

Herbert J. Dexter Elementary School

Principal's Corner

Greetings Dexter Families,

As we come to the end of February, I would be remiss if I did not take a few moments to highlight the significance associated with this month. Every February, people across the nation come together to celebrate Black History Month. It is a time for us to continue our collective journey of honoring and deepening our knowledge of the history and contributions of African Americans and people of African descent. Our students joined the nation in celebrating Black History Month by engaging in developmentally appropriate activities in their classrooms that enhanced communication, collaboration, research skills and so much more!

In the spirit of enhancing communication and collaboration, I will begin conducting small focus group sessions with parents in March. These sessions will give me an opportunity to get to know you all better while obtaining your perspective on various aspects of Dexter. Invitations will be sent out via email and participants will be provided with the questions ahead of time.

Until next time...

Principal Dunn

Grade Level Highlights

Here are just a few of the exciting things going on in Dexter Elementary.



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PSCD and Pre-K

Our Pre-K students are learning about tunnels and tubes. This study offers the children opportunities to explore tubes and tunnels and answer questions such as, "Where can we find tubes and tunnels?" and "What are the characteristics of tubes and tunnels?" During our study children have opportunities to explore tubes and tunnels by crawling through them, assembling them, pouring sand and water through them and building tunnels for their cars and trucks to go through. They are discovering ways to make sounds with tubes and learning how people use tubes and tunnels each day for play and work. Our Tubes and Tunnels study has been one of the kids' favorites!

Kindergarten

As we approach the end of the school year, please beware that kindergartners are expected to be reading and comprehending what they read by the end of their kindergarten year. However, some of our students are currently not reading on-grade level. Please continue to read, ask questions about the story, and study the sight words each night to increase reading fluency and comprehension.

We are currently working on the following skills:

ELA-uppercase and lowercase letter recognition (focusing on the letters b, u, r, e, g, d) and sight words

Writing-narrative and opinion writing

Math-number recognition (11-19) and counting by 10's

Science-motion

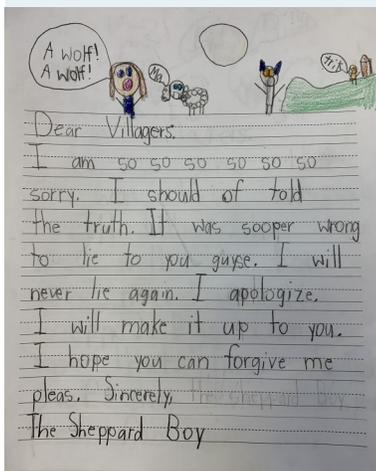
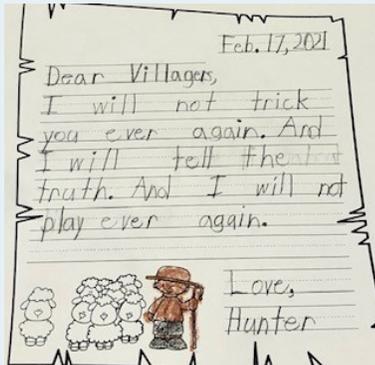
Social Studies-Black History Month (famous African Americans)

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or concerns.



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Thank you for your continued support,

Mrs. Alexander and Mr. Miller

Mrs. Allen and Mr. Rodriguez

Ms. Frasier and Mrs. Ramey

"Nothing is IMPOSSIBLE, the word itself says, "I'M POSSIBLE!"-
Audrey Hepburn

1st Grade

First grade has been learning a LOT this quarter. In reading we discussed characters, plot, setting, problem/solution and many other aspects of a story. We read the story "The Boy Who Cried Wolf" and we especially liked writing a letter to the villagers apologizing to them from the point of view of the boy. In math we have been learning about place value. We learned there are different ways to make numbers and we love making "quick pics!" Ask your child how to draw one. In science we have been discussing light and shadows. We learned that shadows are made when an object is blocking the light. In social studies we talked about past presidents and why we celebrate Presidents Day. We also discussed Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and what an important person he was in American history. To celebrate Black History Month we learned about famous African Americans and their contributions. First grade is learning and growing and we are so proud! Go first grade team!

2nd Grade

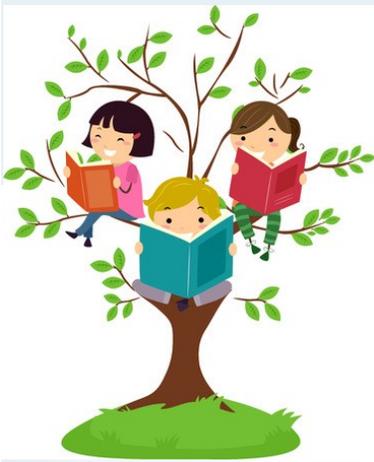
Second graders have been having a great time at Dexter Elementary School! They have been learning about States of Matter in Science. We completed a STEM activity, building an igloo. The students estimated how many marshmallows it would take to cover their igloos, made adjustments throughout the process to make sure their igloos were fully covered and secure, and then

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they used temporal words to write about the process and the steps.

In ELA, the boys and girls have been hard at work, learning about important inventions and how they helped change the world. Our essential question for Unit 5 in Benchmark Advance is: "Where do the ideas for inventions come from?" We learned about Anna Connelly, Mary Anderson, George Washington Carver, Alexander Graham Bell, Thomas Edison, and many more important inventors. The boys and girls have been working hard on writing their opinion essays as well.

In Math, we have been learning about measuring in inches and centimeters. The boys and girls have had lots of fun measuring common objects and materials, and estimating lengths!

In Social Studies, we have been learning about important African Americans in American history, such as George Washington Carver (as mentioned above), Ruby Bridges, Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Mae Jemison, and several more. We have been having lots of fun in 2nd grade!

3rd Grade

Third grade has been busy designing and creating. We have been working on perimeter and area. Students were given the task of designing a mall. Teams were made and the students collaborated on naming their mall, the stores, and deciding how big each store should be. After the mall was designed, the teams got busy finding the perimeter and area of each store. We saw a classroom of potential architects and builders as well as some creative names for stores!

4th Grade

This month, fourth grade students have been actively working to prepare for the upcoming Math Interim Assessments. We are

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learning to apply strategies that will enhance test scores and develop problem-solving abilities. Throughout this quarter, students have especially enjoyed writing and editing opinion essays. They also have been learning to identify the main idea and supporting details of various types of text.

This week, in Social Studies, fourth graders discussed different ways in which people preserve and celebrate their culture or heritage. In celebration of Black History Month, Ms. Jones' class researched and showcased presentations on past and present influential figures in African American history. The projects were amazing.

The 4th grade students and teachers are excited about the remarkable progress made this school year. We extend a special thanks to all 4th grade parents. Your support and encouragement, throughout this year, have been incredible. We look forward to continuing the work of preparing our students for the next grade level.

5th Grade

During February, our 5th graders have been researching one influential African American of their choice. They created amazing posters and presentations for their classmates. During the presentations, students will understand some of the contributions these citizens made that have changed our society. Throughout the month, they have read short stories describing some of the amazing changes.

In science, students have experiences with mixtures, solutions of different concentrations, and reactions forming new substances. They also engage in engineering experiences with the separation of materials.

Concentration is an important phenomenon impacting many of the natural and designed systems in students' lives, from chemicals in water to carbon dioxide or other gases in the air. Students investigate the ratio of solute to solvent (concentration) in solu-

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tions. They observe and compare soft-drink solutions that differ in the amount of powder (water held constant) and in the amount of water (powder held constant) in order to develop the concept of concentration. They make salt solutions of different concentrations and compare them using a balance. Finally, our last investigation involves students layering salt solutions to determine their relative concentrations based on density.

Ms. Smith's Class

One of this month's current event was about the Great Backyard Bird Count. Mrs. Smith's kids not only read about the Great Backyard Bird Count but they also participated by going outside on 12 Feb and completed a 15 minute bird count. We came back inside and logged onto the website and recorded our findings: 5 mockingbirds and a red shouldered hawk. We made homemade birdseed feeders and hung them up outside near the car rider loop. Finally, we teamed up with Mrs. Bocanegra and created water color birds. We had a great time with the Backyard Bird Count.

Art: Ms. Donaldson

Dexter art students can relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen their understanding as they move through Black History Month. (Anchor Standard 11)

In K-2, we have read:

"Art from Her Heart: Folk Artist Clementine Hunter," by Kathy Whitehead and Shane W. Evans

"More than Anything Else," which is a children's book about Booker T. Washington's childhood, by Marie Bradby

"Beautiful Blackbird," by Ashely Bryan

"Tar Beach," by Faith Ringgold

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Students have worked on story quilts and talked about the use of colors. We are going to be continuing our work with quilting and the history and construction of quilts as we learn about Gee's Bend.

In Grades 3-5, the classes are going to be working on performing their shadow puppet shows. They will share the story of a famous person from history, communicating how that person has impacted our society in a positive way. The filming will happen in the classroom, and it will be shown on the morning news throughout the next month!

Music: Ms. Bocanegra

Dexter music classes have focused on Black History Month, Valentine's Day, and Chinese New Year for our K-5 music classes the past month. 4th & 5th grade students have learned about artists such as Stevie Wonder and The Weeknd by performing body percussion to Sir Duke and analyzing The Weeknd's artistic choices during the Super Bowl halftime performance. K-5 students made Chinese fans and performed a traditional fan dance to celebrate the Chinese New Year. Students have also been learning music theory and have practiced writing and performing quarter notes, eighth notes, quarter rests, sixteenth notes, and others. During March we will learn all about St. Patrick's Day and will do some cup play-a-longs.

Physical Education: Dr. Alderman

Students K-1st grades are learning rhythm with music while participating in different tag games. Locomotor movements are skipping, speed walking, jogging & hopping.

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Students 2nd-5th grades are participating in a Basketball Unit. Each student has their own basketball. Students are learning how to dribble with their left & right hand, chest bounce pass, lay-ups and free throw shooting. Students are engaged and enjoying the lessons. I'm encouraging students to help their classmates and display good sportsmanship.

Information Specialist : Ms. Porter

These are a few reminders about the Information Center and checking out books.

- Pre-K – 3rd graders check out books bi-weekly on a designated day the classroom teacher has scheduled. Mrs. Porter and Mrs. Gatewood bring books on a cart for students to choose.
- 4th – 5th graders go to Destiny Discover and put books on Hold. Then we will pull the books and bring them to the classroom. If your child does not know how to put books on hold please let me know.
- All returned books will be quarantined for 2 weeks before they are put back on the shelf for checkout.
- We send out notices once a month to parent emails if there is an overdue book.
- If a book is lost or damaged, we simply ask that you replace that book with another book of the same value. We prefer hardback books. Please do not send money.
- To encourage reading each month a Reading Challenge Form is sent home. When students complete it, they bring it to the Information Center for a prize from the Treasure Chest.
- We have over 3,000 electronic books in Mackinvia.com for students to read. Students will use their Google accounts to log in.
- If you have any questions, or concerns please contact Mrs. Porter kathy.porter@dodea.edu, or call the Information Center at: 706-545-7768.

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Read Across America week is March 1st – 4th

The Theme is “Celebrating a Nation of Diverse Readers”

See the Upcoming Events for more details.

Storytime After School Reading Club

Storytime After School is held virtually for Dexter’s 1st and 2nd grade students. During this time, I read to the students and we discuss what was read. Although the students can relax and enjoy this time, I incorporate good reading habits.

This month I have read about Famous African Americans, books about kindness, and books about Valentine’s Day and Groundhog Day. Next month I will read books by Dr. Seuss, books about St. Patrick’s Day, and books about Springtime.

If you would like for your 1st or 2nd grader to join us please contact Ms. Gathers at: angela.gathers@dodea.edu.

Upcoming Events

- **February 26: Pre K Only No School** - Pre K Report Card Prep Day
- **March 1st:** Bookmark Design Contest Entries Due
- **March 1-4: Read Across America** - Please see attached flyers for events and dress up days
- **March 5: No School for Students** - Teacher PD Day

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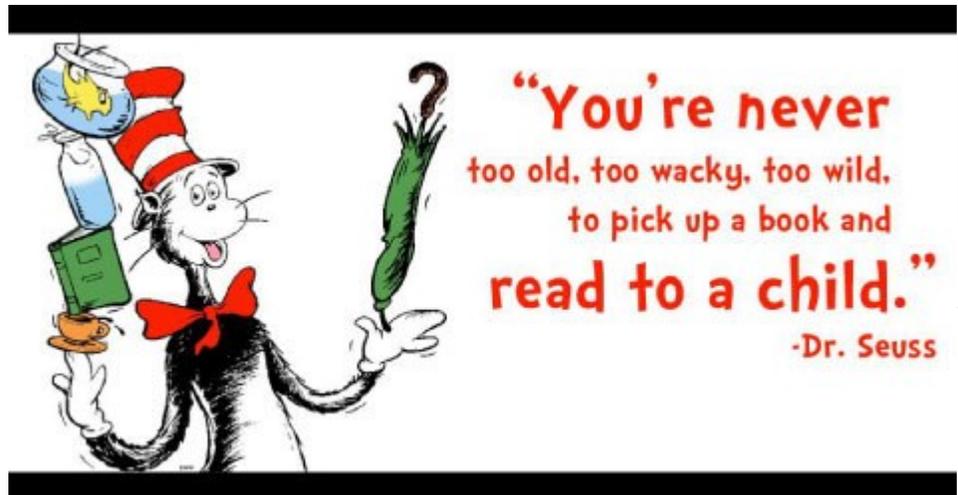
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- **March 17: Dexter Elementary School Kindness Day - Wear Green**
- **March 24: Last Day of Quarter 3**
- **March 26: No School for Students - Report Card Prep Day**
- **March 29-April 2: No School - Spring Break**

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Read Across America Upcoming Activities at Dexter

In honor of Dr. Seuss' birthday (March 2nd) Dexter will host a celebration of all things Seuss during the week of March 1st - March 4th. The week will consist of theme days and activities that will celebrate reading.

Read Across America has celebrated books and reading since 1998. The theme for this year is "**Celebrate a Nation of Diverse Readers.**" If you would like to be a guest reader for your child's class on March 2nd, or for any other questions about Reading Across America week, please contact Mrs. Porter - kathy.porter@dodea.edu

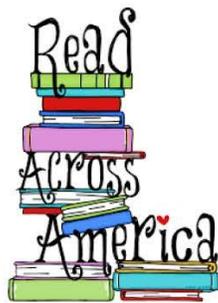
Monday, March 1st - **Mixed Up Monday** - wear **mismatched clothes**

Tuesday, March 2nd - **Favorite Character Tuesday** - dress up as your **favorite storybook character**

Wednesday, March 3rd - **Wacky Wednesday** - Wear **something wacky on your head (hat or wig)** or your clothes backwards, inside out or mismatched

Thursday, March 4th - **Snoozy Thursday** - Cozy up to a good book in your **pajamas**

There is no school on Friday, March 5th



Let's Celebrate Reading!!!