



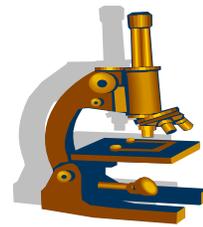
My name is Matthew Strain and it is a blessing to be part of the St. Peter's school and community. It is my second year as the fifth grade teacher and I look forward to working with our fifth graders as we challenge them academically and prepare them to enter middle school. It is always exciting to witness a student's growth as they begin to make connections to real-world applications.

## Winter

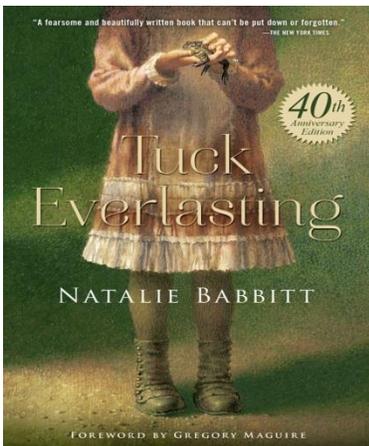


Wow! It's hard to believe we are at the half-way point of the school year, and what an exciting first half it has been. Fifth graders were excited to learn how the Revolutionary War was the seed that gained America its independence. To enhance this experience, we visited George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate. Additionally, students were assigned the task of writing a biography report on various key contributors of the Revolutionary War. In addition to writing a biography report, students wrote a personal narrative, giving them the opportunity to tell a story about a personal experience. But, now after a long winter break, we are back in action and ready to move forward into the second semester of the school year.

In the second semester, we will break away from Social Studies and begin exploring areas of science. This will include Life Science, Physical Science, and Earth Science. This will be especially exciting, as I have set aside one day a week as a dedicated lab day. This will give students the opportunity to view microorganisms under a microscope, formulate a hypothesis, record data, and much more.



In Language Arts, we will continue learning the parts of speech and their application; as well as continue to learn aspects of writing and reading comprehension. Additionally, we will begin our class novel, *Tuck Everlasting*, by author Natalie Babbitt. This is a wonderful story that asks the essential question; "would you want to live forever?"



For math, fifth grade will continue to work with fractions, and then we will work our way into probability and statistics. These will be challenging concepts; however, the fifth graders are diligent workers and will continue to hurdle over challenges that come their way.

As always, we continue to be disciples of Jesus, not only through our daily prayers and devotions, but through our actions; such as being kind to others, helping those in need, and learning to

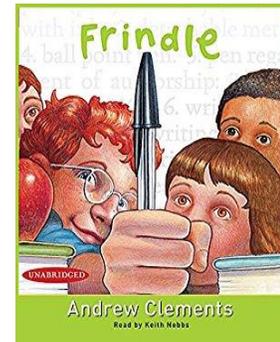
forgive during those times when we do not necessarily agree with each other.

It is truly exciting to continue to be a witness to the growth of these young learners and watch as their potential continues to evolve. We are half-way through the year, but we still have a long road of learning ahead of us.



## Fall

This year we will begin by revisiting some familiar concepts and then hit the ground running. To kick things off, we will introduce the process of writing a personal narrative. This will set the stage for future writing labs where students will learn the process of paraphrasing and retelling the main idea in their own words. Additionally, we will spend a good portion of the first marking period discussing and analyzing the short fiction novel *Frindle*. This is a wonderful story of a fifth grade student who makes up his own word for “pen” and becomes a national celebrity. In addition to the reading and writing component, we will be expanding student’s knowledge in the grammar world; exploring elements of parts of speech, as well as expanding their vocabulary.



For Science and Social Studies, we will be splitting these content areas, such that we will be concentrating on the Social Studies curriculum the first semester and the Science curriculum the second semester.

However, students will have the opportunity to explore scientific methods as they participate in our STEM program once a week.

During the first semester, the Social Studies curriculum will highlight the branches of government and the purpose of each branch. Additionally, we will explore the importance and impact of the Revolutionary War.



The fifth grade math program will have a fresh look because fifth graders will be introduced to the program that is being used in our middle school. Students will focus on problem solving strategies and learn methods that will enable them to solve equations using mental math strategies. I am excited about this program and I look forward to helping students develop and implement these strategies.

Last, but not least, I am truly looking forward to exploring how Jesus shows God’s love and giving our fifth graders an opportunity to reflect on how Jesus calls each of them to discipleship. Additionally, we will learn about the Sacrament of Confirmation and Liturgy of the Eucharist during the first semester.