

Penn Brook Perspectives

January 2021



Students in sixth grade decorated Mr. Scott's door for the holidays.

This month, we are practicing the “S” in our CARES motto- **C**ooperation, **A**ssertion, **R**esponsibility, **E**mpathy, and “**S**” for **S**elf-Control. When we use self-control, on a deep level, it is a way of showing care and concern for one another; it binds us together, whether we know that person or not. Using our self-control before saying something hurtful; stopping ourselves from retaliation when we feel wronged; or even thinking before acting silly in a classroom, shows that we care about the impact of our actions on others. In many ways, using self-control also uses empathy, as it is being thoughtful of how others might feel if someone were to do the same thing to us.

On Monday, when there is no school in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr, we are reminded that he preached non-violence as the way to change the social injustice of the time, asking for self-control. In addition, researcher, Angela Duckworth, showed in her research that **self-control** and “grit” (defined as, “a passionate commitment to a single mission and an unswerving dedication to achieve that mission”) were better predictors of school success than I.Q.

The research also shows that sometimes children have to fail in order to succeed. Sometimes it is the struggle of trying hard and not giving up that leads to success. Thomas Edison was once asked how it felt to fail 1,000 times before inventing the light bulb and he answered, “I didn’t fail 1,000 times, the light bulb was an invention with 1,000 steps.” It is this self-control and perseverance that we strive to instill in our children for their own wellbeing, as well as to show care and concern for others.

I hope you enjoy this glimpse into the Penn Brook School through this latest edition of Perspectives as written by our student reporters, who are doing such an excellent job interviewing and reporting!

Mrs. Maher



Owen makes a W for Walrus.

Preschool

The preschool classroom has been busy working on winter activities. They have been learning about hibernation and what animals do to get through the winter. Students worked on holiday crafts and made special holiday gifts for their families.

Kindergarten



Students in kindergarten have been learning how to code.

By: Sophie, Alanna, and Noelle

There are many things happening in kindergarten this year! Mrs. Dennett, a kindergarten teacher at Penn Brook answered a few of our questions about what is going on in kindergarten.

Mrs. Denett said “The kindergarteners are learning so much! One of the biggest things we are focusing on is independence in school. Many of the children have not been to school before and are learning about how school works, for example, raising your hand, walking in line in the hallway, how to order lunch, etc. They are also working on many academic skills like letter names and letter sounds, counting, patterning and basic addition, writing their name, and learning how to sound out words when writing.” As you can see kindergarten has been learning a lot this year.

Next, we asked, "What is the hardest part about teaching kindergarten?" She replied "The hardest thing about teaching kindergarten is not seeing the entire class every day. They work so hard in school and I miss not being able to be a part of their learning every day."

For the third question Mrs. Dennett stated, "The Kindergarteners in my class are working really hard on writing. It is hard work to sound out words as they are writing. We are working on using strategies and resources when writing independently." This is what the kindergarteners struggle with most.

Another question we asked was, "What do you enjoy most about teaching kindergarten?" She responded with the answer, "My favorite part about teaching Kindergarten is seeing the children learn and grow each day! I love being a part of their learning as they use new concepts or skills. I can see the excitement on their face and how proud they are of their work."

The last question we asked was, "What is the hardest subject to teach?" She answered "Math. It is not hard to teach, but we have math at the end of the day and the children are usually tired, and it can be hard to work on a skill or concept when you are tired. I have to be very creative to keep their attention and focus at the end of the day."

In conclusion, kindergarten has been eventful this year. For example, they have been learning the elementary school basics such as learning how to order lunch, how to raise their hand, and be independent. As you can see, kindergarten has been working very hard.

First Grade

By: Olivia and Lauren

Student Council Members Lauren and Olivia had a chance to interview first grade Mia to learn about first grade happenings.

Mia in Miss Fluet's class has a very interesting opinion about this school year. First, Mia's favorite subject is math. She really enjoys learning *Everyday Math* like addition and subtraction. Next, she said first grade is pretty easy so far and she doesn't like being hybrid. She said that she really likes being fully in school, with her whole class and with her friends. Another thing is, she loves her teacher this year. She said she is a very caring and nice teacher. Mia's favorite Special is Art. She really enjoys doing arts and crafts projects. She also likes the art teacher.

Mia is very busy in each subject. First, in math she is measuring, tables and desks, using inches and centimeters to help her measure. Next, in reading she is reading new books to improve her learning. Right now Mia is reading a book about solar systems. Lastly, Mia and her class are learning how to write and improve their reading skills.

Second Grade

By: Sophie



Students in Mrs. Slack's class wore crazy hats to celebrate showing our C.A.R.E.S values of Cooperation, Assertion, Responsibility, Empathy and Self Control. They earned 100 leaves.

Student Council member Sophie asked second grade teacher Ms. Power about what is happening in second grade.

1. What is the most interesting thing that you have taught so far this year in science?

I think one of our best science lessons this year was about the fall season and why leaves change color. The students went on a scavenger hunt outside in their neighborhoods to look for different types of leaves. We also love using *Scholastic Magazine* to learn more about different topics, including arctic animals and how they have adapted to live in such harsh places.

2. What are you teaching in math and is it hard or easy for the students?

In math, we are learning to tell time to the 5 minutes. With practice, the students are doing a great job! We also just learned how to measure using standard lengths of measurement, including the inch and centimeter.

3. What are some of the books you have read in reading this year?

We have been reading many nonfiction books about animals for our research project. Each second grade class has been researching animals from different habitats. Our class has been researching desert animals like, Fennec Foxes, Camels, and Meerkats.

4. What are some genres you have done in writing this year?

We are writing books about our desert animals now, so we are excited to share what we learned with our readers. We have also written personal narratives about special moments in our lives.

5. How many years have you been teaching? What's your favorite part about teaching?

I have been teaching for 11 years and my favorite subject to teach is writing. I love teaching because every day I get to come in and watch students try something new. When they realize they can do it, there is nothing better!

Thank you for learning about second grade!

Miss Power

Arctic Adventures

Grade 3



Steven found a way to share the holiday spirit this season!



Mrs. Hinchliffe Zoomed to speak with third graders about living in the Arctic.

Recently, third graders had a very special visitor to their classrooms via Zoom. Mrs. Hinchliffe Zoomed into the classroom to talk about her time living in the Arctic. Mrs. Doran had a chance to speak with third graders, Owen and Emily about what they learned.

Owen explained that he learned some interesting fun facts about arctic living. He was excited to share that Mrs. Hinchliffe placed ice cream on her porch when she was a child living in the arctic, because it was cold enough to stay frozen while outside. Owen went on to explain that the ice cream was stolen from the porch. He thought it was pretty interesting that you could store ice cream outside. Another cool fact that Owen shared was that people in the arctic wear special glasses made of caribou antlers. He said that there are coin-like slots on angles. He learned that the glasses help with the brightness from the light reflecting off the snow. Lastly, Owen shared that something that stood out to him, was that hospitals were not close. He said that if someone got hurt, they would need to fly by plane to the nearest hospital.

Emily from third grade also shared some things that she learned from the Zoom visit. She said that in the winter, it is always below zero and not warm enough for outdoor activities. In the winter, people do indoor crafts and activities. In the winter, there is not much daylight and lunchtime is the only time you can see the sun. We would like to thank Mrs. Hinchliffe for providing this unique experience!



Sixth Graders Selmah and Jacob were able to interview some fourth graders via Zoom.

Felicitous Fourth Graders

By: Selmah and Jacob

Here, you will read about the amazing fourth graders and their feelings for this year. Siena, Grace, and Tucker are in fourth grade. Sienna is in Mrs. Lemay's class and she loves Mrs. Lemay. She says that Mrs. Lemay is funny, kind-hearted, and no matter what the case is, she never gets mad! Grace is in Mrs. Houle's class and loves how funny she is! She likes all of her teachers and says they just keep getting better and better! Tucker is in Mrs. Houle's class as well and he enjoys how inspiring, funny, and easygoing she is!

Our first question:

"What are you learning/what is your favorite subject?"

Grace likes social studies. She said they are learning about Native Americans and the midwest. Sienna likes math! She

said they are learning how to multiply, round, and estimate. Tucker likes math, too! He likes to multiply with the twos table and do *Moby Max* long division. We learned a lot about so many subjects in the fourth grade!

They all liked art as their special. Tucker likes art because he can express his emotions and likes drawing. Sienna likes art because she can be creative, thinks it's fun, and it lets her express her emotions. Grace said art because it is harder to do other Specials in Zoom.

"What do you like about fourth grade?"

We started by asking Siena. She said she really likes how fun fourth grade is. She feels like it is the best grade because it is easy and hard at the same time!

"What do you like about Penn Brook?"

Tucker said that the teachers are nice, everyone is a friend, and it is the coolest school in the world. Grace loves all of her teachers. She likes her teachers being funny, caring, and inspiring. Sienna said she likes how the teachers make us smile and help us get through the hard times. I hope you learned a lot of things about Penn Brook!

Fifth Grade

By: Selmah and Harley

Mrs.Valorz is teaching Fifth grade. She says that remote learning is okay for her class though it is difficult. Mrs.Valorz says that in fifth grade this year they will be using *Google Classroom*, which is easier for the students to stay organized with their assignments. She adds “It's just a lot more planning for teachers to get ready for in-person and remote students”. Answering the question “Compared to your other classes, how is this year?” She responds by saying “I have a great class this year, even though some are at home and some are at school, we have created a strong classroom community. Everyone is kind and we are still trying to have fun!”

Mrs.Valorz concludes that it is difficult to work with two groups at once. She also states “We are on Zoom all day so students can ask questions at home and still be a part of the discussion, however, it's not as easy to help students who are online.” The fourth question we asked is, "How is your class handling this pandemic?" Mrs.Valorz replied saying “Most students seem to be doing well, they just wish we could be in school full-time!” Our last question to Mrs.Valorz was, “What are you teaching right now?” Mrs.Valorz says that they are finishing up the book *Maniac Magee* and writing narratives for reading and writing. We also just started teaching fractions in math and students are learning about water sources in science.”

What's Happening in Sixth Grade?



Sixth Graders found a creative way to decorate Mrs. McGinnis's door for the holiday season.

Math Happenings

By: Adrianna

This past semester students were applying the meaning of fractions, the meanings of multiplication and division, and the relationship between multiplication and division to understand and explain why the procedures for dividing fractions make sense. Students used these operations to solve problems. Students are also extending their previous understandings of number and the ordering of numbers to the full system of rational numbers, and will include negative rational numbers, and in particular negative integers in chapters to come.

Science Happenings

By: Lilliana

In science class, students learned about rock layers. Students have also learned about the three types of rocks; Sedimentary, Metamorphic, and Igneous rock. They studied different vocabulary words and what they mean. Students were taught about three types of geologic notes on the geologic time sheet. Students now have notes about Law of Superposition, Stratigraphy, and the Geologic Time Scale.

Geography Happenings

By: Abigail

Right now in geography, we are learning about the ancient civilization of Africa. The sixth grade has also learned about North Africa, East Africa, South Africa and Central Africa.

Currently, we are learning about the Swahili Coast and the Bantu Migrations.

English Language Arts Happening

By: Rachael

What are we doing in ELA? This past semester students worked on an earthquake project. We had to research our earthquakes and then write slides about fatalities, injuries, impact, etc. Another thing students did in ELA this semester was a book report on a book we read. We could read any book that was up to our reading level, then we did a report where we had to make up a cereal, write a summary of the book then on top of the cereal box, you had to put how much you liked the book. You also put the characters and setting under nutritional facts and ingredients. That is what students did in ELA this semester.

The New Music Teacher

By: Madeleine and Jacob



Ms. McBride is the best music teacher and really gives you different information about songs. Ms. McBride is going to really make you want to sing. We had a chance to ask Ms. McBride what she does and why she likes her job. She gave us the information we needed.

Ms. McBride said that she loves music and loves to be able to teach the wonderful students of Georgetown every single day. Being a teacher makes Ms. McBride happy because she gets to watch all the Penn Brook students gain interest in music. Ms. McBride said that she grew up in Plymouth Massachusetts and went to school there from preschool to twelfth grade. After that, she went to the University of Delaware for college. Her favorite

holiday is Thanksgiving. She loves to be with her family and eat the food her family makes.

We asked a question about if a student is being disrespectful in class. Ms. McBride said that if a student was being disrespectful in class, "I would make it a point to talk to them one-on-one after class. I believe that when a student is being off-task or disrespectful, it means that they're probably having a hard time with something that I might not know about. I like to let the student know that their behavior is not acceptable, but I am there to listen to them and support them if they need help with something else (or if they need to vent - sometimes, we just have bad days, and that's okay)! I'll also try to work with them to come up with a plan for how to prevent that type of behavior from happening again."

We learned that Ms. McBride loves different kinds of singers. She loves singers like Clyde Lawrence, Lili Boulanger, Amy Beach, Maurice Ravel, Joseph Haydn, Hildegard of Bingen, and John Williams. She said she could go on forever.

We learned that Ms. McBride loves to go to the beach, hang out with family and friends, and bring her dog Seamus for walks.

Ms. McBride told us she loves to sing a lot. She also told us that she has been singing since fourth grade. We are happy that Ms. McBride is at Penn Brook!