

Music Notes



James Walker Elementary

Upcoming Events:

- * **Thurs., Sept. 9:** Ground-breaking Ceremony for Sculpture Garden, 5:30 pm
- * **Thurs. Oct. 14:** JWE 5th grade musical, "Let's Pass it On", 7:00 pm
- * **Fri. Nov. 5:** JWE 5th grade performs at the Missouri Mavericks game, 7:00 pm
- * **Thurs., Nov. 11:** JWE 4th grade musical, "Make it Healthy", 7:00 pm

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Oh, the Places We'll Go With Music!

As we begin a new school year, the JWE music room is decorated with cars, trucks, planes, and boats and maps, posters, and pictures of many places in the world. During this school year, I hope to take the students to many fun places with music (if only mentally and within the confines of the 4 classroom walls!).

During the first week of school, we reviewed our JWE music class goals and consequences, developed by former JWE students, and adopted by current JWE students:

Goals:

- 1) Be polite and courteous and act your age
- 2) Be respectful to your school,

your personal property, and others' personal property

- 3) Follow teacher requests
- 4) Have fun!
- 5) Be safe
- 6) Follow the JWE pledge

Consequences:

- 1) Reminder
- 2) Warning
- 3) Adjustment of behavior/ participation grades (4th/5th grade only
- 4) Conference with student at recess/inform classroom

- teacher
- 5) Conference with parent or guardian (phone call)
- 6) Conference with principal

We hope not to need to refer to the consequences list much, if at all, this year. However, JWE students agreed that while that is a sad list, it is fair to use if necessary, in order to help everyone in the class to have fun.

I'm looking forward to a great year in JWE music!

—Mrs. Crosley, JWE music teacher

Music Booster News

You will soon be receiving some information on Blue Springs Music Boosters. This is a terrific organization that helps JWE students every year! Please consider becoming a member. Music Boosters will accept membership applications all year long, so if

you are unable to join at this time, you can join at any time during the year. Music Boosters meets once a month, though attendance at meetings is not a membership requirement.

Music Boosters will need help with

upcoming Fall Fun Fest events (people to walk in the parade, people to work in the Bingo tent). If you are interested in helping, let me know!

Also, JWE will be participating in the Music Boosters candy sale next month. If you can assist me here at JWE, let me know!

Kindergarten News

I am so excited to meet all the new kindergarteners at JWE! We have had a great time together these first few weeks in the music room. The first few weeks of kindergarten music are spent doing name songs as we all learn each other's names, and learning about the concept of personal spaces. "Personal space" is a term I use frequently in JWE music classes grades K-5. Many of the activities we do include motions and movement, so a personal space for each student is necessary.

I try to include singing, instrument

playing, and listening activities during every class period.



This year in kindergarten music, we will explore several basic concepts of

music such as loud and soft dynamics and fast and slow tempos.

Much of the kindergarten year is spent experiencing and trying different

music activities, without a large focus on terminology. The music curriculum is a spiral curriculum, in which I see the same students every year and can build upon and add to their prior knowledge each year.

In first grade and beyond, the students begin to label, sort out, and describe all of the musical experiences they have had beginning in kindergarten.

I am looking forward to a great year working with your children!

If anyone has any sticky Velcro strips they could donate to the music room, we could use some to adhere xylophones to their stands. Let me know if you can help!

1st grade news

It has been terrific to see so many familiar faces back at JWE for 1st grade, and it has been a privilege to meet the new friends who have just moved in and joined us this year.

I get to see first grade students every day, as I am their lunch duty supervisor. Though I still see them usually only once a week in the music room (unless the rotation happens in such a

way that I get to see them both Monday and Friday), this daily time at lunch proves to be very valuable in getting to know them all better!

In the music room, we have already reviewed several of our favorite songs from kindergarten and played instruments. We have used the listening ball (a fun ball that lights up and makes sounds) to discuss pieces of music

we've listened to (whoever is holding the listening ball takes a moment to share their thoughts about the music we're hearing). Most recently, we listened to a piece of music from Africa (as the theme in the music room is "Oh, the Places We'll Go With Music). We were excited to hear some of the very same instruments we have in our classroom: agogo bells and a shekere.

2nd grade news

JWE 2nd grades continue to build upon the knowledge they have of music from grades K-1. Already this school year we have reviewed AB form, steady beat, and rhythm reading.

Just this past week, 2nd graders were very excited to learn how to read sixteenth note rhythms. While this is not a required part of the music curriculum at this grade level, each year I have found that students are so en-

thusiastic and excited about learning sixteenth notes that I go ahead and teach it now!

2nd graders have enjoyed using a lot of the classroom instruments as we have reviewed playing the rhythms of each other's names and played along with a song called "Play Along With a Rock Band".



It is always great to see the kids' smiles as they arrive at class and throughout the class period!

3rd grade news

As we kick off the 2010-2011 school year, JWE 3rd graders are having a great time in music. They have played all sorts of instruments and reviewed rhythms. Be sure to have your 3rd grader tell you about the antics we've been up to with the song "This is What I Can Do". Maybe they will even demonstrate some of the moves for you!

3rd grade has also enjoyed doing songs with the beanbags and scarves during music time.

This school year, I was fortunate enough to be able to purchase a sub-

scription to Music Express magazine for our classroom. Each student gets a magazine for use in the classroom. These magazines remain in the class-



room for grade levels to share. The magazines include not only articles to read, but also printed music of several

songs to sing. Several students were excited to find current pop songs in the magazines (Black Eyed Peas "I Got a Feeling", and "Lean on Me" and "Don't Stop Believing" from Glee). In addition to the pop songs, the magazines also include songs from other nations/cultures, cross-curricular songs and activities (ie: relating to science or social studies), and classical music. We will continue to use the magazines throughout the year, and will receive new issues every 2 months.

4th grade news

4th graders have begun the year by reviewing some of their favorite songs and activities from 3rd grade music. We have enjoyed playing instruments and reviewing rhythms. We also enjoyed decorating Mrs. Crosley's board with our names and the rhythms/notes that go with our names.

Among new things in 4th grade music:

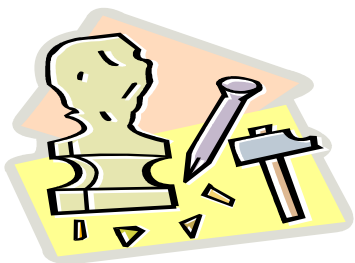
- This year, 4th graders receive

grades in their special classes (art, music, and PE). These grades are for behavior and participation. A plus (+) is considered a good grade, while a minus (-) is not so good. 4th graders have decided that their goal is to earn as many plusses as they can during music class times so they will have a plus on their grade card.

- 4th grade has begun to learn the song "Chester", an all-time favorite among JWE 4th and 5th graders. With this song we have learned Italian musical terms for tempos, as well as focusing on "A" form (one verse). But our favorite part is the competition to see who can sing the song fastest while still doing all the motions. (The winner gets a Pixy Stick!)

JWE 4th and 5th grade Choir will be starting soon. Choir will meet on Tuesday mornings before school. More information will be coming home soon!

5th grade news



JWE 5th graders have a lot of exciting performance opportunities coming up. The first is our Groundbreaking Ceremony for the JWE Sculpture Garden.

This will be on Thursday, Sept. 9th at 5:30 pm. Only those 5th graders who have signed up to participate in this performance will be involved.

In 5th grade music classes, we have begun preparing for our musical "Let's Pass it On", which we will perform at JWE on Thursday, Oct. 14th at 7:00 pm. Students should be practicing/reading the words to the songs at home to help in preparation for this

performance.

Also, please mark your calendars and save this date: Friday, November 5th, JWE 5th graders will be performing the national anthem at the Missouri Mavericks game.

It is shaping up to be a very busy fall for JWE 5th graders in music!



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Mrs. Rachel Crosley
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If anyone has any sticky Velcro strips they could donate to the music room, we could use some to adhere xylophones to their stands. Let me know if you can help!

JWE Special Edition newsletter (including Music Notes) can be found on our school website. Simply go to www.bssd.net and navigate from schools to elementary buildings to James Walker. Future issues of Special Edition will be found only online. If you do not have access to the Internet, please let me know so we can plan to send you a hard copy of Special Edition each month!

We're on the Web!
www.bssd.net

Composer Corner

In the corner of the music room, I have a bulletin board labeled "Composer Corner". It also doubles as the birthday bulletin board. When it is a student's birthday, they get to sign their name on the birthday board. The composer featured on the board is one who had a birthday during that month.

Our first composer this school year was Claude Debussy, who was from France, and whose birthday was August 22nd. As the theme in the music room is "Oh, the Places We'll Go With Music", we imagined we were on a vacation to France as we listened to "Clair de Lune", one of Debussy's famous piano pieces.

Our next featured composer was Anton Dvorak, whose birthday was September 8th. Different classes in different grade levels listened to some of the "Slavonic Dances" he wrote.

Often times when we listen to a piece of music, we will toss around a ball I call the "listening ball". Students share their thoughts on the music we heard (whether they liked it or not, why or why not, what instruments they heard, what the music reminded them of, etc.) before tossing the ball back to me (which we all love because the ball lights up and makes sounds!)

