



## St. Edmund's Academy

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### May Core Virtue Focus

“Ah, Hope! What would life be, stripped of thy encouraging smiles, that teach us to look behind the dark clouds of to-day, for the golden beams that are to gild the morrow.” ~ Susanna Moodie

In May, we focus on the trait of hope. We will be beginning a new novel, Tom's Midnight Garden, which has many examples of hope for us to identify and discuss. We will use this knowledge to help us to reflect on times in our lives when hope has played a significant role.

### MAY BIRTHDAYS

5/9 – Polly

5/12 – Jalen

Happy Birthday!

### Games, Games, Games

The Fishermen finished things off with a series win in “State A Fact”. In “On Which Continent” the Purple Jet continues to lead the way, while the competition remains tight in “Trio”. We look forward to Geography Day when many of our regular games will be compressed into one fun-filled couple of hours. The date for that remains a TBA at the moment, but as we get closer, a Nutshell will provide more details, including what to bring for our USA Buffet!

## Math

In May the students will be studying the concept of measurement. We will be exploring linear, weight/mass, and capacity measurement with both customary and metric units. We will be doing many hands-on activities in class to facilitate this learning. There are many ways to connect measurement to everyday life, so if you find yourself doing an activity involving measurement (cooking, arranging furniture, etc.) ask your child to join in!

## Reading

Karana has been rescued as she heads to the mainland to be reunited with her family and friends. The students really enjoyed reading about her adventures, and although the story was bittersweet in nature, it was thought provoking and quite suspenseful. The sequel, *Zia*, Karana's niece at the southern California missions with some of her remaining relatives. It does depict some of the hardships that the island natives were subjected to under the guise of Christianity promotion, and some parts can be a little intense for young readers. You may want to check it out before allowing your daughters/sons to read it if they so desire. Our final novel is Tom's Midnight Garden. A time warp fantasy with British flair!

## Social Studies

As we continue to press on, our next stop in social studies is the beautiful Southwest. Complete with buttes, mesas, oil fields, ranches and big cities, this area of the country consists of the states of Texas, Oklahoma, Arizona and New Mexico. Our first quiz will cover lessons 1 and 2 of the region and will be given on Tuesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Our rivers of the United States project turned out to be a huge success, with some wonderful information about the rivers on display in the hallway. Our final stop in geography will be the West.

## Language Arts

The focus shifts in spelling with the words served up from a previously used speller from several years ago. The words are good ones, and can be a little more challenging, so extra preparation time is in order for the final few weeks. We will not have a spelling/vocabulary test next week, though, because of a few other tests and quizzes that need to take top billing. Make sure the kids are continuing to review the vocabulary words. This week the focus is "Food Glorious Food" which connects with the bonus words in the packet. I will choose five of those words to add to the list of twenty.

Adverbs are the target in grammar along with a smattering of conjunctions to end the year in English usage. We will have one more "slammer" and the final adverbs/conjunctions test to complete the final report card in grammar. We will also be doing some editing, and, if time permits, a few sentence diagrams. You remember those folks, right?

## Science

Our final unit in science is an Earth Science unit called "Earth Movements." Students will explore the massive movements that are constantly shaping Earth: volcanoes erupting, trenches creeping open, continental plates colliding and sending mountain ranges skyward. Students will learn how rocks provide clues to Earth's history, structure, and geological activity. Students will investigate Earth processes that lend support to the theories of continental drift and plate tectonics. They will also model all of the following: ocean-floor spreading, plate subduction, magma convection currents, volcanism, and earthquakes at plate boundaries.

## Writing

After finishing up our new articles, we will begin a project that brings together social studies, library research, computers and writing! The students have been assigned a state and given key elements to research. After completing their research in library, they will then create a detailed "brochure" about it.

## Art News

Students are getting ready for the Arts Festival which is on May 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>. They will choose one or two works to display. Students are glazing their hand made ceramic foods. When they are fired in the kiln, they will put the food on their hand designed paper plates for display. Next they will complete a two layered drawing of a façade of a building on the outside on tracing paper, and a detailed drawing of the inside floors on drawing paper. Later they will study reflections on water, and in mirrors.

## Music News

The fourth grade has been improving on their recorder skills during music class. We are learning new notes and more difficult songs! Our students are accepting this challenge and have been very successful! We are also looking forward to our Fine Arts Festival on May 18<sup>th</sup>! Our students will prepare a spring concert and a talent show. We will provide more details about this event very soon!

## Computer News

Fourth Grade will continue to concentrate on proper keyboarding techniques throughout the remainder of the year. The students will be using a variety of resources to practice their keyboarding skills. Students will be using a software piece called Typing Instructor. Students will also be using various websites preapproved by Mrs. Feldstein. Students will have their hands covered by paper so as to not be able to look at the keys. In addition, students will be using online resources such as [www.voki.com](http://www.voki.com) and <http://www.talkingpets.org> to practice typing and being able to hear what he/she typed.

## Physical Education News

As the school year comes to a close, the fourth grade students will complete their fitness tests; continue working on lacrosse fundamentals and preparing for the Kongo Bash. Birthday picks will also be used during the months of May and June. The fourth graders had an overall exceptional 2010-2011 year in Physical Education class. Thank you.

## Library News

Fourth Grade will conclude the year reviewing and reinforcing skills learned throughout lower school. We will use tools such as Alexandria, reference books and Power Library in our review. They will work independently and in group activities. We will also take a closer look at the Carnegie Library kids home page, a useful site for information on summer reading and activities at the Carnegie Libraries. The Reading Counts competition will end by mid-May to allow time to award prizes. In addition, please help your child remember to return any checked-out books during the week of May 23rd.

## World Cultures News

Our "Tapas Day" was a big success. We had Manchego cheese, bread dipped in Spanish olive oil, black and green olives from Andalucia, Serrano ham, chocolate-covered almonds, marzipan cookies imported from Spain, and Clementines. Thanks to all the parents who had the kindness to provide all the food, and particularly to Mrs. Garrard who was once again a great event coordinator! During the first week of May students will learn the main facts about Cinco de Mayo and this period in Mexican history, read a play about it, and celebrate the way Mexican children do, with candy-filled piñatas! Our last units will be about one of the master pieces of literature: Don Quixote. There will be a review quiz before the end of the year.