Elliot's Classroom Newsletter

Martha's Vineyard Public Charter School | Week ending October 9, 2026

Dear Families, here is a look at a busy week of investigating, creating, and learning together!

Red Bandana Recipients

Last week: **Uma** • This week: **William**

Congratulations! Inspired by "the Man in the Red Bandana," we celebrate helpfulness and our six pillars: **Trust, Responsibility, Cooperation, Democracy, Respect, and Freedom.**

We have completed **STAR diagnostic testing in reading and math.**

ELA: Plural nouns and rainforest writing

This week in ELA, students explored how nouns change when there is more than one. Beyond adding **-s**, they learned to add **-es** to nouns ending in **-ch, -sh, -x, and -s**. We also studied irregular plurals such as **child–children** and **mouse–mice**. **Next week, we will review the spelling patterns we have studied so far.**

One journal prompt asked: *"You are exploring the rainforest and discover a new flower no one has ever seen before. Describe it."* Students imagined many magical and medicinal plants, then drew and painted their discoveries. **Look for their artwork and writing on the bulletin board outside our classroom!**

Fourth Grade Math

Physical play makes place value fun! In our beanbag-and-hula-hoop game, **Ben won the second game for his team, taking its total above 1,500 points.** Students modeled their scores with **base-ten blocks** and **regrouped** along the way.

"I Have, Who Has?" builds confidence reading large numbers into the millions. Our tabletop game connects place value and multiplication: rolling 3 in the thousands space earns **3 × 1,000 = 3,000 points**, with race-to-10,000 and race-to-1,000,000 versions. **We will wrap up Module 1 in our math textbook next week.**

Third Grade Math

Students rotated **3 × 4** arrays into **4 × 3** to explore the **commutative property**, then used multiplication tables to find products and patterns. Measuring **72-inch and 56-inch lengths with 6-inch and 12-inch rulers** connected multiplication, equal jumps on a number line, skip-counting, and leftover inches.

Gardening

Gardening began this week! Fourth graders explored plants and foods that occur naturally on Martha's Vineyard, the **Three Sisters (corn, beans, and squash)** and their significance, the **Columbian Exchange**, and some **Wampanoag-language words** for these plants.



The Three Sisters: corn, beans, and squash



The Columbian Exchange

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Science: Water cycles and clouds

This week, we studied the **water cycle and clouds**. We learned that about **70% of Earth is covered in water**, but only about **1% of its water is accessible for drinking and human use**. Students created "water cycles" in bags to observe different phases of water.

We also studied how clouds hold water droplets. Students made clouds of **shaving cream** and added water droplets to see what would happen. **Because of Friday's half day, some students will do the cloud experiment next week.**

Social Studies: Classroom detectives

In **"The Teacher's Trash,"** students examined clues from the teacher's garbage can to infer the person's interests, habits, and activities. They combined observations with what they already knew to make **inferences supported by evidence**, exploring how artifacts reveal human activity today and in the past.

Our work with *The Massachusetts Story* builds vocabulary: **artifact, decade, century, history, primary source, and secondary source**. Objects, places, and personal accounts help us understand the past.

For the **adult-memory interview**, students ask where an adult was during a historical event, what they remember, and how it affected their life. Students turn the account into **six to eight sentences**, connecting personal stories to history. Thank you to the adults sharing their memories!

Explore Time: Ideas becoming projects

Projects taking shape include **fashion, lyric and music writing, model-car building, ferret research, the Salem witch trials, and a school newspaper**. Possible ways to share learning include a fashion show, an original song, a model-car museum with assembly steps, an animal-research display, a history exhibit, or a newspaper issue.

By the end of the semester, each student should have a finished product ready to share. We are checking materials, next steps, and presentation plans. Students should explain what they made, how they made it, and what they learned.

Instrumentation with Chelsea

Instrumentation with Chelsea also began this week, bringing more hands-on learning and creative expression to fourth grade.

Wish List: A classroom scarecrow

Our class will **vote on a scarecrow design next week** to support the field trip fund. Donations are welcome:

- Fabrics of all textures, old sheets, and fuzzy blankets
- Cotton or polyester stuffing and old pillows
- Wheels or old bike tires
- Other interesting materials for our creation

Upcoming Events

Monday, October 12	No school
October 13	Cranberry Day
November 4–6	12:30 dismissal for PEP Conferences
November 11	No school

Please sign agendas nightly, check homework and IXL, and send a healthy snack and lunch as needed.

Thank you for your support! Have a wonderful long weekend!

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