

October 20, 2014 – Staunton City Schools Tip Sheet

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New Classroom Friends at Ware

Third grade students at Ware Elementary have been a little crabby lately and for good reason -- Mrs. Smith's classroom has been invaded by crabs! The invasion was actually by invitation as Mrs. Smith brought the crabs to her classroom to use as a teaching tool.

During science class, students were introduced to biomes and habitats through adopting these new classroom friends. Mrs. Smith revealed the crabs through a mystery activity during her introductory lesson. Students were given the chance to guess what the creature was before it was totally revealed. Once students figured out that the crabs would become a permanent fixture in class, they quickly took to naming them. The crabs' names are Charlotte and Wilbur, from Charlotte's Web, Geronimo, from the Geronimo Stilton books, and Bob, Harry and Bobby.

Students say they love their new classroom friends. They are enjoying observing them and watching them walk sideways. It has also helped the students to understand a crab's natural habitat as they were quick to point out that crabs were found in the salt water and in tropical climates.



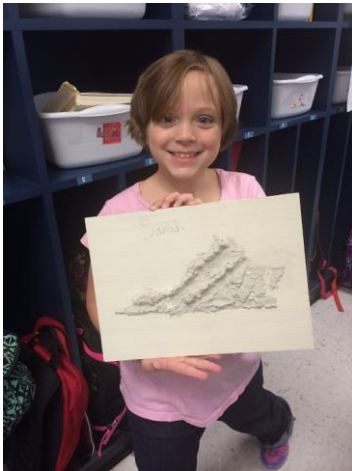
Mrs. Smith's third graders have new classroom friends.

Fourth Graders Dig Deep in Virginia Studies

Fourth grade students at Bessie Weller Elementary School got their hands dirty as they finished the Virginia Regions unit in history. Working with paper-mache, students were tasked with creating a relief map that replicates the unique geography of each region, from the flat land of the Coastal Plain to the old rounded mountains of the Blue Ridge Mountain region.

“The purpose of this activity is to solidify what students have learned about Virginia’s geography over the course of the unit in a fun and creative way,” said fourth-grade teacher Nicole Hostetter. The students enjoyed the messy work, and the chance to show what they learned about our state’s geography.

Students also engaged in a mock archaeological dig on school grounds, uncovering artifacts such as pottery, arrowheads, bones, and beads. Through the dig, students were able to learn first-hand about the native cultures in Virginia and the first settlers to the region. “We wanted them to experience what it’s like for an archaeologist to find materials from the past and feel how exciting that is,” said fourth-grade teacher Diane Kester. “We wanted them to have a sense of wonder about the people who lived here before.”



Sarah Carter displays the relief map she created.



Sahara Davis digs for artifacts in the 4th grades’ mock archeological dig.