

April in OII

Important Dates

- April 5 - Fourth Grade *Inspiretist* Event
- April 8 - Book Fair Family Night
- April 9 - Book Fair Classroom Visit
- April 10 - Wilmington Blue Rocks Field Trip
- April 15 - Social Studies DCAS Testing
- April 16 - Social Studies DCAS Testing
- April 18 - Spirit Day! (Twin Day or Hollywood Day)
- April 19-April 26 - No School, Spring Break

Math

In April, and for the remainder of the school year, students will be spending the math block completely focused on fractions. Students main focus will be centered on, *How can fractions be represented, interpreted, ordered, and compared?* Students will review fraction features like numerators and denominators and the understanding that fractions are part of a whole. Students will then transition into the idea that fractions with different numerators and denominators can represent an equal amount. Likewise, students will start to explore that fractions can be combined to equal one whole, less than one whole, or more than one whole. Students will analyze a variety of strategies for adding and subtracting fractions that include (1) array, (2) decomposing fractions in to parts, (3) equivalence, and (4) use of a number line.

Throughout this unit, students will develop an understanding of fraction equivalence and operations with fractions. They will recognize that two different fractions can be equal (e.g., $15/9 = 5/3$), and they will develop methods for generating and recognizing equivalent fractions. Students will extend previous understandings about how fractions are built from unit fractions, composing fractions from unit fractions, decomposing fractions into unit fractions, and using the meaning of fractions and the meaning of multiplication to multiply a fraction by a whole number.

Reminders - Brain Blast Multiplication quizzes happen every Wednesday! Those quizzes are not recorded as grades and are added as a supplemental practice for fact fluency. Make sure your student is practicing their facts each week :) We have also added engageNY's "sprints" strategy of fact fluency practice to our routine. Just like Brain Blasts, these procedures are not graded and are used for increased exposure and practice.

Dreambox

Students are encouraged to successfully complete a minimum of 5 Dreambox lessons a week. Students are able to use their morning work time as well as our scheduled quiet time after exploratory to work on their assigned Dreambox lessons. Home access is also an option — please refer to the directions sent home at the beginning of the year for home access specifications.

English Language Arts

Students have just completed two informative writing pieces on dangerous animals and greek gods and Goddesses While synthesizing a variety of resources — including articles, videos and interviews — students have created a compare/contrast essay on various animals and their particular “dangerous” features, along with the mythical qualities of two greek gods and goddesses. For extra exposure and practice, students will continue working on compare/contrast writing pieces throughout March. The main focus will be to continue working on citing research evidence in their writing in order to make a compelling case, regarding similarities and differences.

Transitioning from compare and contrast essays, students will do a final report writing unit on severe weather patterns. While analyzing severe weather like tsunamis and earthquakes, students will write a full expository writing piece on their determined weather selection and then create a full green screen meteorology report. Completed videos to be shared with families this spring!

After completing a novel study on *Who is Jeff Kinney?* And your student’s independent wax museum reading activity, we will now move into the novel, *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes*. We will continue to have student-led discussions on this novel and fine tune our RACE response strategies in preparation for the Smarter Balanced testing in May.

Accelerated Reader (AR)

Students recently retook their STAR exam for our Winter data point. Please refer to your child’s red take home folder for a full STAR score report listing their independent reading levels (ZPD range) and current grade level equivalent. As your child takes AR quizzes on completed books, they record and graph their progress in their AR folder. Quiz score reports will be sent home following each quiz and student progress is displayed in the classroom along our back cabinets. Students are encouraged to independently read an AR book for a minimum of 20 minutes each day. Students must reach 100% of their AR goal to be eligible for the AR party.

Science

Students have completed their unit on magnetism and electricity. They successfully ran explorations and labs on the magnetism properties of magnets and various metals and then constructed their

own circuit using components like wires, bulbs, Dcells, switches and motors. All groups were also able to successfully use electromagnetic wire to magnetize a steel rivet in an organically created electromagnetic circuit.

The next unit in science is on Land and Water. Students will look at various land formations and water formations and begin to understand how our Earth's water shapes the land. With special focus on features like canyons and valleys, students will also dive into the concept of erosion via self-created terrain bins. With gravel, rocks, sand and soil, students will create their own sets of terrain and put their designs to the ultimate test once water is added. Via a simulated water cycle and simulated wave erosion, students will test which design was able to withstand the most water force.

Dazzling Dorr Club

Dazzling Dorr Club certificates are distributed every Friday to students demonstrating a full week of positive behavior and consistent effort. Your child should be very familiar with what actions qualify for both positive behavior and consistent effort. Once your child has three certificates, they can turn it in for a Dazzling Dorr lanyard on the following Monday morning. All privileges begin once a lanyard is obtained. If a student loses the lanyard for any reason (misbehavior, not showing positive behavior or consistent effort, etc.), they must earn the three certificates to regain access.

Students who have earned their Dazzling Dorr lanyard are encouraged to bring it home the first night to show it off at home and be celebrated by family members. However, moving forward, it is suggested that the lanyard stays at school in their locker. We've had many lost lanyards over the years and find it the "safest" option to keep the lanyard in O11. Lanyards must be present in order to receive privileges!

The Dazzling Dorr of the Week privilege also started recently. One Dazzling Dorr is selected each week to sit at a very special desk in O11. This desk is stocked with lead pencils, gel pens, coloring materials and all sorts of other "office accessories." Students know that to earn this extra special Dazzling Dorr privilege they need to be showing top notch positive behavior and consistent effort. More Dazzling Dorr privileges, like the desk, will be released throughout the year. Make sure you talk with your student about what they're doing to earn those elite privileges! :)

Thanks so much for all of your support! Feel free to reach out if you have any questions!

Ms. Dorr

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