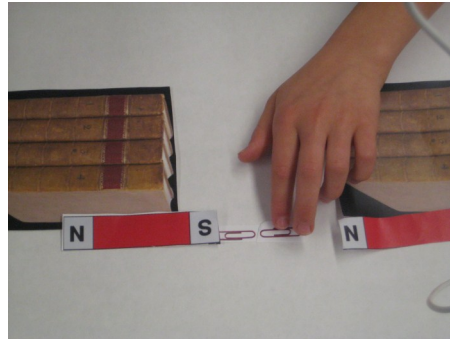




Property of :



# 2011 4<sup>th</sup> Grade RESOURCE BINDER



**"THE JOURNEY OF A THOUSAND MILES BEGINS WITH ONE STEP." - LAO-TSE**



# Welcome to Fourth Grade

---

Summer 2011

**Date:** June 7, 2011

**To:** *Future Fourth Graders and Parents,*



It is my personal privilege to welcome you and your child to the fourth grade community. Throughout the school year, I have observed the third grade projects on the wall and have seen the students interacting throughout the school. Some mornings, I had the opportunity of seeing third graders work on their daily work. From these observations I know next year is going to be a great year filled with many adventures and projects.

This binder will serve as your portal of information about the summer, valuable resources, content areas of fourth grade, contact information, and parent information /21<sup>st</sup> century learning. The binder is divided into the following parts:

**Contact Information/School Supplies:** how to contact Mr. Ferguson throughout the summer and school year and school supplies needed for next year

**Summer Exploration:** Explains the summer expectations and project, and highlights expectations for math facts, student web pages, along with reading resources

**Internet Resources:** Explains how to access fourth grade resources online, student web pages, and web services

**Content Areas:** highlights the topics that will be taught in fourth grade, some the projects fourth grade students have completed

**Parent Section:** welcome letter, changes in fourth grade, 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning

In the fall, you will receive more handouts that explain homework in detail and focus areas for each trimester. I have emailed a PDF copy of this binder to you as all the websites mentioned are hyperlinked: you can read it on your computer, click on a link and pull up a website. Once you have received this binder, please sign the slip on the next pages acknowledging that you have received the binder and return it to me. You can also send a quick email to me letting me know you have received the binder. (This is the best way)

Please let me know if you have any questions or comments. My contact information is included in this binder. Have a wonderful summer together and rest up. I look forward to receiving your seven wonders of summer (summer project) during the first week of school and hearing about family's adventures.

Remember to Never Stop Exploring Your World,

-Mr. Ferguson

P.S. For parents with an older sibling that has been in fourth grade, read through this binder because each year this binder is revised and new content is added

# Table of Contents

---

## **Section One: General Information**

- Contact Information
- School Supplies

## **Section Two: Summer Exploration**

- Summer expectations
- Seven Wonders of Summer (Summer Project)
- Great Resources for Summer Learning
- Math Facts
- Summer Reading

## **Section Three: Internet Resources**

- Introduction
- Portaportal
- Classroom Webpage
- Classroom Blog
- Student Webpages
- Ways to be Safe Online

## **Section Four: Content Areas**

- Core Concepts in Fourth Grade

## ***Section Five: Parent Information***

- Letter to Parents
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning
- Changes in Fourth Grade



# Checklist of Things to Do This Summer

---

- ☐ ***Read through this binder***
- ☐ ***Send an email to Mr. Ferguson*** -I would like to send more letters and communications to parents via email. Please send me an email so I can store your email address in my address book and also acknowledge that you have received this binder. The subject line of the email can read “parent email for 4<sup>th</sup> grade 2011” and body of the email can simply be your name and contact information. Thank you. This will be the most efficient way to collect everybody’s email address.
- ☐ ***If you have not emailed me, sign the slip below to acknowledge that you have received the binder. Please return to Mr. Ferguson.***
- ☐ ***Take pictures of summer adventures*** (for the seven wonders of summer)
- ☐ ***Practice your math facts***
- ☐ ***Read a book*** (if possible, write a review of the book on your webpage)
- ☐ ***Laugh, smile and soak up the sun’s rays***

---

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The \_\_\_\_\_ family has received a copy of the fourth grade resource binder for 2011.

---

(signature of a parent)

# Contact Information

---



## *Mr. Ferguson – Fourth Grade*

Listed below is my contact information for the summer and the school year. Please feel free to contact me at school during the summer if you have any questions regarding the summer project or about fourth grade. Email is the best source of communication as I check it on a regular basis. I will also check my phone and mail at school on a biweekly basis during the summer. July will be my busiest month this summer as I will be attending professional courses so I will not be checking my phone messages as frequently. When you are leaving a message, please leave a phone number in which I can reach you at.

Lastly, I would like to send more letters and communications to parents via email. Please send me an email so I can store your email address in my address book. The subject line of the email can read “parent email for 4<sup>th</sup> grade 2011” and body of the email can simply be your name and contact information. Thank you. This will be the most efficient way to collect everybody’s email address.

### **Summer Contact Information:**

1. **Email:** lafayette4@gmail.com
2. Lafayette Regional School  
149 Main Street  
Franconia, NH 03580
3. Phone: 603 823 7741 ext. 105

### **During the School Year**

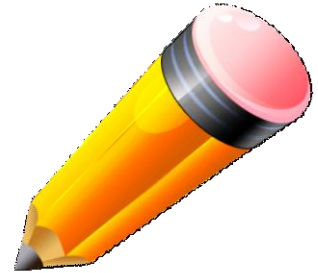
During the school year feel free to contact me anytime during normal school hours. I am often at school from seven o’clock in the morning to at least four o’clock in the afternoon. If I am not available leave a voice message. Please do not contact me at my home unless it is an extreme and urgent emergency. (Missing homework or a question about a project is not an extreme emergency)



# School Supplies – 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

2011

*Here is a list of some school supplies for fourth grade. If you need help providing any one of these items, let me know. As a general rule in 4<sup>th</sup> grade, students are responsible for supplying their own pencils. I have back up pencils in case of emergencies. Students have found it helpful in the past to have a small pencil case to hold their pencils, erasers and colored pencils so they are not floating around in the desk. As always please let me know if you have any questions.*



- Pencils and a Handheld Pencil Sharpener
- Erasers
- Colored Pencils
- Heavy Duty 2" Binder (1) – This binder will hold the morning dailies that students complete each morning
- *Binder Folders (2)* - These folders are used to hold homework papers in the binder
- 1" Binder (1) (please choose a color that is different than the other binder)  
This binder is used for homework. It will hold the student planner that students will be given on the first day and notices to and from school.

# Summer Expectations/Project 2011

---

Welcome to fourth grade and the summer of 2011! First, I would like to wish everybody a safe and exciting summer. Summer is a great time to spend with family and friends, creating memories and enjoying the great outdoors around us. Over the summer, it is important for students to have time to read and explore math to maintain their core academic skills. To learn about the summer achievement gap, research it online.

In fourth grade, there are three expectations during the summer for incoming fourth grade students. These expectations are to help maintain their academic skills and promote students exploring the world around them. Following this letter, there is a detailed explanation of each expectation. In addition I have attached a list of internet resources students can utilize at home.

1. **READ, READ, READ!!!** Every day the students should have the opportunity to read for a half-hour. The students should read a variety of materials ranging from chapter books to magazines. Ms. deSteuben provides a summer reading guide for all the students. Also take a visit to your local library for additional support.
2. **Practice Math Facts** - Each day the students should spend five minutes practicing their math facts. There are some laminated practice sheets included in the binder.
3. **Seven Wonders of Summer Project** - Students take seven pictures of the greatest moments during the summer.

These summer expectations will be explained to the students.

## Student Webpages

This past week students created their own personal webpage as their first project in fourth grade and they look great. Over the summer, students should feel free to add to their webpage. For example, they can write a blog comment about a trip they went on, or in their book section they can write a summary of their favorite webpage, or they include a story or poem they write. I encouraged the students to check in with a parent before they officially publish an item on their website to help with editing. It is important to remember the quality of work is more important than quantity. This is OPTIONAL and just another tool to encourage writing during the summer months.

If there are any questions, feel free to contact me. My contact information is included in this binder. Have a great summer and I can't wait to hear and see all the highlights of the summer.

Enjoy exploring

- Mr. Ferguson



# Seven Wonders of Summer

## ***Mission:***

Explore the world around you this summer and choose seven of the most important wonders of your summer. Take a picture of each wonder and bring the pictures on the first day of school. You may take as many photos as you like but you will need to choose one photo to match each of your seven wonders. One of your wonders needs to be your favorite book that you have read this summer.

When students return to school, they will write a caption to match their pictures and assemble the writing and pictures into a digital story.

## ***What is a wonder?***

Wonders of the summer come in all different shapes, sizes, and forms. It should be a highlight or a favorite memory of your summer or favorite. Some example of wonder are: first vegetables in the garden, visiting a new place, or a family party.

## ***Explore Sample Projects at:***

<http://mrferguson2009.wikispaces.com/wondersofsummer>

<http://lafayetteab.weebly.com/1/post/2010/09/seven-wonders-of-my-fun-summer.html>



### Useful Information

- Have fun exploring and keep an open mind.
- Pictures can be taken with a digital camera, cell phone, or disposable camera. (Disposable cameras can be developed with a Photo CD)
- Families can help the child with taking the pictures but the child should choose their seven wonders.
- Check out [this website](#) for tips on taking better photos.



### How To Bring the Photos to School

- Email me the pictures or digital file. I will send a confirmation email.
- Bring a Photo CD or on a thumb drive on the first day of school
- Bring the developed pictures on the first day of school

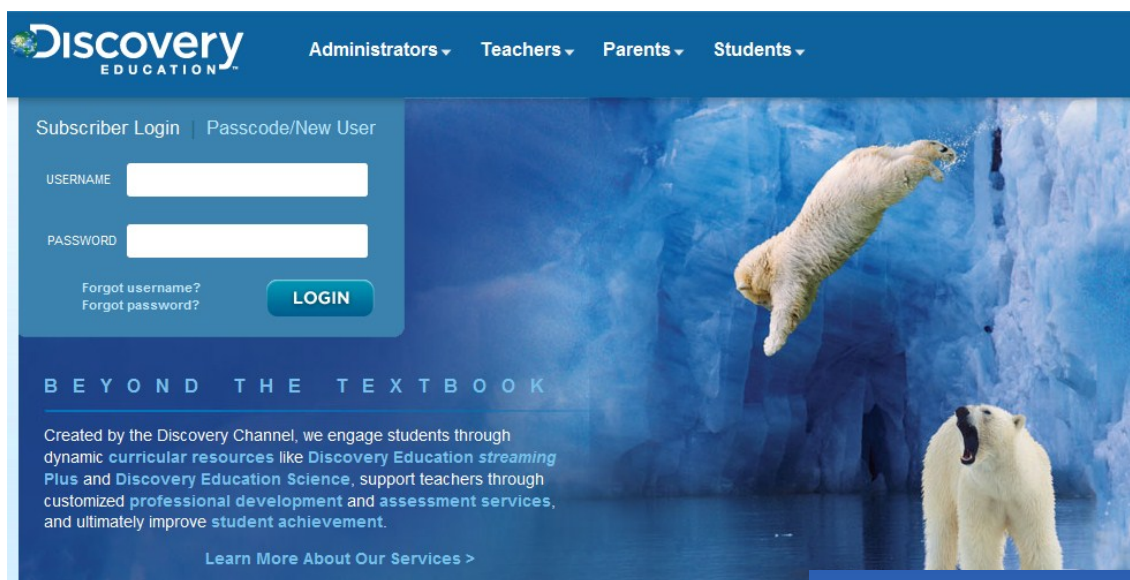
### Questions

**Contact me via email:**  
lafayette4@gmail.com  
**Or via mail:**  
149 Main street  
Franconia NH 03580

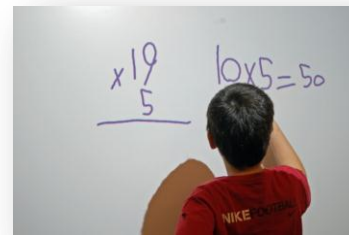


# Great Resources for Summer Learning

All these resources should be familiar with the students because they have used them in third grade. These online services are also available during the summer and good way to keep the skills fresh. Use **Discovery Education** to learn about the science. **Dreambox** is a great way to keep developing the number sense and in the fall a 4th/5th grade edition will be out. **Timez Attack** is a game focused on practicing math facts. **Weebly** is the web service that hosts the student webpages and a great way to write about your summer adventures. Each picture is hyperlinked to the website. Enjoy them and remember to enjoy the great outdoors.



# Math Facts



A solid mastery of math facts in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division will be extremely beneficial in understanding new math concepts presented in fourth grade mathematics. In fourth grade, there are weekly fast fact quizzes in both division and multiplication where the students are timed on fifty math facts. Multiplication and division facts go up to  $12 \times 12$ . Please remember that each student is at his/her own unique level. Think of where your child is now with their math facts and then set measurable and achievable goals they can achieve. Below are the expectations of math facts in fourth grade:

## ***Multiplication (12 x 12)***

Trimester	Time	# of Problems	Range
End of 1 <sup>st</sup>	5:00	50	Up to $12 \times 12$
End of 2 <sup>nd</sup>	4:00	50	Up to $12 \times 12$
End of 3 <sup>rd</sup>	3:00	50	Up to $12 \times 12$

## ***Division (144/12)***

Trimester	Time	# of Problems	Range
End of 1 <sup>st</sup>	5:00	50	Up to $81 \div 9$
End of 2 <sup>nd</sup>	4:00	50	Up to $144 \div 12$
End of 3 <sup>rd</sup>	3:00	50	Up to $144 \div 12$

## **Practicing Math Facts**

Attached are washable math fact sheets to practice math facts over the summer and throughout the school year. Record your answers using the Vis-a-Visa (wet erase) marker and then check your answers using the multiplication table. When you are done, gently wipe your answers off with a damp cloth and hang dry until next time. If you need a new marker, please let me know and I can provide a new one. These markers are also available at Staples. If you get tired of these sheets or prefer a paper and pencil copy, there is free software called **Math Resource Lite** to download for your home computer. [Click this link](#). I could also provide the file on a thumb drive.

There are also several websites to help practice your math facts and print out worksheets to practice math facts. Mrs. Kelley has also provided the students with [Times and Division Attacker](#) which are good resources. Here are some sites:

- <http://mathfactcafe.com/> (worksheets)
- <http://www.schoolhousetech.com/BasicMath/Default.aspx> (free software to download on your computer to create math worksheets)
- <http://www.amblesideprimary.com/ambleweb/mentalmaths/tabletrees.html> (Math Fact Quiz)
- <http://hoodamath.com/games/multiplicationgame.php> (Flashcards)
- [http://www.mathplayground.com/spaceracer\\_multiplication.html](http://www.mathplayground.com/spaceracer_multiplication.html) (Math Fact Game)

# Summer Reading – Selecting Books

---

The first important part of summer reading is finding a great book at the right level. Although this seems like a simple task, it is more complex because each child has a unique interest, reading level, and support. On top of that there are many different systems (companies) that level books from Lexile, Development Reading Assessment (DRA) to Accelerated Reader. As a school wide staff we are starting discussions of having a common language to help alleviate the stress and confusion of choosing books and to help you understand what level your child is reading at.



In the meantime, I would like to point you in the direction of some good sources for selecting books and also determining if the book is a “just right book” for your child.

[Reading Grade-Level Comparison Chart](#)- This first source is a chart that compares the various different systems that level reading reports.

[Choosing a Right Book \(Brain Pop\)](#) – This web page gives a good quick summary of selecting a book for your child.

[Novelist K-8](#) this is a web subscription that our school has. The user name is *Lafayette* and the password is **03580** log in service. Novelist is a database of fiction books that has several attractive features from the ability to search by grade or Lexile level. Secondly, it can recommend books based on a book that your child has enjoyed. Check it out and explore!

[Brain Pop “Choosing a Book”](#) - This article is from an education source called Brain Pop. It does a nice job of explaining how to determine if a book you have selected is the “just right book”. In the classroom, I usually have a student read the first couple pages and monitor their fluency and word recognition. Usually if the student struggles on five or more words the book is too hard. Then I discuss with them what they have read. First I ask students to tell me what happen. Then I usually ask them to make a prediction.

[Dorothy Canfield Fisher Book List](#) – this is the Vermont edition to the Great Stone Face but I prefer this over the Great Stone Face award for a couple reasons. First I know that a strong core of children’s librarians actually read through all the children literature each year to select the thirty books. Secondly the resources are more plentiful. The books usually have a grade level associated with it based on content and reading level.

[Accelerated Book Finder](#) - many of your students have been using accelerated reader program(AR) with Mrs. Kelley. This website is AR book finder which allows you to search by AR level. This book finder will only give you books with AR quizzes but it might be helpful in choosing the correct level.

Hopefully these six sources will provide a good starting point and if you find a book but the local library is not carrying it, ask for the book through “interlibrary loan” so they can get the book from another library for you.

Also I asked the students recently how they choose books and they had some great suggestions. Here are the ways the students in fourth grade choose books:

- Similar author they have enjoyed
- Recommendation from family, friends, and adults
- Award winning books
- Part of a series
- Online review/recommendations
- Movies/TV
- Looking at book covers/book blurbs

Once you have a book in hand, now it is time to start the journey. Find a shady spot under a chair or a cozy chair on the deck and begin the new journey with your book. If you finish a great book this summer, spread the joy and share the book with your friends or teacher 😊. I am always looking for the next great book!

# Internet Resources:

In the fourth grade, we utilize the Internet on a daily basis for sharing our work, participating in a global community, practicing skills and gathering information. In the fourth grade, we maintain two websites to meet our various needs. The two websites are:

[www.portaportal.com](http://www.portaportal.com) (guest access = ferguson) provides links to educational websites



[Mrferguson2011.weebly.com](http://Mrferguson2011.weebly.com)— main classroom webpage with student projects and a classroom calendar. It also contains a classroom blog page for discussions



The following pages will explain each website, how to access the website, and contribute to it. Check out these resources and also discover the adventure of last year's fourth grade at [mrferguson2010.weebly.com](http://mrferguson2010.weebly.com). As you explore, please let me know how these Internet resources are working for your family, as together we learn how to best use these tools effectively.

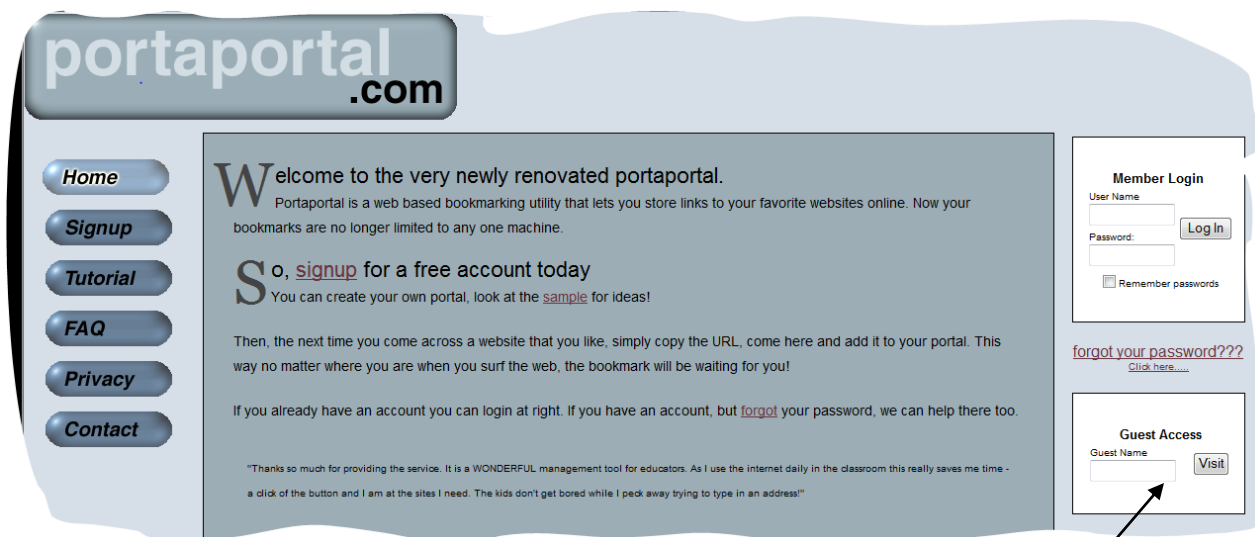
Lastly, safety of the students is the number one rule in our school. While students are on the internet we will closely adhere to this policy of safety first. If you have any questions, please contact me.

- Have fun exploring!





The Internet has endless resources. I have created a class portal at [www.portaportal.com](http://www.portaportal.com) that features a wide variety of websites. There are links to math interactive websites where students can practice math facts. There are also links to online encyclopedias and databases such as Novelist. (If there is a login and password, I have included that under the website's description. The password is in parenthesis.) This website is constantly evolving as new websites appears and old ones are retired. On a monthly basis I update this portal. If a link is not working please let me know so I can fix it. Thanks in advance for your patience. If you have any websites that you discover with a good educational foundation, please let me know so I can add it to the portal.

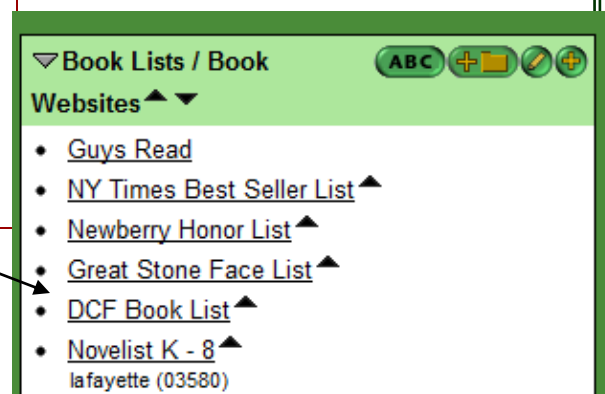
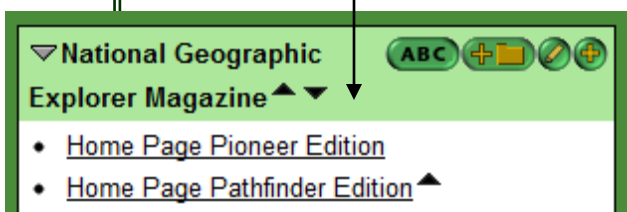


## Featured Websites

Type in *Ferguson*  
Click Visit

Online Edition of the National Geographic Magazine the students work with during the school year

All these sites provide book lists. Please check the age and grade level on the books.



Internet Search Sites for Kids



## 2010 - 2011 4th Grade Class Lafayette Regional School, Franconia, NH, U.S.A



## Classroom Webpage:

This webpage will serve as a gallery of student projects and also a reference for the homework and projects in the classroom. On the homepage of this website, there will be a school calendar that will be kept up to date with the school and classroom events. Lastly, you will find a link to the classroom blog page and resources/reference.

Under the *student corner* will be a link to all the student's personal webpages. As always this student page will be under the control of the classroom teacher.

The website for the fourth grade of 2011—2012 is still under construction and will begin to take shape over the next couple weeks and the summer. My hope is that students will eventually manage this website as I had some students manage this past school year's site.

Last year's website:

<http://mrferguson2010.weebly.com/>

## Sneak Peak at your classroom webpage

2011 - 2012 Fourth Grade at LRS



**Lafayette Regional School, Franconia, NH**

Welcome Friends From Around the Globe

Skype: lafayette41


Email: lafayette4@gmail.com

# Classroom Blog:

A blog is a webpage that allows for discussions about a topic from students and people around the world. In fourth grade, the blog usually centers around events in the classroom and current events. The most powerful feature of this website is the ability for parents and students to write comments and respond to topics. (All comments are moderated for appropriateness) Anytime you want to leave a comment for an entry, just click the comment button next to the title of the entry. The classroom teacher moderates all the comments so your comment might not appear immediately. Now you can comment away!!!

## 2010 - 2011 4th Grade Class Lafayette Regional School, Franconia, NH, U.S.A

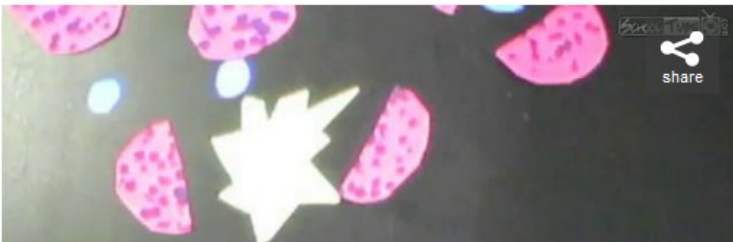
[Home](#) [Blog](#) [Projects](#) [In the Classroom](#) [Student Corner](#) [more...](#)



### Energy Movie

05/12/2011

This is movie where students show the different ways we produce electricity in the United States. What do you think is the best way?



share

Select Language

Powered by [Google™ Translate](#)

### Author

Mr. Ferguson and the Fourth Grade at Lafayette Regional School

### Archives

[May 2011](#)  
[April 2011](#)  
[March 2011](#)

0 Comments

Click here to post a comment



# Student Webpages

---

This past school year for the first time, students were responsible for a personal webpage dedicated to sharing their achievements, work, and ideas. Among the student's responsibilities were posting a review on a book they finished reading each month, editing for grammar, and a monthly writing piece. They also wrote blog comments which were personal reflections of major projects and field trips. Parents enjoyed their websites because it was a great reflection of student progress throughout the year. Students were proud of their website and also amazed to look back their earlier work.

I hope to continue this opportunity for responsibility next year and have students responsible for their own webpage which will be moderated and control through the classroom website. Their website will be hosted through an online service called weebly.com. This beauty of this online service is that most features are a "drag and drop". While maintaining this website, students will be required to follow all the school rules and Internet safety expectations such as no full names will be used, only initials and pictures will not be matched to a name.

New for this upcoming school year, students will have worked with me before the end of school and create their personal webpage. This will allow students to add content to their webpage over the summer if they so desire. Under the summer expectations of this binder I explained in more detail this option of students editing their webpage and guidelines.

Check out the [student webpages](#) from last year. As always if there are any questions, please feel free to contact me.



# Online Safety

As students are online more and more, it becomes more important that students understand how to be safe on the Internet and be a critical observer/thinker of each website they visit. These concepts are covered through the school year. Below I listed some safety tips from the FBI Kids website which are some core safety ideas. At Lafayette it is our policy that students never put their full name next to a picture of themselves. Also I ask students to close any website that makes them feel unsafe immediately and let the teacher know.

Outside the safety concerns, I consistently encourage the students to be critical thinkers on the web. When students are searching a webpage for information, they should be thinking about who is the author and what is their purpose.

Remember our number one school rule is Safety First!!

*Here are some Online Safety Tips from the FBI*

**Back to the Kids Page**

## Safety Tips

There are some very important things that you need to keep in mind when you're on your computer at home or at school.

- First, remember never to give out personal information such as your name, home address, school name, or telephone number in a chat room or on bulletin boards. Also, never send a picture of yourself to someone you chat with on the computer without your parent's permission.
- Never write to someone who has made you feel uncomfortable or scared.
- Do not meet someone or have them visit you without the permission of your parents.
- Tell your parents right away if you read anything on the Internet that makes you feel uncomfortable.
- Remember that people online may not be who they say they are. Someone who says that "she" is a "12-year-old girl" could really be an older man.

Shirley

To read more about new privacy rules, visit the Federal Trade Commission's Web site at [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov). There is a special section just for kids.



# Core Concepts for 4<sup>th</sup> Grade:

Listed below are some of the core concepts that are covered in fourth grade. As always the needs, interest, and readiness of the students play a vital role in shaping the fourth grade content and projects during the school year as well as state and federal standards. This list will evolve and change throughout the school year as the class develops their “personality”.

## ***Social Studies***

- US and World Geography (continents, map skills)
- New Hampshire History
- Textile industry
- Structure of Government (Fall)
- Current events
- Project: “Landmark Challenge”

## ***Science***

- Electricity/Energy
- Magnetism
- Earth’s Surfaces
- Life Cycles and Habitats



## ***Math***

- Fractions and Decimals (comparing, placing on a number line)
- Multiplication and Division of large numbers (Fall)
- Metric System (Fall)
- Data and Graphing (finding the average, reading and interpreting graphs)
- Geometry and identifying shapes

## ***Reading***

- Develop reading strategies  
Imagine (Visualize), Make Connections, Analyze Text Structures and Features, Recognize Key Words, Explore Inferences - (Making Predictions), Ask Questions, Determine Main Idea and Themes, Evaluate, Summarize, and Synthesize, Reread and Adjust Approaches to Text ( I’m a reader)
- Write critical responses to text
- Explore nonfiction material such as magazines and articles





### ***Language Arts***

- Practice the seven traits of writing through daily journaling
- Vocabulary/ Grammar / Spelling
- Organizing and writing a story
- Researching and writing a narrative report
- Project: "Doodle for Google"

### ***21<sup>st</sup> Century Literacy/Technology Expectations***

- Organize and filter information into a graphic organizer
- Maintain a personal webpage
- Research information on the web and determine the validity of the website
- Create a Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet, a Power Point Slide Show, and Publisher documents that effectively conveys information and engages the audience
- Project: Global Newspaper (Fall)
- Manipulate digital media such movies and pictures to tell a story

### ***Social/Emotional Learning***

- Develop a global empathy and understanding of different cultures
- Develop skills to work collaboratively
- Practice the six core values (*Be Here, Be Safe, Be Respectful/Responsible, Set Goals, Let Go & Move On, Be Honest*)
- Monster Project (Fall)
- Oreo Project (Fall)



# Parents

---



2011

Parents, welcome to fourth grade! I look forward working with you and facilitating your child's academic and social growth next year.

First, let me take a moment to introduce myself. This is my seventh year at Lafayette as the fourth grade teacher. This past spring my wife and I celebrated our son's, Ethan Frederick Ferguson, first birthday. Prior to coming to Lafayette, I worked in various different schools in Vermont as a student teacher, long term substitute teacher, and paraprofessional. I also received my Master's in Education while I was working in Vermont. Before entering the education field, I wore many different hats such as a firefighter/EMT, an AT thru hiker, a camp counselor and much more. This summer, I am planning on attending several professional development opportunities. Also, Mr. Woo and I are presenting about animation in the classroom at an international conference (BLC '11) in Boston. My family also has some trips planned this summer to New Jersey and Maine. I pull all these experiences together to shape the fourth grade classroom into a dynamic learning environment that is project based.

Fourth grade is a dynamic learning environment that is constantly evolving around the needs and interest of the students. To help you keep up with what is happening in fourth grade, I publish a weekly newsletter which contains highlights from the previous week, goals for upcoming week, photos, and homework. This will be the staple for communication between home and school. It will go home every Monday evening.

Also there is the fourth grade website which will showcase the different projects of fourth grade and special events. The Internet resource section of this binder explains this resource in more detail.

As always, please contact me if you have any questions during the year. My contact information is included in this binder.

# 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning

---



Through my six years at Lafayette I have seen changes in the education field as educators, parents, and schools around the globe try to determine what “skills” students need for the 21<sup>st</sup> century where change happens exponentially. Some of the skills that are often related to 21<sup>st</sup> century are collaboration, global empathy, communication, critical thinking, lifelong learning, and creativity.

This topic of 21<sup>st</sup> century learning has also been appearing on headlines of national newspapers. Our professional staff at Lafayette have been discussing 21<sup>st</sup> century learning and adapting our “classroom experiences” to better match the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills students will need. Recently, our school received a large grant to help acquire digital tools for the classroom that promote the skills related to 21<sup>st</sup> century learning. In fourth grade, there will be a laptop for each child and a responder.

To help you better understand what “21st century learning” is and how it impacts your child’s education I have attached two articles published by a team of educational leaders known as the Info Savvy Group. This group has compiled research and experiences from schools around the globe into mini reports that give teachers and parents a snapshot of 21<sup>st</sup> century learning and the changes in our world. Beyond these packets, there is plenty of research available online - just remember to check the source of the information. Here are some websites and videos to watch:

- [http://www.ted.com/talks/sir\\_ken\\_robinson\\_bring\\_on\\_the\\_revolution.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/sir_ken_robinson_bring_on_the_revolution.html) - (TED Talk by Sir Ken Robinson. There are more fabulous talks on this website)
- <http://www.infosavvygroup.com/> (The home page of the Info Savvy Group)
- <http://novemberlearning.com/resources/archive-of-articles/> (Alan November’s articles)

Lastly, I want to assure you that despite these changes, there are essential foundation skills in reading, math, language arts, science and social studies that all students need. They are outlined in the state and federal standards. These standards still serve as the building blocks of your child’s education in fourth grade.

# Changes in Fourth Grade

---



2011

As students progress from grade to grade, they face changes in their schedule and routine. There will be a new teacher, new concepts to learn, and a new schedule. For these students, they have been in the primary grades, so the changes and increased expectations will be more apparent as they enter fourth grade. My goal is to make this transition as smooth as possible for both the parents and the students. The first step in this process is having clear communication. I have listed some of the most common changes between third and fourth below.

- Morning snack will be eaten during first recess. There will be no snack time during class and also no snack milk. Children find it helpful to have portable snacks that can be in a Ziploc bag.
- “Specials” such as art, health and physical education are scheduled at 7:55 in the morning which is right after the students arrive at school. It is important to be on time because otherwise they will miss their specials.
- There are still two recesses, at 10:00 and 12:00. Lunch is at 11:30 in fourth grade and students will have the freedom to choose their table.
- Each student will receive a student planner to record their homework assignments and reading.
- Each student will be assigned a locker to store their coat and backpack in. On the first day of school, students will find their name on a locker.
- Students will be expected to read for a half hour each school night and on the weekends. To make the transition back to school smoother, children are encouraged to start reading each night for a half hour.
- Students will be tested on their math facts for multiplication/division weekly and record their progress on spreadsheets. Students should practice their math facts each night.
- Students will have the option of joining band and chorus this year. Parents should begin to discuss the obligations of belonging to each group this summer with their child. Take them to see a music show so they can get a feel for the joy of being part of a music/band group.
- Students might have special sporting events with the fifth and sixth grade.

I hope this list helps smooth the transition from the primary grades to intermediate grades. Overall, as the student enters fourth grade they become role models for younger children and are expected to be responsible, respectful, and engaged life-long learners in the school community. Feel free to go over this list with your child.

Thank you for your time and energy, and, as always, if you have any questions feel free to contact me.