

December 2017

# The Month Ahead

## At Innova

Melissa Vecchiarelli completed an Honours Bachelor degree in Sociology, and a Bachelor of Education from Queens' University. Melissa has a love and passion for overseas missions and education. She has had the opportunity to travel to many places all over the world, and was privileged to teach English in Thailand, and English in Zambia through Village of Hope, Africa. What Melissa finds fascinating about classical Christian education, is that children are encouraged to think critically, while being taught with a Biblical view of the world. In her free time, she enjoys serving at her church, being outside, hiking, bike riding, traveling and anything to do with art. Melissa is engaged and is getting married in December.



Melissa Vecchiarelli  
Teacher

Grade 1

Grade 1  
Miss Melissa Vecchiarelli  
mvecchiarelli@innovaacademy.ca

*Grade 1 students are actively engaged in learning foundational knowledge and skills in all subject areas. Our classroom is filled with singing, chanting, movement, and engaging hands-on activities. We seek to provide a safe and nurturing classroom environment where students can deepen their awareness of God's love and relationship with Him, as well as meet their potential for academic success.*

**Bible and History:** This year, Bible and history are integrated into a seamless narrative. The study of Ancient civilizations, with a focus on Egypt, is integrated with Old Testament biblical events. Students will begin to understand history as God's unfolding plan of redemption and appreciate that they are a part of this story. In the month of December, Grade 1 students will continue to work their way through the book of Genesis, completing their memorization of Genesis 1. As Christmas approaches, we will wonder at God's greatest gift, the birth of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Topics covered this month include:

- The birth and sacrifice of Isaac
- The Middle Kingdom in Egypt
- The birth of Jesus

**Literature, Vocabulary, and Reading Fluency:** Through participating in reading groups, students will build and refine phonics skills, oral reading fluency, and reading comprehension. In the month of December, literature study will focus on Christmas stories and poetry from *The Golden Christmas Treasury*. Students will read and discuss the short stories "The Peterkin's Christmas Tree", "The Little Fir Tree", and "The Cratchits' Christmas Dinner" and enjoy listening to *Robin Hood* read aloud by the teacher. Students will:

- Identify the elements of a legend
- Show comprehension through answering questions
- Identify author, character, setting, and plot
- Read clearly with expression and observe punctuation marks
- Read for meaning and respond to content questions
- Predict the story outcome
- Identify characters, setting, problem, outcome, and lesson of the story, highlighting biblical application
- Sequence the events of a story and retell the story in his/her own words
- Relate story events to personal experiences
- Become familiar with the different facets that make up a poem – rhyming words, beat, rhythm, and imagery

**Spelling, Phonics and Penmanship:** Spelling, phonics, and penmanship will be learned together using *Spell to Write and Read* and *Cursive First*. Using a variety of activities and games, students will:

- Learn and practice the following lower-case letters in cursive: *n, m, v, x, y, z*
- Read, spell, and know the sounds of the following multi letter phonograms: *sh, th, oo, er, ee, oy, oi, ch, ow, ou, ay, ai, ea, or, ui, ng, ar, wh, aw, au*
- Be introduced to the sounds of the following multi letter phonograms: *ck, oe, oa, ed*
- Continue learning weekly spelling list words

**Writing and Grammar:** In the month of December, students will:

- Learn about nouns, and the difference between proper, common and possessive nouns
- Identify the names and the order of the days of the week and months of the year
- Identify that the names of the days of the week and months of the year are proper nouns
- Write months and days as proper nouns with capital letters
- Identify and use commas in dates
- Identify and use commas in dates in complete sentences
- Distinguish between proper nouns and common nouns

## Grade 1 – The Grammar Stage

Innova Academy's grammar school curriculum builds a solid academic foundation, emphasizing mastery of facts and fundamental skills. Grammar stage students have the natural ability to retain large amounts of information, so Innova intentionally builds knowledge across the curriculum immersing students in a holistic, unified, and rich learning experience. Students are actively engaged in learning while applying skills they have previously acquired to new, expansive content. Classrooms are filled with singing, chanting, movement, and engaging hands-on activities. Strong habits of heart, mind, and soul are reinforced, as students become more aware of their impact on others and build skills in self-governance and responsibility.

**Latin:** In December, students will learn Latin vocabulary pertaining to Christmas. Students will also spend the month of December reviewing what they have learned to date. Each morning, students are asked questions to become comfortable with key Latin phrases. They will review a number of greeting words, words that are associated with making friends, and multiple responses to the question, "How are you?" Songs and chants help children learn Latin in an enjoyable and engaging way. Some words and phrases that students are reviewing are:

- Quid est tuum praenomen? (What is your name?)
- Meum praenomen est... (My name is...)
- Quid agis? (How are you?)
- Sum... (I am...) bene (fine/good), optime (great), pessime (terrible)

**Mathematics:** Grade 1 students will begin each mathematics period practicing math facts with the CalcuLadder math drill program. Students progress through this program on an individual basis. This month, students will begin a unit titled "Shapes and Patterns". Students will:

- Identify, classify, and describe plane and solid shapes
- Make same and different shapes
- Combine and separate plane and solid shapes
- Identify plane and solid shapes in real life
- Use plane and solid shapes to identify, extend, and create patterns

**Music:** Students are very busy preparing for their Christmas concerts. This month, students will:

- Polish Christmas repertoire
- Participate in activities to develop choral skills
- Participate in activities to develop rhythmic skills

**Science:** This month, students will continue to learn about matter. Through various hands on experiments, students will explore:

- Surface tension and how it affects liquids
- The three forms of water
- Evaporation
- Melting, freezing, and evaporating liquids
- Types of gases

**Visual Arts:** Students will examine shapes and patterns in pottery and artifacts from Ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Greece. Visual arts projects and topics for this month include:

- Shapes and patterns used throughout art history focusing on Egyptian, Greek, and Mesopotamian artifacts
- Primary and secondary colours
- Techniques for mixing colours with different mediums

**Physical Education:** In gym, students will learn how to play a successful game of dodgeball. We will also discuss germs and the steps we can take to help protect ourselves and others from catching a cold. Specific skills/lessons include:

- Throwing and catching a dodgeball
- Aiming before throwing
- Proper hand washing
- Our body's defenses against germs
- Healthy habits (sleeping, eating, washing, etc.)

*Please note that although students in different grades often study the same topic, curricular expectations are tailored to individual grade levels.*

## Upcoming Events

December 1 & 15 – Pizza Lunch

December 7 – Black Creek Pioneer Village Field Trip – All Grades

December 8 - Exordium

December 15 – Parent Morning – At the Fischers'

December 19 – AMICA Christmas Performance

December 21 – Innova Christmas Concert – Main Sanctuary

December 22 – Skating – Riverwalk Commons; noon dismissal at Riverwalk Commons

December 30 – Winter Social - NTR

December 25–January 5 – Christmas Break; classes resume January 8

Innova Academy aspires to graduate young men and women who will possess the virtues, wisdom, knowledge, and skills necessary for further academic study.