



Monthly Mustang



3rd Grade students Walker Colson and Suraj Verma meet on the "Friendship Bench"

NEED A FRIEND? MEET UP AT THE FRIENDSHIP BENCH

BY ANDREW BENITZ

"You have to be a friend to have a friend," This quote is written on two new benches on our school playgrounds. They are not ordinary benches, but *Friendship Benches*. Our PTO and Ms. Prater, one of our school counselors, worked together to design the benches. If you are feeling sad or lonely, go sit on the *Friendship Bench* and a friend will come along and hang out with you. If you see someone on the *Friendship Bench*, ask them to play with you. It's an easy way to make a new friend and help each other out.

Ms. Prater said, "I'm excited to have a place for kids to find a friend on our busy playgrounds."

"I think it's a good idea so people can make new friends." - Christian Sackett, 2nd grade

"I am going to use the bench to help make someone feel happy." - Harrison Benitez, 2nd grade

"There are a lot of new kids at our school so it is a good chance to make friends." - Paige Berger, 3rd grade

"It's really nice for new kids to meet new friends and not be embarrassed or shy." - Reagan Walls, 5th grade

"The bench helps to solve the problem of people needing a friend to play with and also helps students meet new people." - Mrs. McClintock

"The friendship bench is a great way to meet new people, even if you already have friends. It's also a way to help everyone enjoy recess and feel included at school."

- Mrs. Pinchback, A.P.



Mrs. Pinchback, 2nd place: Evelyn Park (Ms. Findley's 3rd grade class) 1st place: Jayden Chen (Ms. Wood's 4th grade class), 3rd place: Derek Jui (Mrs. Bailey's 3rd grade class).

THE BIG BEE BY JAYDEN CHEN

When I won the Spelling Bee, I was flabbergasted! My thoughts were, "I hope to win the grade level Bee." I never thought about winning the school-wide Bee. The next level is a tough nut. In the district Bee, only one winner moves on out of 60-80 kids! I don't think I will win, but I am still studying very hard. What I do is memorize words, their definitions, and use in a sentence. I also practice concentration. On stage, my head can really hurt from concentrating. I tell myself, "don't panic!" Panicking will make everything worse!

Over the years, the spelling bee has had some surprises. There have been a couple of ties, and even a time when there were no more words left to spell!

Q: When was the first Spelling Bee?

A: The first National Spelling Bee (now known as the Scripps National Spelling Bee) was in Washington, D.C. in 1925.

Q: How much money do you get if you win the National Spelling Bee?

A: The winner of the Scripps National Spelling Bee receives a \$40,000 cash prize and an engraved loving cup trophy from Scripps, a \$2,500 savings bond, a reference library from Merriam-Webster, \$2,600 in reference works and a lifetime membership to Britannica Online Premium from Encyclopædia Britannica, and \$5,000 cash prize.

Q: Why is it called it a spelling bee?

A: Historically the word bee has been used to describe a get-together for communal work, like a husking bee, a quilting bee, or an apple bee.

Q: What is the age limit for the national spelling bee?

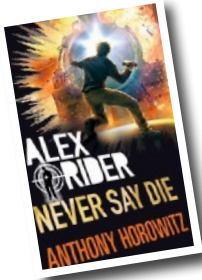
A: No one younger than 8 has ever qualified for the nationals. Spellers can compete until they're 15, or until completing eighth grade.

Q: What are examples of winning words?

A: Gladiolus (a flower), sacrilegious (committing something unholy), staphylococci (a type of bacteria), guetapens (ambush or trap).

BOOK REVIEWS

ALEX RIDER NEVER SAY DIE BY ANTHONY HOROWITZ REVIEWED BY WESTON BENNER



While this is not a Bluebonnet Book, I wanted to make sure you add it to your Must Read list! And if you haven't read the series, what are you waiting for? This book is the 11th in a series. After a four year break between books, I can tell you this story was worth waiting for! It is a fun action adventure, spy thriller book. The author takes you on an international mission, including

Egypt, France, and Wales. He introduces you to amazing gadgets and takes you through abandoned coal mines and crazy car chases to locate someone very important to our main character, who resembles a young James Bond. (No plot spoilers here!) If you enjoy nonstop action and great character development, give this a read. I can't wait for the 12th novel!



5 Out of 5 Mustangs

SOAR REVIEWED BY CAROLINE CLOONAN

Soar is about a boy who was abandoned when he was a baby. A nice man adopted him. The boy's name is Jeremiah, and the man's name is Walt. They loved watching and playing baseball together. Then, at the age of 10, Jeremiah has heart surgery. After that he has to go to a heart doctor, and couldn't run or play baseball anymore. They moved to a new town for Walt's job that was very focused on winning at baseball. His middle school had half of a baseball team, because the high school team took all the fame. So Jeremiah began coaching a baseball team for his middle school. Will a team coached by a kid be able to win? Read Soar to find out more!



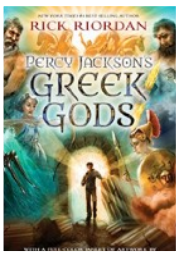
THE MAGNIFICENT MYA TIBBS

REVIEWED BY TUTIALI

The Magnificent Mya Tibbs is a marvelous Bluebonnet book written by Crystal Allen. The book starts off with cowgirl, Mya Tibbs all pumped up and excited for Spirit Week, the best and most fun week of the school year! She even made a pinky promise with her mega-popular best friend, Naomi Jackson, to win the Fall Festival VIP tickets! But when Mya gets paired with mean Connie Tate, the biggest bully in the whole school, she finds herself in a tangle. Can Mya work with Connie to win the VIP tickets and get her best friend back? To find out, read the Magnificent Mya Tibbs, Spirit Week Showdown.



GREEK GODS BY RICK RIORDAN REVIEWED BY MIA GOVERNALI



This book has a lot of funny stories of Greek gods and goddesses. One of my favorite characters is Aphrodite, the goddess of love. Aphrodite really wants to be the center of attention all the time. When Athena gets a lot of attention for her weaving skills, Aphrodite gets really jealous and wants to be the person in the

spotlight so she decides to try weaving. She gets stuck in all her yarn and gets bound to her loom. Her husband, Hephaestus, has to cut her free.

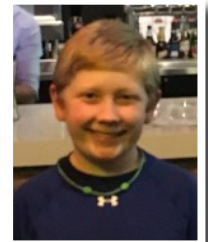
This book makes history really fun. I highly recommend it to those that are interested in Greek mythology and to all Percy Jackson fans. I give this book five out of five Mustangs.

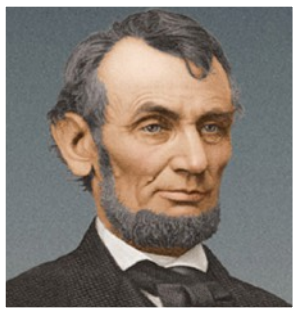


TAIT'S TASTY TELLING SKEETER'S RESTAURANT REVIEW BY TAIT LOVE

One of my family's many traditions is going to El Meson Restaurant right after a Rice sports game. El Meson is a Cuban restaurant in Rice Village with décor that includes modern art, a bull head and a javelina with an apple in its mouth. The menu consists of Cuban specialties like rice and beans, plantains, and scrumptious tapas as well as classics like nachos, enchiladas and calamari. At my family's recent visit, I enjoyed the *Enchiladas al Gusto* which has two enchiladas, one taco, and some rice and beans. To top it off, for dessert we shared a cake called *tres*

leches, which in English is translated to three milks. It was smooth, cool and creamy - it was really the highlight of the meal. The only downside of El Meson is there is almost no parking, so on the weekend, valet is mandatory. Overall, the food is muy bueno and the service is perfecto. I award El Meson four and a half out of five Mustangs.





ABRAHAM LINCOLN

BY CAROLINE THOMPSON

Let me introduce you to one of our most famous American presidents, Abraham Lincoln.

Lincoln was born on February 12, 1809, in a log cabin in Kentucky. He had a hard time as a kid. Abraham's mom died when he was only nine. The future president also moved often, from Kentucky to Indiana. Later, he moved from Indiana to Illinois when he was in his twenties.

Abraham wasn't just a president. His earlier jobs were shopkeeper and postmaster. Lincoln's political career started in 1834 when he was elected to the Illinois state legislature. He taught himself law and had many other political experiences.

On November 6, 1860, Abraham Lincoln was elected president. This

happened right as the Civil War was beginning. Lincoln led the country, freed the slaves and won the war.

To those in the north, ending slavery was great, but southerners were angry. One furious man, John Wilkes Booth, took his wrath too far. One night, Lincoln and his wife, Mary, were watching a play. John crept up behind them and shot Lincoln in the head. Abraham Lincoln died from the wound on April 15, 1865.

I'll end with a quote Abraham Lincoln *"You cannot escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today."*



IS SODA BAD FOR YOU? BY ETHAN JETT SHOR

Here are a few reasons why soda is bad for your health. One can of soda can have 10 teaspoons of sugar.

Over time, this can lead

to diabetes and other health problems such as cavities, and gum disease.

Caffeine is in most sodas. Caffeine can cause cancer, high blood pressure and an irregular heartbeat.

Sodas are also linked to obesity. Studies show that kids who drink soda are more likely to become obese than those who do not drink soda.

As you can see, soda is very bad for you. I hope you are convinced to not drink soda. Instead, try sparkling water!

VALENTINE'S DAY AROUND THE WORLD

BY SOFIA GIULIANI



Valentine's Day is a popular holiday not only in the U.S, but many other countries too. It began as a celebration of Saint Valentine, but it has become a worldwide celebration of friendship, and more importantly, love.

Some countries, such as India, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, and Iran have been banned or discouraged celebrating because of their more conservative religious practices.

In some Asian countries, women give men chocolates; on March 14, *White Day*, a holiday created by candy-makers. Men return the favor by giving the women white chocolates. Taiwan is the opposite. On Valentine's Day, men give the women chocolates and the women return them on White Day.

In Lebanon, in the city of Bayreuth people celebrate similar to Americans. Men take women out to eat and may buy them a gift; every city in Lebanon celebrates Valentine's Day differently. Valentine's Day is celebrated in many countries and is celebrated in many ways. It is a day for family and friends, but mostly, it is a celebration of love.

2017 RECAP BY PRISHA SHIVANI

- January 20- Donald Trump was sworn as the 45th president of the United States.
- January 21- Over 500,000 people join the woman's march in Washington. They speak out about statements by Donald Trump.
- February 5- New England Patriots beat the Atlanta Falcons 34-28 in Super Bowl 51
- February 26- Zootopia wins Oscar for Best Animated Feature Film
- April-24- Astronaut Peggy Whitson breaks a lifetime record of the most days in space.
- May 9- President Donald Trump fires James Comey. He fired him based on the suggestions of the several top officials
- June 2- U.S. withdraws from the Paris Climate Agreement.
- July 10- NASA makes the closest ever pass to the Jupiter Red Spot.
- August 21- A total Solar Eclipse crosses the U.S.
- August 25- Hurricane Harvey causes destruction all through Texas. Many houses, schools, and public places were destroyed.
- September 19- An Earthquake strikes Mexico
- November-1- The Houston Astros defeat the Los Angeles Dodgers in Game 7 of the World Series
- * Source- Google, Times for Kids

EVERYTHING YOU HAVE EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT MRS. HWANG

BY LAILA CHILAKAPATI AND MATTIE EDWARDS



We all know that Mrs. Hwang loves 3rd graders, but did you know that she also taught Middle Schoolers and High Schoolers? She was a tutor and a director of a tutoring service before she arrived at West University Elementary School. She loves math because it is another language and there is only one answer in math. Being at WUES has been a good experience for her so far because she

really likes her students and her classroom. Mrs. Hwang enjoys being a teacher because when her students are growing and learning from her, it also helps her to grow. She also enjoys watching movies and reading books like *Wonder* and *When My Name Was Keoko*. Mrs. Hwang lives in Houston with her family. Her two children inspire her every day and encourage her to continue teaching. One day when her children graduate from Bellaire High School, Mrs. Hwang hopes to travel with them to Europe. Mrs. Hwang is a great teacher and we welcome her to WUES.

MS. FINDLEY GOES TO AFRICA BY JOSEPH MAXIM

Q: Tell me about your mission trip to Africa?

A: I went to Zambia, Africa and worked with 10 orphan girls.

Q: Who did you help? A: 10 girls aged 3-8.

Q: Will you go next year?

A: Yes.

Q: Tell me about the kids that you helped?

A: I was proud of them. Four girls learned English in a year.

Q: How did you get started?

A: My friend, Sara, works at the organization.

Q: How long have you been teaching West U? A: 3 years.

Q: How long have you been teaching school? A: 4 years.

Q: Why did you start teaching?

A: I always wanted to be a teacher.

Q: Where did you start teaching?

A: Austin, Texas Real Learning Academy.



MATH CLUB BY TIMOTHY KIRICHENKO



Timothy- What is Math Club?

Mr. Higgs- Math Club is a community of like-minded people working towards excellence in math.

T- What competitions have you participated in?

Mr. H- We have participated in MOEMS and Noetic competitions.

T- Do you have any practice sessions?

Mr. H.- Yes, we do, but not all the time- usually Tuesdays!

T- What do you do at the practice sessions?

Mr. H- The members practice Math Logic mostly. Taras Kirichenko is the facilitator.

T- Is there a test to get in? Mr. H- Yes, there is a pretest.

T- How many people are accepted in the club? Mr. H- About thirty people total from grades 3 through 5.

El Dia del Amor y la Amistad by Jake Rodriguez



February 14th is celebrated in Mexico as *El Dia del Amor y la Amistad*, or "*The Day of Love and Friendship*". It is not just a holiday for couples to share their love but to show love and appreciation

for every one in your life.

One of the most fun traditions of Mexicans on Valentine's Day involves the traditional and well-known Mariachi band. A gentleman will visit the house of the lady he likes and bring a Mariachi band with him. They sing love songs and serenade the lady as she opens her window and hopefully win her heart. This tradition has existed for hundreds of years.

In schools, children often have contests and write poems about love and friendship. Much like in the United States, streets are filled with vendors selling flowers and candy, stores and restaurants are decorated in red and pink and heart shaped balloons are everywhere!

Winter by Gaia Giuliani



Imagine a glittering landscape dotted with giant pine trees. An indigo river flows before your eyes. White- tipped peaks loom in the background. There is a calming emptiness to the scenery, yet it has an elegant richness to it.

The air is so quiet, you can hear your own heart beating beneath your chest. No bird dares hum a sweet song, no deer dares to prance in the frosty meadow, in fear if disturbing the silence of it all.

The air you breathe is so crisp, so real. It smells so natural, so good to breathe.

The freshly fallen snow is fluffy and cold, as snow should be. Delicate crystals fall in flurries from the white cotton balls hovering beneath the endless blue bowl that is the sky.

DEAR KIRAN BY KIRAN MEHTA



Dear Kiran,

My best friend always wants me to tell her my test scores, and sometimes I'm embarrassed to tell her. If I do, she will compare my grade to her grade because she's super competitive. Help! 😞

- Not So Witty

Dear Not so Witty,

First of all, NEVER share your test grades with anyone except your family. Especially if your embarrassed! Don't let anyone bully you into giving up your test scores. If she really is your best friend, she should support you, not tear you down, even if she is super competitive. Try and find friends that appreciate you for who you are, and not use you to make them feel better about themselves. - Kiran

Dear Kiran,

My teacher is making our class read a book I've already read, and I'm really bored. How do I still enjoy reading class?

- Bored

Dear Bored,

Try refreshing your mind on the book, you might have already read it, but you won't remember all the details. If the book is a good read, you might enjoy reading it again, for example, many people love reading the Harry Potter series more than once, including me. Talk to your teacher about this and she/he can help you enjoy reading the book again. If you still don't like the book your reading, start another book you enjoy for free reading to entertain you. Remember, you might have read the book, but other people haven't, so don't spoil it for them.

- Kiran

KIDS KITCHEN

BY ABIGAIL MACRORY &
REMY PHAN

Welcome to Kids Kitchen, a new monthly column about food and recipes. Valentine's Day is right around the corner. Don't you want a treat for that special someone? We are going to tell you how to make Cupid's Killah Cookies, our very own recipe. We tried it in our kitchen. We hope you make this recipe and love it as much as we do!

Cupid's Killah Cookies

Ingredients

- 2 3/4 cups of all purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/4 cups butter
- 2 cups white sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 6 drops of red dye
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350° In a medium bowl stir together

the flour, baking soda and salt and set aside.

2. In a large bowl, cream together butter and 2 cups white sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs, vanilla and red dye. Gradually stir in the dry ingredients until just blended. Roll the dough into walnut sized balls and roll the balls in the powdered sugar. Place cookies 2 inches apart onto an ungreased cookie sheet and flatten slightly.



3. Bake for 10-12 minutes in the preheated oven. Allow cookies to cool on a baking sheet for 5 minutes.
4. Eat and Enjoy!

THE IMPORTANCE OF DOG OBEDIENCE TRAINING BY JACK REID



Training is key to keeping your relationship with your dog safe and happy. Trained dogs have happier lives and are more likely to be made part of the family. Also, they are more likely to spend time with their owners at parks, on picnics, and at other recreational places. All-in-all, it makes for a better K-9 citizen. Here are a few tips to help get you started.

To train your dog yourself, it is easiest to use a treat-oriented program. The basic skills are

sit, stay, and come. To learn the sit command, show your dog a treat and move it from above your dog's nose to behind its

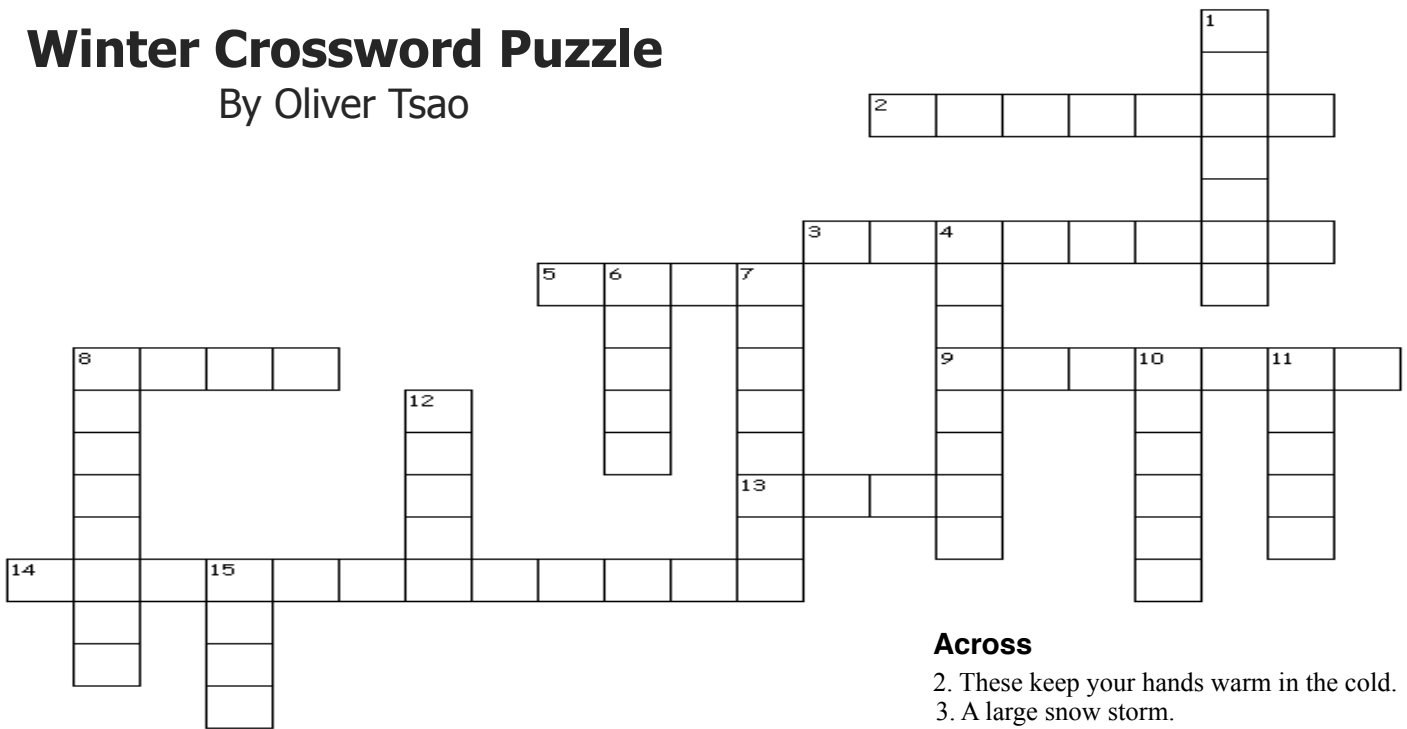
head. When he sits, give him the treat. To learn the stay command, make your dog sit, then put out your hand and say, "stay" several times in a happy tone. Then take 1 or 2 slow steps backward. Don't forget to give him the treat when he stays. Lastly, for the come command you should first put your dog on a leash. Next, hold the other end of the leash and say "come" repeatedly. Then, walk backwards quickly until your dog comes to you. When he catches up to you, give your dog praise and a treat. Be sure to reward good behavior and ignore bad behavior.

I hope these tips helped, and you found there are many reasons to pursue obedience training for your dog. There are hundreds of other things you can teach your dog, but you have to be diligent and consistent. These beginner's tip will help make a big difference in making your dog feel secure and confident. Remember, a trained dog makes a happy dog and a happy family.



Winter Crossword Puzzle

By Oliver Tsao



Across

2. These keep your hands warm in the cold.
3. A large snow storm.
5. A type of tree that is green in the Winter
8. Precipitation in the form of ice crystals.
9. A figure made of 2 or 3 large snowballs.
13. A base made of snow
14. These float when added to hot cocoa!

Down

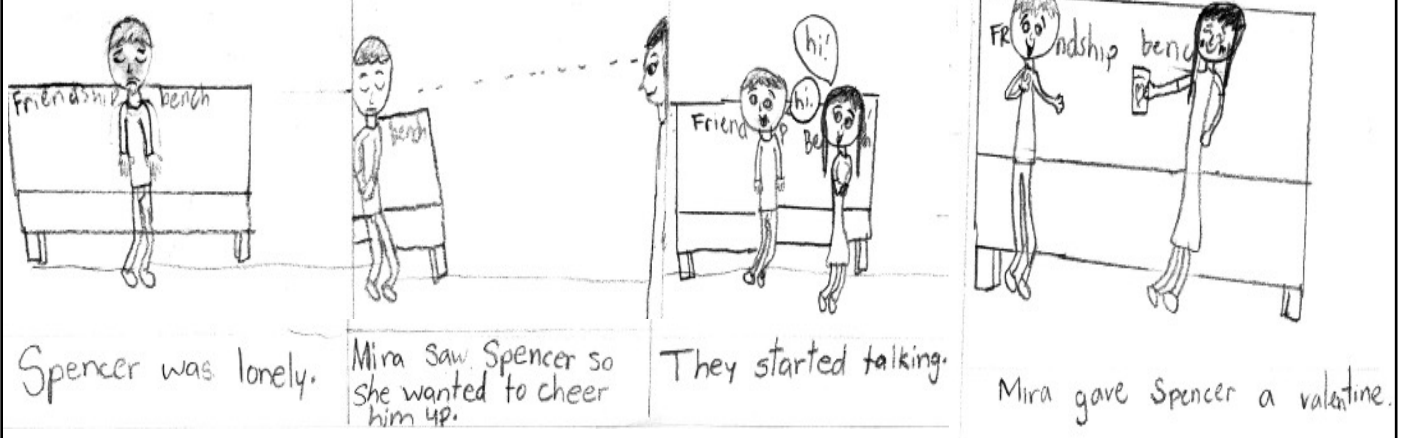
1. The first month of the year
4. a shoe with a blade for gliding
6. A home made of ice blocks
7. They keep your ears warm in winter.
8. A tightly packed sphere of snow.
10. The coldest of the four seasons.
11. Lay in snow, move legs and arms to make a snow_
12. Another name for hot chocolate
15. Kids use it to ride down snowy hills

It Is Snowing! by Emily Tang





Valentine's Day by Seriah Thomas and Kate



The Homework Miracle

Mattie Edwards 3rd grade Langston



WHY DOES FEBRUARY HAVE 28 DAYS AND SOMETIMES 29?

By Jonathan Barg.



February is the second month of the year. It is also the shortest month of the year, the only month that is less than 30 days and the only month to be affected by leap year.

Can you believe that February used to never exist? According to a legend, Romulus, the first king of Rome, created a 10-month lunar calendar that began in March and ended with December. It is unclear whether there were any months between December and March, but it's likely they were left off, because the wintertime was not important for the harvest.

The second king of Rome, [Numa Pompilius](#), decided to make the calendar more accurate and tied it to the [lunar year](#). Numa added two new months, January and February and each month had 28 days. But since even numbers were considered bad luck at the time, Numa added days to all the months of the year, but February. No one knows why February was left with 28 and remained an unlucky month. It may be related to the fact that Romans honored the dead in February and celebrated the Day of Purification on February 15.

In around 45 B.C., [Julius Caesar](#) decided to make the calendar sun-based, like the [Egyptian one](#). He added 10 days to the calendar year making it 365 days. Since March was still the first month of the year, February was the last one, so it remained the shortest month of 28 days. As you know, our typical 365-day year is based on the time it takes our planet to get around the sun. However, that number is approximate. In reality, it takes the earth 365 days and approximately 6 hours complete an orbital period. So, Julius Caesar and his astronomers rounded up the extra time to six hours and then added a day to the calendar every four years to balance the time difference between our calendar and the solar calendar.

When the Gregorian calendar was developed, they kept the months and numbers of days the same so that people wouldn't have to learn a new calendar.

HOUSTON'S FIRST SNOW DAYS OF 2018

On January 16, 2018, Houston had its first snow day of 2018, and the second snowfall this winter, which hardly ever happens! But instead of the fluffy and powdery snow, this was basically frozen rain and ice. It was fun to see it accumulating on the roofs and the ground, but it also made the roads slippery and icy, creating dangerous conditions.

Temperatures fell to as low 26° Fahrenheit, which is well below freezing (32° Fahrenheit). In fact, on Tuesday and Wednesday, it was colder here than in New York City, which is quite rare. Since the freeze continued into Wednesday, we didn't just get one snow day, we got TWO SNOW DAYS, making it the longest Martin Luther King Jr. weekend ever. Yay!

We bundled up in many layers and ventured outside to see the ice and snow on our block. The leaves were frozen, and there were icicles everywhere, which were pretty tasty, actually. But we didn't last too long outside, because it was too cold. To pass the time and to stay warm, we watched Wonder (highly recommend), played games (Scrabble and Slamwich), had lots of playdates with friends, baked brownies, and, of course, drank plenty of hot chocolate. What did you do during your "Snow Break"?

Valentines Word Search

C	H	O	C	O	L	A	T	E
E	R	T	D	N	L	E	E	O
E	I	U	E	O	C	P	U	H
E	O	T	R	P	E	M	Q	M
A	D	M	I	R	E	R	U	R
E	N	N	U	S	U	V	O	L
A	K	O	C	A	D	S	B	O
E	N	I	T	N	E	L	A	V
A	I	I	D	I	P	U	C	E

Word List:

RED

BOUQUET

PINK

ROSE

VALENTINE

ADMIRER

CUPID

LOVE

CHOCOLATE

Created by: James Gray and Marshal Edgecomb