

4SL Highlights

October—November

What a Great Start

The 2010-11 school year has started fabulously well. We have organized supplies, established some routines, and started progressing through the Alberta Program of Studies.

This is the first of five bimonthly newsletters that you will see your child bring home. It is our way of informing you of what we are learning about in school, and it serves as a more formal way for me to pass any messages about special days or reminders.



So ... What Are we Learning?

Language Arts:

There are four basic strands to my language arts program—word work, , oral language skills, ,reading and writing. Word work involves looking at the meanings and patterns of words. At this point I have students divided into three learning teams, and each is looking at words that suit their ability level. Oral language involves both listening and speaking, and it is proven to be critical to the development of both reading and writing. Using the SMART Learning approach, I am coaching students to listen for similarities and differences between their own and other's ideas and to listen respectfully as other's formally report on their learning. Students also are asked to orally share before beginning any writing task. My reading program has concentrated on teaching students the value of making images while reading along with listening for important details. The process involves teaching skills as a whole group and then giving students time to practice the skill while they are doing independent reading from texts appropriate to their reading level. My writing program has a very high oral language component. At this point, we have and will continue to have students write from the experiences that they have at either speaking from an outline or from doing structured partner talk and group sharing.

Math:

In Math we have been working on whole numbers. This includes representing, comparing and describing numbers to 10 000 in a variety of ways. Students worked on standard, written and expanded form for numbers. We also place numbers on place value charts and sketch the number in base ten blocks. Another outcome we have worked on is using estimation and mental math strategies for both addition and subtraction. From there we move on to adding and subtracting 3 and 4 digit numbers using a variety of strategies. We do as much problem solving and class discussion as we can. We do partner work so that students can discuss problems and possible strategies for solving them with each other. Students then report to the class on their answers and how they got them. We will also begin working on multiplication and division at the end of October or the beginning of November.

From the Desk
of Mrs. Stafford
and Mrs. Lynch

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Special points of interest:

- Oct 8-11 Thanksgiving long weekend
- Oct. 22—No School (PD Day)
- Oct. 29 Halloween Party
- Nov. 5—No School (PD Day)
- Nov. 10 Remembrance day service (10:30 AM)
- Nov. 11-14 No School Remembrance Day Long Weekend
- Nov. 26—No School (PD Day)



So What Are We Learning? - Cont.



Social Studies: By the time your child has completed grade 4 social studies he or she will know everything there is to know about Alberta! The focus of the fourth grade program is to have our students understand the history, changes and challenges of our people as well as learn about the diverse regions of our beautiful province.

We started the year off by looking at the properties and functions of maps as we found specific locations and distances using an Alberta road map. Throughout October-November, we are starting the study of the histories of Alberta's People by looking at the First Nations and Fur Traders. The three grade four classes have plans to bring as much history alive as possible by looking at literature, doing role play and bringing in historical artifacts..

Science: *Waste and Our World* is the environmental strand of the grade four science curriculum. The students will be looking at how nature recycles both plant and animal wastes. As part of this study, 4S is vermicomposting. It has been quite motivating for our 4th graders to have worms in their room—Mrs. Stafford is even warming up to them! The Waste and our World program continues by having the students examine the composition and quantity of human wastes, and what can be done to reduce the impact of this waste on the environment.

Plant Growth and Changes. The biology strand of the fourth grade curriculum will be addressed throughout the school year. Students will look at the importance of plants to human survival through examining food webs. We will also be doing some experiments and research as we examine plant requirements for growth, and how these requirements can vary from species to species.



Adopt A Plant!

veat that she will try her best to keep them thriving when they are under her care. The curriculum requires students to describe common plants and describe how characteristics, propagation and living requirements of plants can vary. Our classroom is rather small so having a huge number of different plants may be a bit impractical, but Mrs. Stafford did think that we could achieve this objective by starting an adopt a plant program with parents **which is completely optional**.

Here is how it works:

1. All students will be given a plant profile sheet to fill in for the plant

that they wish to bring in.

2. Interested students with parent help will fill in the form, and return it to school. The form will include preferred plant visit times of the year
3. Mrs. Stafford will arrange to have a timetable made up for the plant visits.
4. Mrs. Stafford will send a note in your child's agenda with visitation times. She will also return a

The plant unit of study will be quite a challenge for Mrs. Stafford as so far she has not had very good luck at keeping plants alive! With that being said, she will carry on with a request for plant specimens from the parents of her students with the ca-

Halloween



Friday, October 29 is when Halloween is recognized at school as the 30th and 31st are days off for students. Please observe the guidelines set forth in the school newsletter regarding dress code and times.

4S has plans to have a organized Hal-

loween party. I shall have a committee of students help me plan games and activities. After Thanksgiving, I'll post a sign up sheet for you to bring either a nutritious or not so nutritious treat-treat



Homework

I thank you for all that you have done to make this year start off so well. Please, if you have a concern, I can be contacted via e-mail (tjstafford@wrsd.ca) or at the school (780-542-9355)

Thanks!

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*Your Partner For
Your Child's Edu-*

Tammie Stafford

