

# February Newsletter

These are busy times! As you know, you will not be receiving any letter grades this term. Please note that these marks are only a snapshot of your child's learning, as measured against the Ontario standard. Our learning in the classroom has been unaffected by the strike. I am happy to discuss what our learning looks like for your child and will provide next steps via phone call or email. A google form will be coming out shortly to find out your preference for how and when we communicate. I am very proud of our accomplishments in Room 1. A letter grade does not accurately reflect the effort each child puts into their daily learning at school.

In Math: By now, you should have received all of the Math we have completed to date. Our Math units so far have been: Patterning, Angles, 2-D Shapes and 3-D Figures (Gr. 4), Polygons (Gr. 5) and Fractions. We will be doing an assessment of our understanding of fractions next week before beginning a unit on Measurement.

Please read through all of the information carefully. I have stapled each unit together as a package. The test (Assessment for Learning: Skill Questions) will be on the top, followed by lesson summaries for parents (Sum it Up), any paperwork completed by students (Action Task and Your Turn Questions) and games/activities that can be done at home to become fluent in these skills. Please take note of the feedback I have written on the assessment pages. This feedback reflects next steps for your child's understanding of the math concepts. I would suggest reviewing each unit for a couple of weeks before moving on to the next. I will do another test of each unit before the end of the year, as grade level expectations are intended to be taught in a reciprocal manner and met by the end of the year.

In Language: We are almost finished presenting our Book Talks. The students have done a great job of choosing a book they enjoy and presenting it to the class so that others are intrigued by the book. Our oral communication skills have improved greatly since the beginning of the year. We are listening to each other in order to learn. We speak with a clear purpose and audience in mind. I am in the midst of doing our winter reading assessments before starting our reading groups again. We are learning how to "Zoom in" and look at all of the details in nonfiction writing which help us to read and find information. In Writing, we are finishing our unit on "Word Choice". We have learned that using specific words, especially verbs, makes our writing more interesting for readers. We have tried to use phrases that paint a picture in our readers' minds. We are working on using alliteration and hyphenated words to make the rhythm and flow of our writing catch our readers' attention.

In Science, we are nearing the end of our units on Animal Adaptations and Habitats (Gr. 4) and Human Body and Organ Systems (Gr. 5). We have done many experiments and used our research skills to find and summarize information about each topic.

In Social Studies, the Gr. 4s have learned about the provinces and territories of Canada. They are discovering the different landform regions and resources and industries within each region. The Gr. 5s are learning about the national and provincial government, their roles and responsibilities. Both grades are learning about the impact of human interactions on the environment.

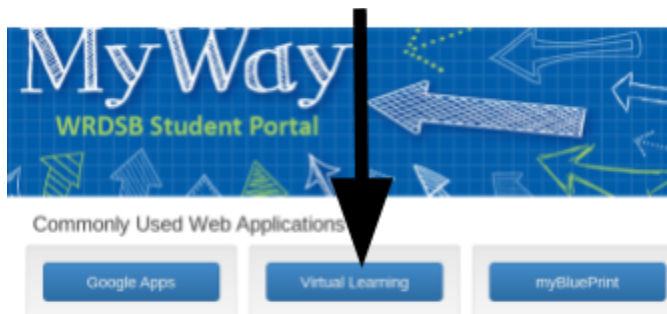
We often use mindfulness as a means of transitioning from one activity to another in the classroom. Learning to visualize and calm our bodies is helpful for self regulating ourselves to a state

ready for learning. We are also going to begin our units on Pilates and Yoga for Phys. Ed. If you have an extra yoga mat, non-slip mat or some type of blanket or towel that your child can keep at school, please send it in as soon as possible. We are able to do the activities without mats, but the students prefer not to be in the crumbs and dirt of the classroom floor.

We are going to celebrate Valentine's Day. Please save your empty Kleenex or similar type boxes and send them in for students to decorate and collect their Valentines. We have 23 students in the class. Students are invited to wear red and pink for school spirit on February 14th.

I have been working really hard at getting our Virtual Learning Environment up and running. I shy away from posting very much on my classroom website for privacy concerns. I often use Google Classroom for my assignments, as it is the easiest for students to use, however the Ministry purchased the Brightspace platform from Desire to Learn because of their secure encryption and data storage. So far, our classroom VLE consists of a grade level carousel with ministry-created activities for each area of the curriculum. I have also started a portfolio for each child in the portfolio tab. We will be adding student work to each portfolio throughout the rest of the year. I will use the calendar in the VLE for any classroom and school activities. The students will continue to write notes in their planners. To get to the VLE you can follow these steps:

- Go to the John Mahood Website at <https://jma.wrdsb.ca/>
- Go to the left hand side panel tab and click on the My Way Portal
- Click on the Virtual Learning tab in the top middle of the page



- Log in with your child's school username (first four digits of student's last name, first initial, last 4 digits of student number) and password (9 digit number starting with 340)

I am happy to help any families who would like to learn more about the technology that we use in the classroom and activities that you can do at home. I love talking about learning, so please contact me with any questions you have. We also love volunteers and visitors, so don't be shy!