

THE RIVEREDGE SCHOOL INQUIRER

The Official Newsletter of The Riveredge School



We are still learning in nature.

Developments at The Riveredge School

Everyone in the world is being affected by COVID-19. With social distancing being a part of our lives, here is a list of suggestions too keep you and your family busy and "out" in nature.

GO BIRDING: Spring is just about here and many birds are getting ready for their northern migration. Visit migratory bird sanctuaries, nature preserves, some of our state parks that are still open, or even just the back yard. *eBird* is an online tool that lets you explore the bird species in your area and learn what types of birds you can expect to see on your gbirding adventures. Now is an especially exciting time to use this tool as birds have started their migration north.

BUILD A TERRARIUM: While schools are cancelled, there are ways to bring nature-oriented arts and crafts to your kitchen table. Terrariums, for example, are a way to connect with a tiny piece of indoor nature. Terrariums are typically small glass containers where various plants can grow. While you may not want to be leaving the house to shop for supplies, you can construct a basic terrarium with what you have in your home—like a washed glass tomato sauce jar or an old glass bowl.

START PLANTING: What great opportunity to start you garden from seeds or starter plants. Digging out the weeds and playing in the dirt, and then experience the fruits of the labor teach the life cycle of the plant.

TAKE A VIRTUAL TOUR: Type virtual tour into your search engine. Museums, parks, national monuments, deep dives into the oceans can all be discovered.

CLEAN IT UP: Collect trash along your road, in a park, along the river, anywhere. Giving time to pay it forward is beneficial for social and emotional health, while serving a greater cause.

Please share your ideas of embracing nature during social distancing!

UPCOMING EVENTS:

PTO MEETING

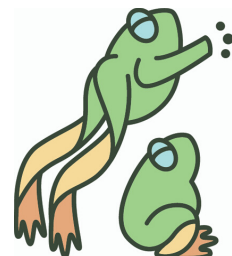
APRIL 20, 6PM VIA ZOOM

NO SCHOOL

MAY 25 - MEMORIAL DAY

ENROLLMENT

MATERIALS DUE APRIL 30 AT 4:00 PM.



Maintaining a Sense of Normalcy:

from [Responsive Classroom.com](http://ResponsiveClassroom.com)

Morning Meeting and closing circle are the bookends of the day. These powerful strategies ensure that children start and close their days with a sense of purpose and connectedness. These time-honored routines and rituals can provide a sense of normalcy for both teachers and students. ROLES teachers have been engaging students remotely for a few weeks now. Here are some ideas for how you can incorporate Morning Meeting and Closing Circle into your efforts too .

Outline a schedule for the day.

- Share the learning and assignments for the day.
- Include outdoor learning tasks.
- Remember to have realistic expectations. Academics are a way to create a sense of normalcy and continuity; be reasonable about what you and your children can achieve.
- Focus on building skills or reviewing key content, not on introducing new learning.

Connect with Your Children throughout the day.

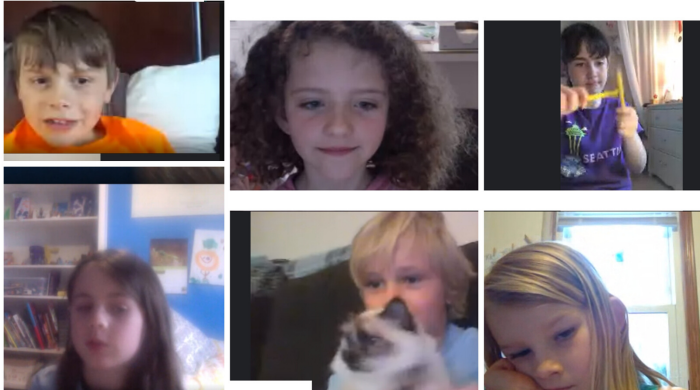
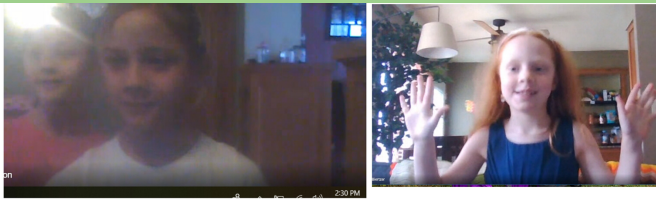
- Celebrate the small things to help you and your children with mental health and distract from anxiety.
- Have some fun together.
- Here are some ideas for fostering the relational glue that is laughing and feeling good together: read-alouds, mindful moments, jokes and riddles, etc.
- Above all, recognizing that this is a difficult time for students to process, flexibility may be the key.

End the Day Well with a Closing Check-In: Have your child/children share:

- How did today go?
- Reflect on new skills learned that can apply to both home and school.
- Follow up on challenges from earlier in the of the day.

We are seeing a barrage of online resources, and that is great. But the most important thing right now is for kids to feel seen, loved, cared for, and supported.

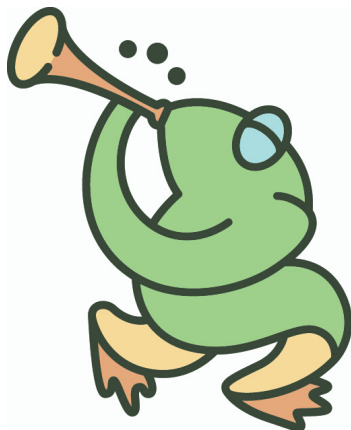




Images of
Distance Learning

Learning Updates

K/1 students and teachers have all found ways to keep connected to nature and each other while participating in distance learning. One of the very first assignments given to K/1 students involved them heading outdoors. Everyone, teachers included, was tasked with finding signs of spring in their own backyard. Students were then asked to take a picture of their findings and share them virtually with their classmates and teachers. There were pictures of flowers sprouting from the ground, buds beginning to grow on the trees, green grass, birds returning to make nests, animal tracks, rivers free of ice, and many other signs of spring. The best part of this activity was the connections and comments that students were able to make with the signs of spring their classmates found. The K/1 community will continue to find ways to support connections to nature and one another as the weeks go on.



Second Graders have been doing a great job of adapting to our new Distance Learning routines! They connect with each other each day through posts and comments in Google Classroom, and there are opportunities to talk and enjoy each other's company during Google Hangouts for a read-aloud, Morning Meeting, and Closing Circle three times a week. Second Grade students are still infusing the outdoors into their daily learning through 'Wild' math assignments, nature journaling, and personal and class inquiry prompts. Ms. G. truly values the half hour she gets to spend conferencing with each student throughout the week to continue to build relationships, set goals, and guide learning.

Third and fourth graders have been adjusting to our new distance learning routines. We continue to include nature journaling as a regular part of our learning, with students discovering new "sit spots" in their backyards and neighborhoods. Students have also been exploring new hiking destinations and documenting spring changes in their journals. Mr. Kempf's hiking updates have provided fun mysteries for students to solve, as they guess his location and provide evidence for their guesses. Daily Morning Meetings and Closing Circles are helping us stay connected as a class community.