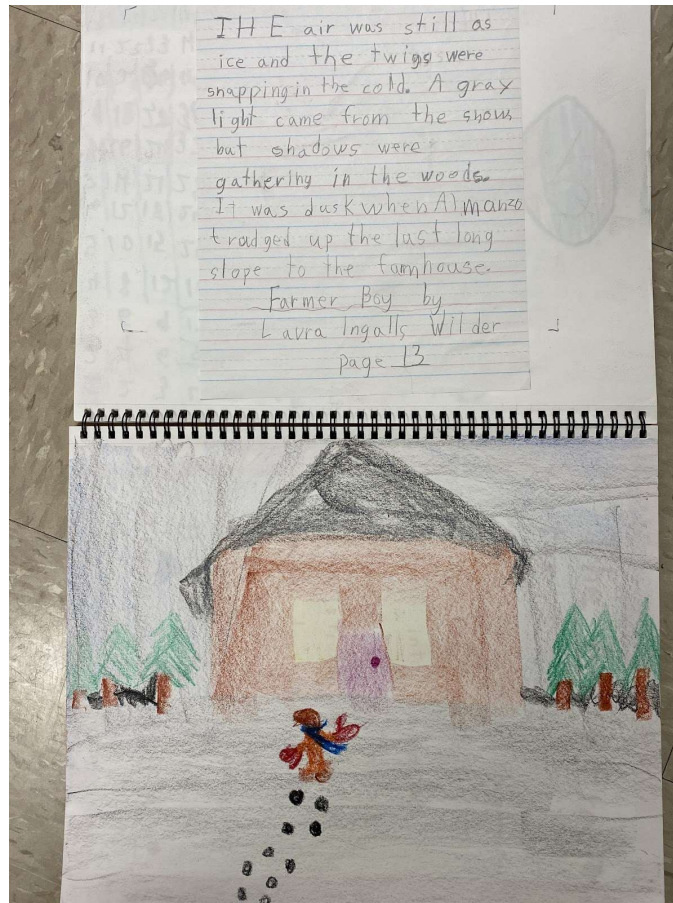


February 2022

CLASS 3/4

Grammar

Jessalyn Hall



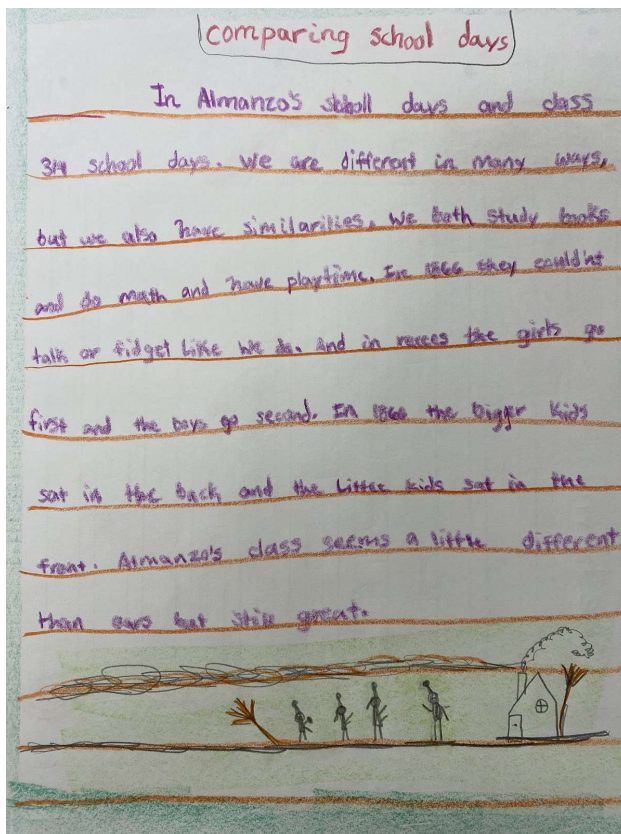
## Learning Focus

- Review and practice identifying all parts of speech
  - Simple verb tense
  - Basic sentence parts and structure
  - Reading fluency and comprehension
  - Writing: friendly letters, compare and contrast, narrative paragraphs
  - Phonics and word study
  - Dictionary skills
  - Homophones
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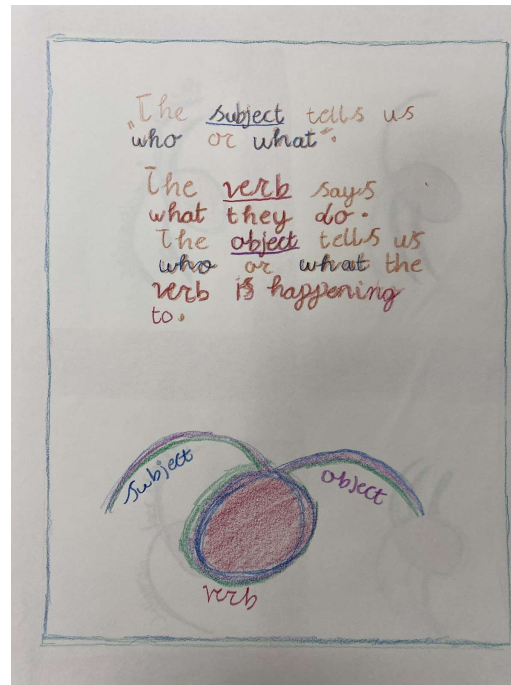
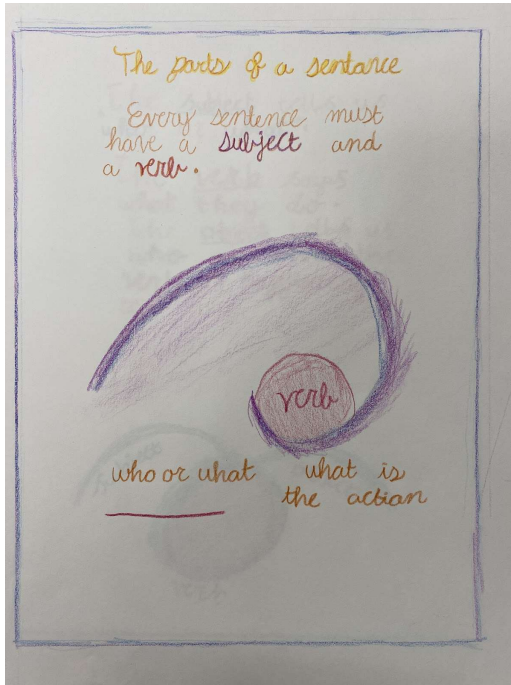
## Class work

Our return from the winter break brought smaller class sizes, with many children out on a given day. It was a truly joyful day in January when the whole group was finally together once again! The children truly love each other and feel happiest when the class is complete.

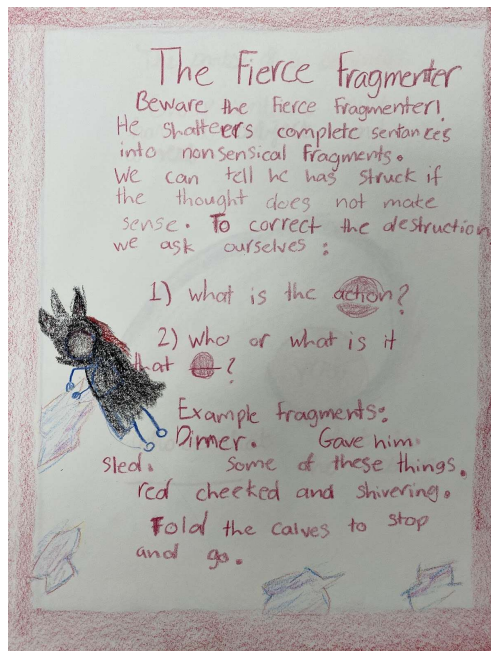


These cozy winter days are just right for snuggling up with a book and so we embarked on our first shared literature study, *Farmer Boy* by Laura Ingalls Wilder. The story of a year in the life of a nine-year-old living on a farm in 1864, it ties in perfectly with our studies and upcoming farm trip. The book has brought reading practice in many ways to meet the needs of the individual children in the class. Whether reading independently, practicing dramatic reading aloud, or in a small instructional group working on decoding, each child has engaged with the book in many ways.

*Farmer Boy* has provided a backdrop for our study of grammar. Many people have been surprised by the deep love of the topic present in Class 3/4! It is a subject they meet with enthusiasm. They greeted the parts of speech, with representative symbols, as if they were old friends and were eager to meet the few that still remained. They love the puzzle of figuring out the parts of speech of each word in a sentence.

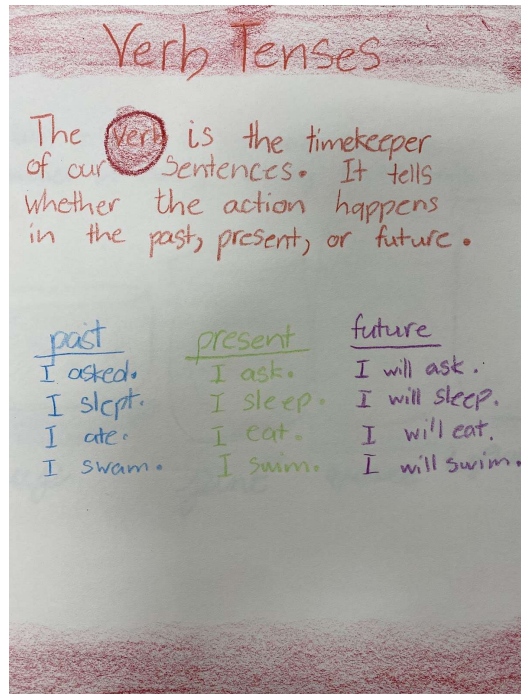


During this block we explored the role of the individual word in the sentence and the gesture of the sentence as a whole. Through drawing and movement exercises we explored the structure of simple sentences. The children were warned of the senseless destruction caused by the Fierce Fragmenter and enjoyed looking for signs he had muddled up their writing.

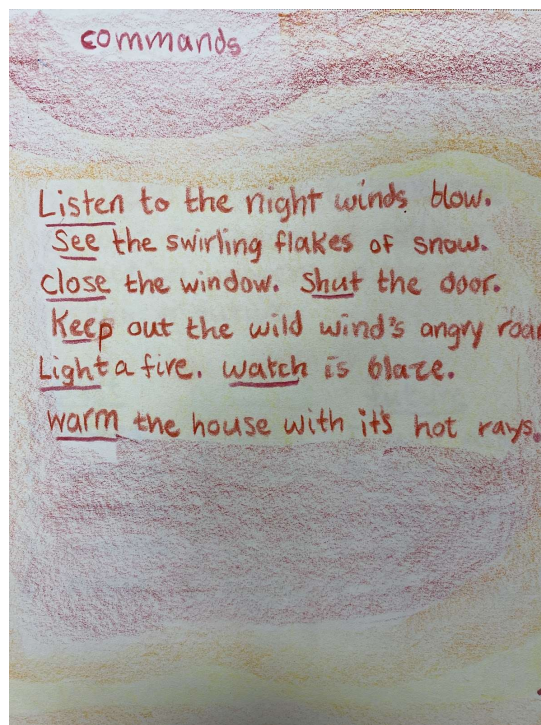
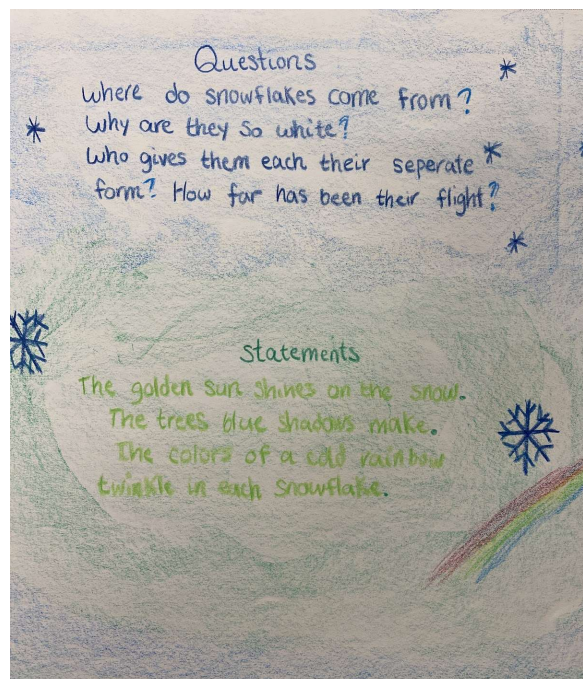
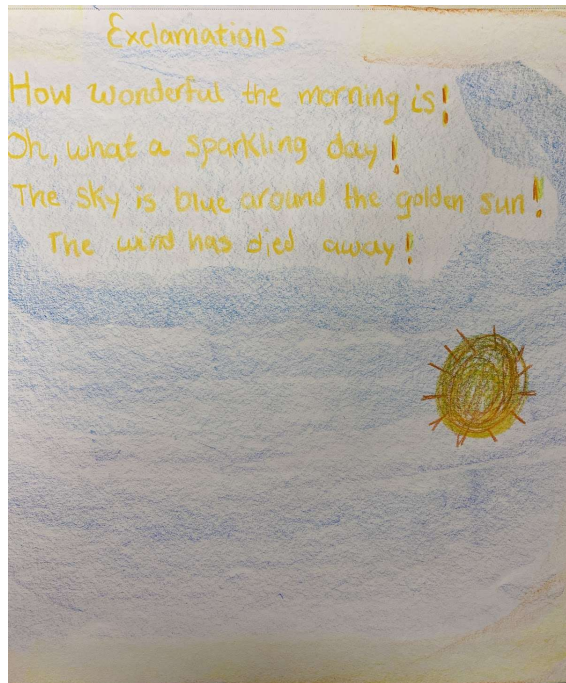


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We experienced simple verb tenses by first exploring the feeling of the past, present, and future. The children enjoyed writing the three forms of familiar verbs and it was fun to discover that some were predictable, taking an -ed ending, while others required a word change.



The four types of sentences (statement, exclamation, question, and command) gave us the opportunity to explore how gesture, tone, and word order change the way we express a thought. The children practiced limiting their speech or writing to sentences of one type and we found it interesting how the tone of the room changed! A room full of exclamations gets more energetic. They observed that it was fun, but less “interesting”. Many statements made us look more closely at what we were observing and see new things. Many questions made us wonder and think deeply, though it was so difficult not to answer them with statements! Too many commands made us feel uncomfortable and we found the need to counter them with kind statements. I found these discussions and experiences brought a new sensitivity to both our classroom discussions and the children’s individual writing.



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## **Why do we teach this block and why do we teach it this way?**

Grammar is a wonderfully intuitive topic and the children need merely to have their awareness of certain aspects of their own speech woken up. They delight in having these little puzzles in their own words revealed. Cloaking the often abstract grammar concepts in images and symbols helps the children to conceptualize and recognize these concepts in the language-rich environment around them.

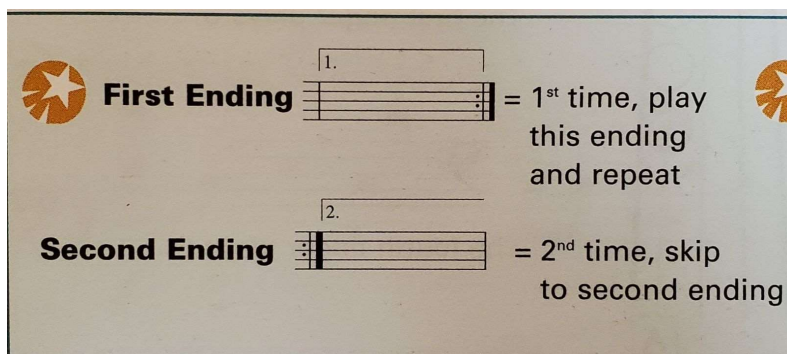
We use movement, story, rhymes and drawing (all the languages of childhood) to bring grammar to life for the children. Their joy in the activities and their excitement when they discover something they have just learned in their speech or reading is a delight to see!

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# Strings

Marshunda Smith

In strings for class 3/4, we have been studying concepts in our new music book and pairing those concepts with music which we will perform during the spring concert on **May 17**. The first concept we have been working on is making sure that both grades understand basic symbols pertaining to their instrument. For some third graders, this would be new for them. For the fourth graders, this is solidifying their previous knowledge. We recently learned and talked about 'endings'. There are 1st and 2nd endings in music and it is presented a certain way.



We take turns reading the concepts together, then I ask the students what does that mean? One person will answer or try to describe what we just read. Sometimes other students will help and add to

the answer. We then look to see if we see this 'figure' anywhere in our music. LO AND BEHOLD.....many of them resound THAT'S WHAT THAT IS!!!! I've encouraged them to try moving forward in their music book, BUT do not skip reading the descriptions.

Once we understand this concept, we try it out and observe what our bodies want to do instinctually in the music and what we can do to help us remember things. The students also begin to notice that we aren't playing pieces of music in unison anymore. The 3rd graders have observed that when the 4th grade violins and viola move at a certain time they *want* to move with them. We incrementally practice each measure so the students hear everything that is happening at a particular moment in the music. Then we slowly add a measure to that measure, and keep adding measures until we perform a

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complete 'sentence' of music. This way of putting music together is a way of practicing at home as well. By the time we finish the 'sentence', the students are hearing the grooviness of the music and they are bopping along and moving their bodies!



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# Handwork

Heather Colis Puro

## Learning Goals and Classroom Work

In handwork, the class has continued to crochet. They have been flexible about taking feedback, have risen to the challenge of longer-term projects, and are using their



observation skills to keep their crocheting on track. Following step by step instructions is a challenge at this age, and the class has developed excellent problem-solving skills.

During our weekly fiber arts class, the students work in groups to card wool into rolaags and use the hand

spindle to turn fluffy wool into yarn. The students are now quite adept at properly carding the wool, and can discern that the result of patiently preparing their materials is well-spun yarn. Students have sanded and made their own spindles, and have worked diligently to coordinate their hands and knees (you need them to stop the spindle) to keep the spindle turning.

The class has heard several stories from around the world that highlight the importance of spinners and weavers, as these makers provide household items and clothes that are essential to our warmth and survival. We recite poetry that expresses gratitude for the natural world that gives humankind the resources we need. And, we sing rhythmic work songs such as [Zum Galli](#)



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[Galli](#), an Israeli work song that is so catchy that the teacher cannot help singing along! Click the link to hear the class singing in a round during one warm day this month.

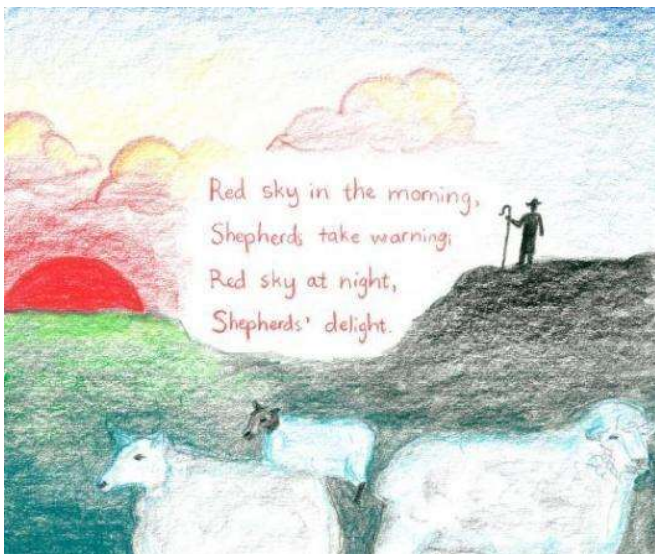


### Why do we teach this block and why do we teach it this way?

Working with a skill like crocheting for an extended period of time allows the students to develop mastery. For the students, feeling accomplishment and control is exhilarating, and brings satisfaction and balance during this uncertain time. Many children have been able to meet the teacher's challenge: "Why don't

you try to figure out the next step?" this winter, and this has further built their confidence. Developing new capacities in this way allows the students to gain more flexibility for making mistakes and patience for learning new things.

Fiber arts class is a time for the students to work together as well. The interdependency between those who card the wool and those who spin has been a good lesson for the students. Students at this age are developing their separateness from adults, and coming together as peers to complete a common task that requires skill and



perseverance supports their development individually and as a group. These work tasks require that each student does their part, but they also have to work together. As a group, the class enjoys working as a team and often getting into these tasks can smooth over a disagreement or bring a smile to a student who is having a hard day.

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Drawing, speech recitation, and singing are usually staples of the morning lesson routine, but also have a place in the subject classes. Mirroring the student learning rhythm in this way supports the children, and exposing them to cultures from around the world through stories and songs builds a sense of how universal the human experience really is without having to come out and say it. At this age, the demonstration of abstract concepts like team work, interdependence, and diversity lay the groundwork for deeper understanding in later years.