

December 2017

# The Month Ahead

## At Innova

Cheryl first encountered classical education while working with disadvantaged students in the inner city of Rochester, New York. She saw first-hand the benefits of teaching a curriculum rich in content that fostered a “back-to-basics” approach, building a strong foundation as well as enhancing learning in the classroom. Cheryl has completed her teaching certificate and master’s degree. Her teaching experiences have run the gamut of preschool to secondary English. In addition, Cheryl has developed and directed a Fine Arts program for Grades 3 to 6 at her local church, producing twelve musicals. In June 2011, she and her family moved to Newmarket. Cheryl is married to Barry and they have two adult children. She is passionate about teaching and is excited to be returning to the classroom full-time.



Cheryl Smith  
Teacher

Grade 3 and  
Grade 4

Grade 4

Mrs. Cheryl Smith

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*Grade 4 students are actively engaged in building foundational knowledge and skills in all subject areas. Our classroom is filled with reading, discussion, singing, 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.*

**Christian Education:** This month in Christian education, students will continue their study of the judges. This period of time covers Israel's history from 1220 and 1050 B.C., from Joshua's death until Samuel. The judges were not legal advisors but rather military leaders who God periodically provided to deliver Israel from its enemies. Students will memorize Psalm 135:1-21. Topics include:

- Jephthah
- Samson's birth
- Samson and the Philistines
- Samson and Delilah
- Samson's death
- The consequences of failing to follow God's commands

**Literature:** Students are in the midst of completing their research projects and posters about aspects of medieval society after completing the novel *The Minstrel in the Tower*. Topics range from feudalism to fashion to weaponry and armour to steps in becoming a knight. Each student group has become "the experts" of their chosen topic and will:

- Prepare a presentation to instruct the rest of the class.
- Complete a self-evaluation as well as a peer evaluation for each presentation.

Following the presentations, students will begin a unit on poetry. Students will learn about poetry techniques, such as rhyme and sensory language that poets use to make their writing more vivid and interesting. A few of the poems include:

- "The Hairy Dog" by Herbert Asquith
- "I've Got a Dog" – Anonymous
- "A Kitten" by Eleanor Farjeon
- "Cat" by Dorothy Baruch

**Writing and Penmanship:** Students will continue to practice cursive writing, focusing on neatness and a natural flow. In writing composition this month, students will focus on writing informative paragraphs with a focus on:

- Good sentence structure
- Proper documentation of sources
- Preparation of note cards for an oral presentation

**Spelling and Grammar:** As students study spelling and grammar, they develop greater awareness of how the English language is structured and apply their skills to writing across the curriculum. Having completed a recent diagnostic test, students will continue to receive a list of twenty words each week. They will:

- Analyze their words
- Correctly use their words in well-constructed sentences
- Learn the spelling rules associated with the assigned word list

**Latin and Greek Vocabulary:** Students will strengthen their vocabulary through the study of Latin and Greek vocabulary and will develop the ability to analyze unfamiliar English words based on Latin and Greek prefixes, suffixes, and roots. This month, students will learn the Latin numbers 1-10 as well as the following Greek and Latin words:

- *verbum*, Latin—word (derivatives: verb, proverb, verbal)
- *nomen, nominis*, Latin—name (derivatives: nominate, nomination, denomination)
- *pro*, Latin—for, before, forward, in place of (derivatives: profess, problem, proceed)
- *prae*, Latin—before, in front of (derivatives: predict, precaution, prefer)
- *ad*, Latin—to, toward; near, next to (derivatives: adequate, adjective, admonish)
- *jacio, jactum*, Latin—throw (derivatives: eject, interject, project)

## Grade 4 – 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.

**French:** In French this month, students will practice learned vocabulary as well as new gestured vocabulary. Students will:

- Begin to learn the words of the Lord's Prayer in French
- Continue to practice songs and dances that communicate the story *La poule maboule*
- Practice gestures and use learned vocabulary to answer questions about the story
- Continue to practice saying and gesturing the play
- Answer questions and complete comprehension activities to better understand the story
- Work towards speaking exclusively in French with teacher prompts

**History:** The focus of history this year is the Middle Ages from the collapse of the Western Roman Empire to the Fall of Constantinople. Topics covered this month include:

- The Viking invasions
- Eric the Red and Eric's son
- The Norse Gods
- The Battle of Hastings

**Mathematics:** This month, students will work with tables and graphs - the visual tools for showing and analyzing data. Skills covered will include:

- Making and interpreting a table
- Using a table
- Line graphs and vocabulary associated with these graphs (horizontal axis and vertical axis)

Following the chapter 4 assessment, students will complete a cumulative assessment for chapters 3 and 4 as well as prepare for benchmark assessment 1, which covers chapters 1-4.

**Science:** This month, students will complete the unit exploring organ systems. Remaining topics investigate the following questions:

- How does the urinary system work?
- How can I care for the urinary system?
- How can I prevent injury to my organs?
- How does organ donation work?

**Visual Arts:** Students will continue examining mosaics and tile work in Byzantine, Roman, and Middle Eastern buildings. They will learn the techniques used by artists to create designs using tesserae. Visual arts projects and topics for this month include:

- Designing and creating a mosaic of their own
- Medieval Tapestries: Using fabric and textiles to communicate stories
- The Bayeux Tapestry

**Music:** The Innova students are very busy preparing for their upcoming Christmas concerts. Over the next few weeks, music classes will mostly consist of rehearsals for these concerts. However, lessons will also include:

- 16th note notation
- Listening: *Fantasia on Greensleeves*

**Physical Education:** This month, students will learn about and play basketball. They will focus on improving their overall performance in the following areas:

- Dribbling
- Passing
- Shooting
- Rules
- Stance

*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.