

February 2018

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



At Innova

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: Students will continue with the study of Ruth for the first half of the month of February. This story of ordinary life stands in contrast to the war and strife Israel experienced throughout the Book of Judges. Although religion was generally at a low ebb throughout this period, the Book of Ruth makes it clear that personal faith of many in Israel remained strong. Following a unit assessment of this book, students will begin a study of the last judge of Israel. Samuel, a transitional figure in Israel’s history, presided over the beginning of Israel’s monarchy. His role encompassed that of a judge, priest, and prophet. Students will memorize 1 Samuel 3:9-10. Lesson topics include:

- Ruth resting
- Ruth rewarded
- Birth of Samuel
- The capture of the ark
- The Philistines’ defeat at Mizpah
- We want a king

Literature: Students will complete their study of King Arthur while reading and discussing the stories “Pretty-Hands”, “The Hideous Lady”, and “Epilogue: The Fate of Camelot”. They will then begin a novel study on *The Whipping Boy* by Sid Fleischman, a story set in the Middle Ages that explores the differences between the social classes. Students will:

- demonstrate comprehension of the text and draw inferences
- discuss plot elements
- explore vocabulary used in the text
- relate events in the novel to topics discussed in history class
- apply biblical principles to the text

Writing and Penmanship: Students will continue to practice proper letter formation and the joining of letters to build fluidity in cursive writing. Students will:

- Write well-constructed sentences in short answer responses to comprehensive questions across the curriculum
- Write their own Arthurian legend with illustrations as a final project

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. This month, students will:

- Correctly use their spelling words in well-constructed sentences
- Learn the spelling rules associated with the assigned word list
- Learn about prepositions
- Identify prepositional phrases

Latin and Greek Vocabulary: Students will strengthen their vocabulary through the study of Latin and Greek vocabulary. Students develop the ability to analyze unfamiliar English words based on Latin and Greek prefixes, suffixes, and roots. Students will focus on the following:

- cum Latin—with, together (derivatives: cooperate, collaborate, community)
- figo, fixum, Latin—fix, fasten, attach (derivatives: fixture, prefix, suffix)
- jungo, junctum, Latin—join, unite, connect (derivatives: joint, conjugate, conjunction)
- digitus, Latin—finger, toe, inch (derivatives: digit, digital computer, digitalis)
- caput, capitis, Latin—head (derivatives: capital, captain, cabbage)
- manus, Latin—hand (manufacture, manifest, manuscript)

French: In French this month, students will continue to work towards speaking solely in French during class. They will practice communicating in French by interacting in classroom activities and answering questions. Students will:

- Finish memorizing *La poule Maboule* and present the play
- Review gestured vocabulary and use vocabulary when working in pairs
- Write complete sentences and answer questions about *La poule Maboule*

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.

- Learn the months of the year, days of the week, seasons, and the numbers 1-31
- Continue to learn and memorize the Lord's Prayer in French

History: The focus of history this year is the Middle Ages from the collapse of the western Roman Empire to the fall of Constantinople. This month, students will read about the age of the Crusades. Topics will include:

- A command from the pope
- Recapturing Jerusalem
- Saladin of Jerusalem
- El Cid and the "Reconquest of Spain"
- Richard the Lionhearted
- John Lackland and the Magna Carta
- Robin Hood

Mathematics: Following the chapter on data and probability, students will begin a chapter on fractions and mixed numbers. Lesson topics include:

- Adding fractions
- Subtracting fractions
- Mixed numbers
- Improper fractions
- Renaming improper fractions

Science: Students will continue their investigation on light this month. The following questions will be explored:

- How do shadows form?
- How does light reflect?
- How does light bend?
- How do we see?

Visual Arts: Students will continue studying family emblems and symbols from the Middle Ages. Grade 4 students will begin learning the techniques and history behind manuscripts from medieval times. Students will:

- Finish weaving their pennants
- Study calligraphy techniques and illuminated letters
- Create illuminated letters

Music: This month, students will continue to learn the basics of recorder playing and score reading. They will also explore more complex Orff arrangements and choral music as they further develop their skills. Specific elements that will be addressed are:

- Notes B, A, G, C, D, and F# on the recorder
- Tone quality in singing
- Mozart's *Twinkle Variations*
- Percussion patterns on the Orff instruments
- Theme and Variations

Physical Education: This month, students will finish playing basketball and then start badminton. They will focus on improving their overall performance in the following areas:

- Stance
- Hitting techniques
- Court positioning
- Playing singles and doubles

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

Upcoming Events

February 2 – Exordium **AND** Non-Uniform Day **AND** Pasta Lunch **AND** Grade 8 Visit Day
February 6 – TSO Field Trip – Grades 3-8
February 9 – Pizza Lunch
February 16 – PA Day – No School
February 19 – Family Day – No School
February 22 – 7/8 Boys' Basketball Tournament (TBD)
February 23 – In-School Speech Meet **AND** Pizza Lunch
February 26 – Reports Sent Home
February 27 – 7/8 Girls' Basketball Tournament (TDB)

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