



http://publicschools.manchesterct.gov/uploaded/District_Office/Parent_Guardian_Resources/Images/CT_2014-15_MB_Brochure.pdf

Or [p://publicschools.manchesterct.gov/page.cfm?p=939](http://publicschools.manchesterct.gov/page.cfm?p=939)

Lib./Media Center: Mr. Hadge & Mrs. Courtney

The PTA-sponsored book fair was held during March. Everyone enjoyed book browsing and selecting and the PTA's goal of putting one book in the hand of each Robertson child was once again achieved.



In addition to raising money for the PTA, many books were added to classrooms and the library. Special thanks to all the volunteers who helped out.

April is National Poetry Month! Poetry books of various kinds will be displayed around the library. If you and your child have never explored the poetry genre, give it a try! Some humorous poets to start out with are Shel Silverstein, Jack Prelutsky, and Bruce Lansky.



If you have not visited the Robertson School website recently please check it out. The address is:

<http://mpspride.org/page.cfm?p=714>.

From the website you can access the K-8 Resource page (under the Resources tab) which has links to our school library catalog and many sites that are used by our students.

Title IX Notice

Title IX is a federal law which states: "No person in the United States shall on the basis of sex be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal assistance." Manchester's Title IX coordinator is:

Terri Smith
Manchester Public Schools
45 North School Street
Manchester, CT 06042
Phone: 860-647-3595
Fax: 860-647-3327

The Title IX coordinator is responsible for monitoring the over-all implementation of Title IX for the school district and coordinating the institution's compliance with Title IX prevention of sexual harassment and discrimination.

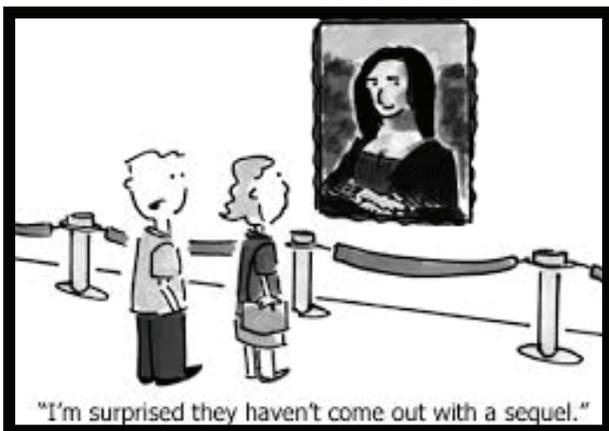
Physical Education: Ms. White & Ms. Falkowski

In kindergarten and grades 1 and 2, we have learned to catch and throw with buckets, then progressed to catching large and small objects. These skills will lead us into playing games like, "Messy Backyard" and "Oscar's Garbage Can."

In grades 3, 4 and 5, we have just finished a 3-lesson floor hockey unit. Moving forward, we will spend a couple of classes on cooperative games and then move into using the rock wall and climbing ropes.

PUT IT ON THE CALENDER

Field Day will be June 3rd (Rain date June 8th). More information to come!



Mrs. Sheroff: Art Studio & Ms. Ignatowicz

Students in Kindergarten through 5th Grade are getting ready for The Robertson ART SHOW!

Thursday, May 14th
6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
in the Gym



Kindergarteners worked on their painting skills in a flower pattern. They also made geometric-shaped buddies using their collage skills.

First grade artists finished up their Aztec calendars using geometric shapes and patterns. They also worked on their flower reversal paper designs.

Second graders are starting their collage printing and some are starting their sewn nametags as part of their fiber unit.

Third graders are working on their 3-D Earth showing their Earth's crust.

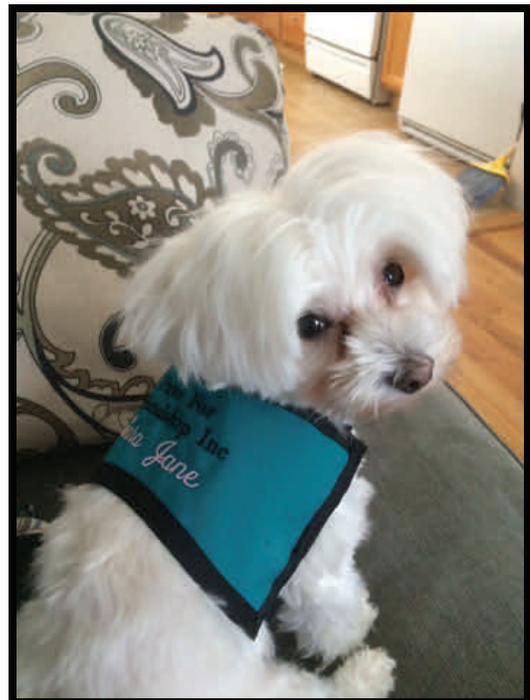
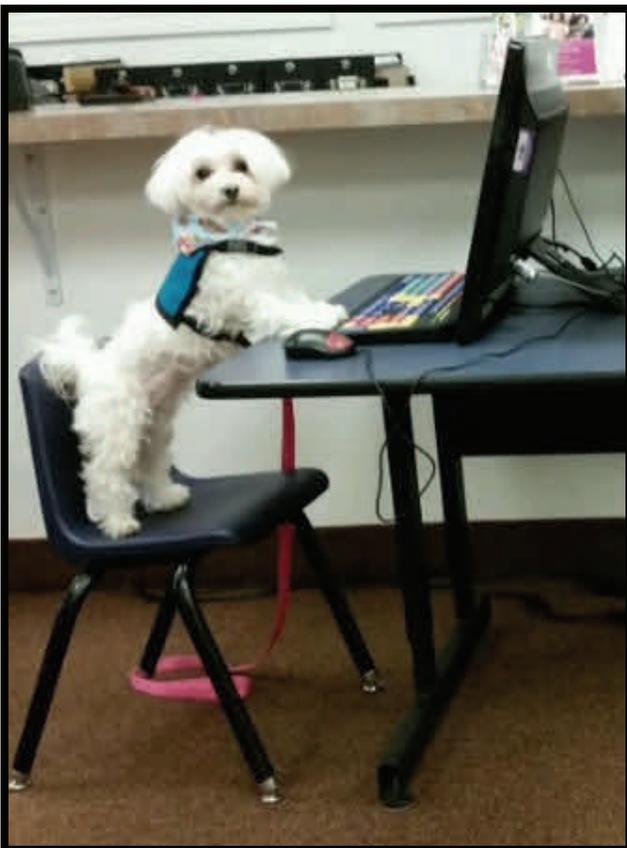
Fourth grade are starting a 3-D figure using foil. The artists they are studying are Har- ring, who made cartoon-like figures, and Al- bert Giacometti, the metal figure sculptor.

Fifth graders are finishing up their pop-out Van Gogh-like picture. Next they will be start- ing a pillow design.

Sara Jane: Physical Therapy dog



We have a visitor at Robertson School! Kristin Akeley's dog, Sara Jane, is a certified Therapy Dog. She comes to Robertson a few days each week. Sara Jane's job is to assist students in maintaining a positive mood and to help promote a general feeling of calm. After a little while we would like to make Sara Jane's services available to a few of our other students. We are all very excited to welcome our newest "staff" member.



Family Resource Center: Mrs. Cassandra Rochon



The Playgroups continue to meet on Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m. in the mornings for children ages birth to 5 years of age.

In the playgroups, children are boosting early thinking and problem-solving skills as they play. The activities are inviting children to practice comparing, sorting, and exploring their cognitive memory. They are receiving hands-on experience with water play and just having fun as they learn.

Positive Youth Development (PYD) lunch groups have been involved in activities to identify "Great Character Traits" in different situations. Some of the traits they have learned are citizenship, trustworthiness, fairness and respect. Through lessons, students are connecting to a time in their lives when these traits were present.

The fifth graders have been introduced to whole group activities such as self-acceptance, feelings, beliefs and behavior. These activities provide knowledge and facts with specific objectives. Their involvement offers understanding from role playing, stories, written activities and brainstorming.



Weekly visits to the kindergarten classes during students' play station time have students critically thinking. At planning time, children are able to choose activities that are interesting and meaningful to them. They are following their own interest and setting goals of what will take place in the station of choice.

REMINDER:

Grocery Tour will be held at Robertson Elementary starting **Wednesday, April 22**. At these sessions, you will be able to make sense of food labels, get new, easy recipes and more for your families.

Registration is required.



MANCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS NON-DISCRIMINATION NOTICE

Manchester Public Schools does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race, color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability (including, but not limited to, intellectual disability, past or present history of mental disorder, physical disability or learning disability), genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws. Manchester Public Schools' does not unlawfully discriminate in employment and licensing against qualified persons with a prior criminal conviction. Manchester Public Schools' is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons and equal access to Boy Scouts of America and other designated youth groups. Inquiries regarding Manchester Public Schools' nondiscrimination policies and practices should be directed to:

Terri Smith, Human Resources Specialist/
Title IX Coordinator
Manchester Public Schools
45 North School
Street Manchester, CT 06042
860-647-3595

Shelly Matfess, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil
Personnel Services
Section 504 Co-Coordinator
Manchester Public Schools
45 North School Street
Manchester, CT 06042
860-647-3452

or

Linda Hodgkins, Coordinator of
School Health Services
Section 504 Co-Coordinator
Manchester Public Schools
45 North School Street
Manchester, CT 06042
860-647-3324

Kindergarten News: Mrs. Clare, Mrs. Osella, Mrs. Schueler, Mrs. O'Coin, Mrs. Polochanin

Language Arts:



The kindergarten students are enjoying reading fiction and non-fiction stories. After reading, we make connections to the text. We are continuing to work on reading strategies and comprehension.

Growing with Math:



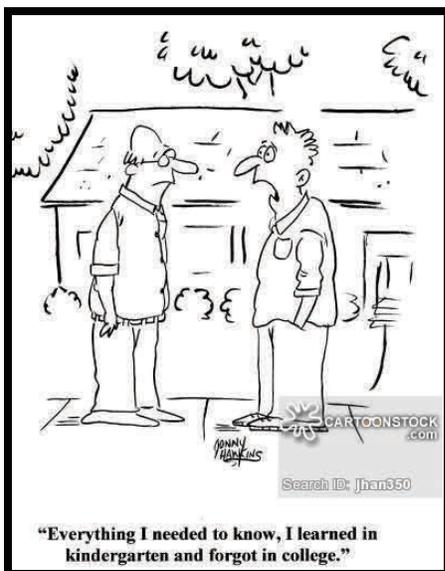
Students are beginning to demonstrate the understanding of how objects can be separated into parts to represent subtraction. Our next unit of study will focus on 2-D and 3-D shapes. Please continue to practice the addition and subtraction flash cards.

Activity: Play Eye Spy and look for 3D shapes in the real world.

Science/Social Studies:

In science, students are learning about living and non-living things.

Our Second Step lessons focus on problem solving in respectful and safe ways.



1st Grade News: Mrs. Parsons, Mrs. Dalton, Mrs. Beauregard, Mrs. Rawlins

We enjoyed meeting with you and discussing your child’s progress during parent conferences. This is a wonderful year of learning for your child. The help and support you have given are making a big difference.

In reading/language arts, we are focusing on applying the comprehension skills learned, including questioning and inferring, to determine what’s important in understanding the big idea in the story, the central message or lesson.



We will also continue reading and comparing fairy tales, and discussing similarities and differences. We have enjoyed writing our own versions of fairy tales, and will now focus on writing our opinions about a favorite version of a story and support our opinions with specific reasons and details from the texts.

Math lessons will continue with Geometry – reasoning with shapes and their attributes, distinguishing between defining attributes (triangles are closed and three sided, etc.), versus non-defining attributes (color, size, etc.). We will also work on telling and writing time to the hour and half hour, and addition facts to 20.

April 22nd is Earth Day. Therefore, during the month of April, we will learn about the earth and the importance of everyone taking care of it. We will complete some projects revolving around earth day, and we will also learn about rainforests!

Enjoy your April vacation!



2nd Grade News: Ms. Dandeneau, Mrs. Gardner, Mrs. Paszek, Ms. Ruggiero

The second grade students have been working on researching, planning, and writing an expository piece. They have been reading non-fiction texts and media sources to research a specific animal.

They have used text features such as table of contents, indexes, headings, and pictures to locate information. They have been recording basic information about their research, including notes, charts and pictures.



They will create a visual presentation to share with their peers. The non-fiction unit ties in our Social Studies concepts as we explore different parts of the world and what animals inhabit certain parts of the earth.

We continue to reinforce editing skills as a part of the writing process. You can also emphasize editing at home with your child's homework. The reading response is a great way to reinforce editing on a weekly basis.

April is National Poetry Month. In writing, the students will be writing poems. They will learn how to use line breaks to emphasize words and phrases in their poems, and how to use feelings, metaphors, word choice, repetition and rhythm into their poems.



Students will also continue to learn about informational writing. In reading, they will research a topic to find important information that they would like to report on and share with the class.

In math, we are continuing to reinforce addition and subtraction skills. Students are learning strategies on how to add and subtract 2- and 3-digit numbers with and without regrouping.

We are using place value cubes to provide students with a visual aide as they carry out the process of adding and subtracting.



In the upcoming weeks, math will focus on geometry concepts and how to identify the different attributes of shapes. Students will be able to:

- * Describe, identify, create, sort and build with shapes (squares, triangles, circles, rectangles, etc.)
- * Identify a variety of geometric shapes in everyday structures
- * Compare and sort 2- and 3-dimensional shapes (3-D terms include sphere, prism, cones, etc.)
- * Extend and make patterns with shapes
- * Determine lines of symmetry, flips, slides, turns and transformations of shapes
- * Describe locations on a grid (e.g., up four and over two etc.)

In science, we are beginning our Matter Unit. Students are applying new process science skills, such as questioning and creating models as they explore the properties that define solids and liquids.

Students are conducting investigations that they have designed in order to deepen their understanding of what matter is.

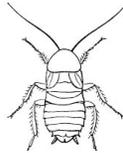
As students explore the properties of solids and liquids, they continue to learn about the scientific method. They ask questions, make hypotheses and write lab reports to describe their procedures, results, and conclusions.



Lutz Visit

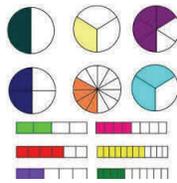
We had the Lutz Museum visit us and they brought us animal friends. We learned about habitats and adaptations. A habitat is where a living organism lives and an adaptation helps the organism survive in its environment by having a special body part or behavior that allows it to either get food or not become food.

We saw a Madagascar hissing cockroach, a pigeon, and cool artifacts. The Lutz will be visiting us again soon and we can't wait to see what Ms. Rachel brings to help us learn more about animals and their adaptations.



Math

Our current unit has been all about fractions. We have been discovering that fractions can be represented in many different ways. For example fractions can be part of a whole, like slices of a pizza, or part of a set like a bag of marbles with different colors, and you describe the ratio of a certain color in relation the whole set. We can even use a number-line to show fractions by partitioning it equally into parts. We know what a numerator and denominator are and where they are located in a fraction.



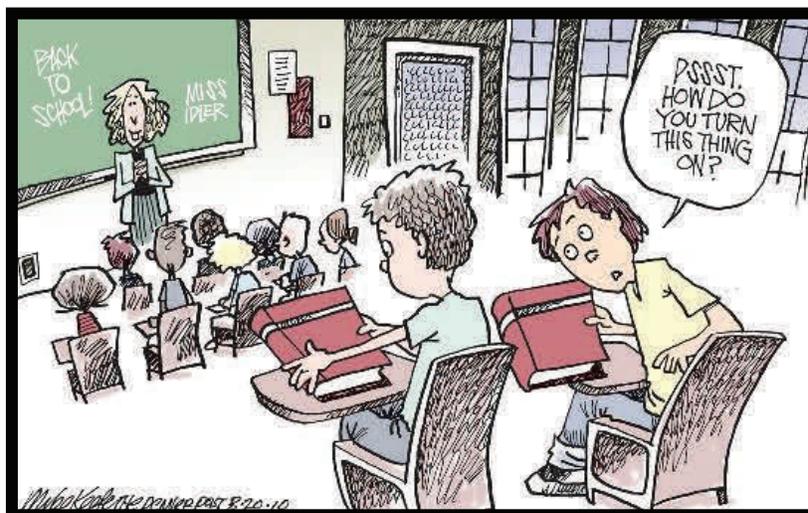
Now we are taking our learning and expanding it to help us find equivalent fractions (fractions that take up the same space) and comparing fractions. Once we compare fractions we can put them in order. Fractions are all around us!

Literacy

In reading, we are practicing important strategies to help us with comprehension. We are reading articles and determining relevant and irrelevant information to help us understand what is really important in an informational text. This helps us with taking notes when doing research. We even discuss the author's opinion and make our own opinions about the topics we read.

Now that we have orally discussed our opinions and reasons, we are transferring these skills into our writing, too. From opinion, we are going to arguments, which means that we take our opinions and support them with text evidence. We have discussed topics such as: Is summer break necessary? Should kids have a TV in their room? Should sledding be banned? This has been a lot of fun discussing in class. We pretend we are lawyers defending our case and need good evidence to convince the judge and jury.

Ask us a question that makes us give our opinion with evidence or reasons! Did we convince/persuade you?



March has come and gone! It was wonderful getting to see everyone at conferences. Thank you for all of your support.

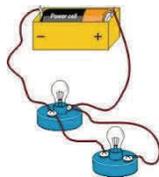
In reading and writing, we have wrapped up our non-fiction unit. Once the final touches are put on our classroom magazine, it will be sent home. Please look through it with your child and ask them about the process. They should also be able to list all of the non-fiction text features they used.



In April, we will be moving into fairy tales and fables in reading, and continue re-searching with persuasive writing.

We have dug deeper into fractions. Students can make equivalent fractions, simplify, and convert mixed numbers and improper fractions. We have just started multiplying fractions by whole numbers. Ask your child for the “secret” to getting the correct answer. In April, we will start relating fractions to decimals.

Science has been on hold while we finished up our social studies unit. We have just started electricity. Students were able to make a lightbulb turn on using only a battery, wire and light. We will take this further by investigating circuits next.



Please Remember:

- ⇒ Fourth Grade will be starting SBAC testing in April. It is very important they all get a good night sleep and come to school on a full stomach!
- ⇒ Several field trips will be coming up. Look out for the permission slips in their Wednesday folders

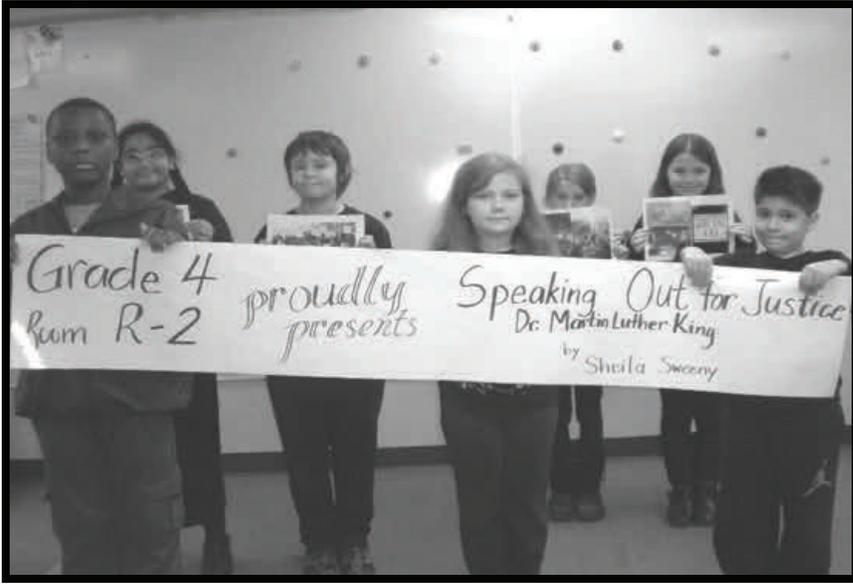


Fun April Facts

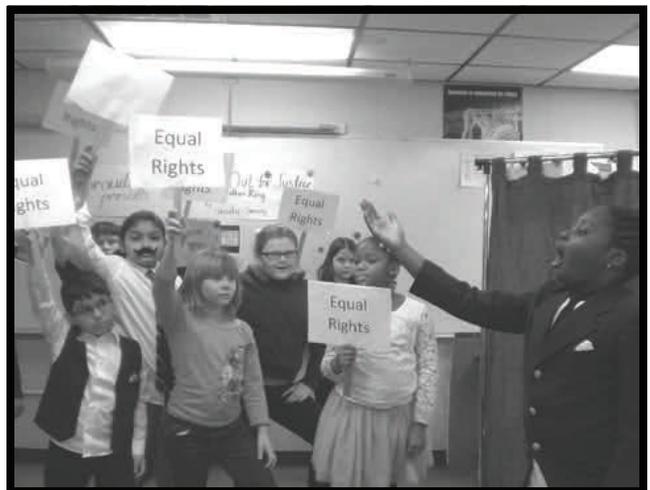
1. What does the word April mean?
2. What is the gem associated with April?
3. What is the flower associated with April?
4. What day, created to make people aware of environmental problems, was first celebrated internationally on April 22, 1970?
5. What is April's Zodiac sign?
6. How many days are in April?

ANSWERS

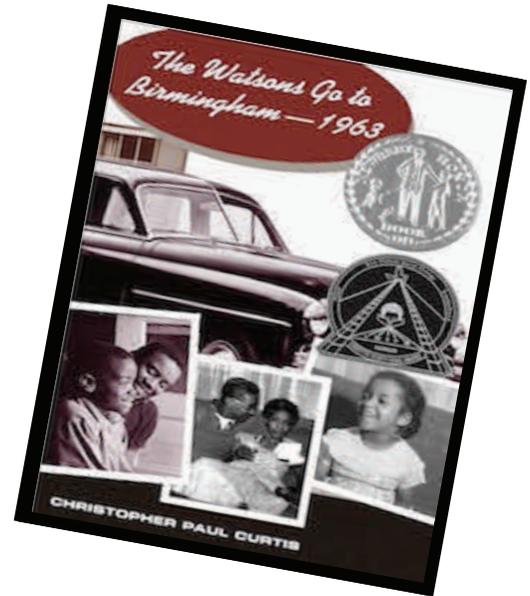
1. Open. The Romans called the month April, which is from the Latin word, “aperire,” which means “to open.”
2. The diamond.
3. The daisy. Some sources also consider the sweet pea as being April's flower.
4. Earth Day. Earth Day started as a student movement and was originally held on March 21.
5. Aries March 21 to April 19. Taurus April 20 to May 20.
6. 30 days in April



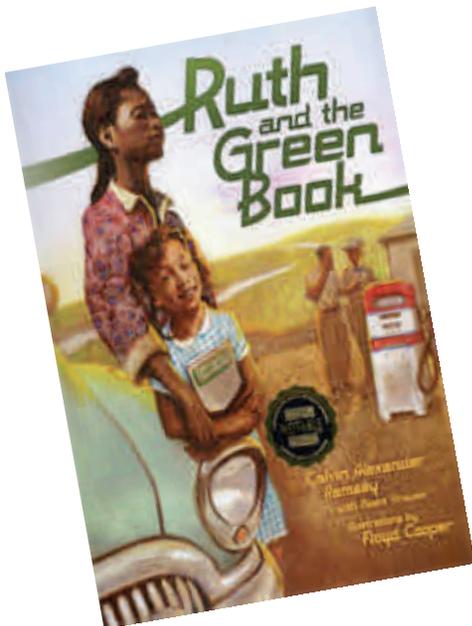
Mrs. Gatmaitan's
4th Grade Class
presented a play in
Celebration of
Black History
Month



Guest Speaker **Martha Brackeen-Harris** visited our school on March 10, 2015. A long time educator, she spoke to the students during an assembly about her experiences during the Civil Rights Movement.



The students read *The Watsons Go To Birmingham*, by Christopher Paul Curtis and *Ruth and the Green Book*, by Calvin Ramsey. They made connections between the books and Mrs. Brackeen-Harris' stories. They asked her questions and clarified their understanding of this important time in American history.



5th Grade News: Mrs. Fagan & Mrs. Frye

Language Arts: In April, students will continue reading and writing opinion pieces. Students will make inferences and synthesize what the author's viewpoint is in different text.

We will also be comparing and contrasting multiple accounts on the same topic. In writing, they will form an opinion and organize their writing. They will express their own opinions on a topic and use evidence to support their viewpoints. The students are enjoying debating on different topics as they express their own ideas.

Math: We will be finishing up our unit on order of operations and algebraic thinking. The students are doing a wonderful job! They have learned to use parentheses, brackets, or braces, in numerical expressions and have evaluated expressions with these symbols. The students will be starting a new unit toward the end of the month on exploring 2-D and 3-D figures. The fun just keeps on going!

Science: We are in for an exciting time in science during the month of April! There will be two field trips. Mystic Aquarium is going to be on April 21 and The Connecticut Science Museum is the 23rd. We are looking for chaperones so please let us know if you are interested! The more, the merrier!



Social Studies: In April, we will continue our journey through the past and continue our quest through the American Revolution. It's so exciting to find out how our nation came to be!

IMPORTANT: We will be attending the Fifth Grade Leadership Conference at Manchester High School on April 8th. This is an exciting opportunity for fifth grade students to learn skills to improve school climate and to be positive role models for younger students. It will also focus on reading achievement and team building. We will be looking for chaperones for this trip as well!

We want to thank our families for all their support throughout this year. We enjoyed our conferences and look forward the remainder of the year!



Music: Miss Grieco

Happy April!

Musical talent is blooming in Room 8! Students have been working on their rhythms using percussion instruments as well as our brand new iPads. Grades two through five have been writing their own rhythms in 2-4 and 6-8 time.

Students in Kindergarten have been practicing their steady beat on barred instruments and drums.

Grades one through five have been working hard on the concept of singing in canon. I am so proud of all the hard musical work that Robertson students have been putting forth this month.



SAVE THE DATE: In the evening on **Thursday, April 9, 2015** the Fifth Grade Honors Chorus will perform at the Fifth Annual Town-wide Chorus Concert at 7:00 p.m. in Manchester High School's Bailey Auditorium. The Bennet Singers, Illing Middle School's 8th Grade Chorus and Manchester High School's Roundtable Singers will also be featured at this concert, which should be about an hour long.

Please feel free to come and support our Town wide Chorus members (12 have been chosen from Robertson's 5th Grade), as well as singers from other Manchester Schools.

This will be an unforgettable musical event.