



Van Voorhis Elementary School

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<http://www.am.dodea.edu/knox/vanvoorhis/index.htm>

Principal's News

Many of you may have noticed the red bulletin board next to the main office that says "VV Lions Continuously Improve." One of the important themes of our school is that children are taught to strive to improve, to set goals and to try their best. In fact, this theme is a basic tenet of our organization, DODEA, or the Department of Defense Education Activity.

Dates to remember

- ◆ Oct. 2 - No school
- ◆ Oct. 5-9 - Fall Break
- ◆ Oct. 12. - Columbus Day - No school

Our school is also expected to set goals and strive for improvement. Our two goals are based primarily on data from our local assessments as well as from our annual Terra Nova test. All grade levels participate in the local assessments. These assessments are created by our teachers and are given twice a year, usually at the beginning of the year and the end of the year. The Terra Nova test is given to only third graders once a year, usually in late February or early March. After much analysis of all of our data, the school determined our goals would be in the areas of problem solving and writing. Those are not the only areas with which we are concerned. We still teach to our DoDEA standards and implement our curriculum. However, as a school, we review our progress using the available data to determine our areas of need. This review helps us create a comprehensive plan, or Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP).

The CSIP is monitored and updated yearly. A team of teachers, parents and active duty military members from the school make up the team who officially help to ensure the plan's implementation. The school improvement team is always open to new ideas and willing to take any volunteers from our parents and active duty sponsors. If you are interested in serving on that team, please contact Ms. Gibson.

Our faculty and staff take great pride in our efforts to ensure that our students, or your children, are receiving the best education we can provide. That is one of the main reasons we continuously evaluate ourselves and our programs. The next time you are in the building, stop by that bulletin board outside the main office and read over the two goals and the information there. We will be placing more information on the board as the year continues.

CSIT needs military member

The Continuous School Improvement Team is still in need of a military member. If interested, contact Mrs. Gibson at 624-5854.

For lunch menus, transportation information and other district-wide info:
<http://www.am.dodea.edu/knox/FKCSCO/Pages/sitemap.htm>

We worry about what a child will become tomorrow, yet we forget that he is someone today. ~Stacia Tauscher

Safety issues

We conduct several different safety exercises throughout the year. These include fire drills, tornado drills and even lock down procedures. We always want to ensure the safety of our students and any visitors to our building. We must conduct these exercises periodically throughout the year to ensure all know what to do in case of an emergency. Practice helps to alleviate fear of those involved, especially our littlest of students. If your student comes home and reports that they had a drill, know that this may very well be true. Please question them about it and how it went. Ask them how they felt and if they felt secure. If you ever have any questions, please do not hesitate to call the school.

Current contact information

It is imperative that we have current phone numbers and e-mails with which to reach the parents and guardians of our students. Please make sure the front office has your preferred e-mail and phone numbers on file in case you need to be

Lunch account payments

Please insure that the payment you send with your child is in an envelope with their first and last name on the front. This is essential to having the correct account credited with payment.

Green Committee needs you

A Green Committee is in the making at Van Voorhis and we need a parent volunteer to join us. This group will meet monthly to develop ways to be more environmentally friendly and aware in our daily efforts at school. If interested, contact Mrs. Gibson at 624-5854.

New phone greeting

You may have noticed when you have called the school recently that we are answering the phone with a new response. You now will hear "DoDEA Americas, Van Voorhis School. May I help you?" This is reflective of an effort in our organization, DoDEA, or the Department of Defense Education Activity, to align all of schools worldwide in a similar structure and format. Please bear with us as we make this transition as it takes time to embed change. As always, our goal is to provide you with service and communication in the very best way possible.

Sewing and golf for school-aged children

MWR is offering sewing and golf instruction for school-aged children. Registration deadline is Friday, Sept. 25. Read all about it at [EDGE activities](#).

Visit us on the Web at <http://www.am.dodea.edu/knox/vanvoorhis/index.htm>

Contact the [Webmaster](#) with problems or suggestions for items you'd like to see added to our site.

NOTE: Normally, newsletters will be sent electronically to your preferred e-mail address. Please insure that the school office has your preferred e-mail on file. Newsletters can also be accessed on our website via a link on the About Our School page. We encourage you to contact us with comments/suggestions for future newsletters.

Academic resources

Along with our Language Arts Wiki at www.vvreads.pbworks.com, there is a wealth of learning resources on our website. Click <http://www.am.dodea.edu/knox/vanvoorhis/index.htm> and select the Student Resources tab at the top of the page. You will find various online learning sites for your child to use to practice and refine their academic skills. These are especially useful during school breaks to help your child maintain their skills. And our site can be accessed from any computer during your travels.

Reading Strategies

When your child is struggling at unknown words when reading, instead of telling them the word, remind them of the strategies below. This will increase their independence by reminding them what good readers do.

At unknown words, Ready Readers...

Look at the picture. Think about the story. What word that starts like that might make sense?



Re-read the sentence up to the word and say the first sound of the word. The word might POP into your head.



Read past the word to see if the words that follow give a clue.



Go back to the word.

Do you know a word that looks like that?

candy

Are there chunks you know in the word?

Try a word that starts like that. Does it make sense and sound right when you read the word in the sentence?



If you try all of these things and still don't know the word, ask for help.



Reading Counts!

Reading Counts! is a reading incentive program where students choose and read books for enjoyment and then test and earn points. Students are rewarded with certificates, recognition on the Morning Show, and placement of their photo on the Reading Counts! board as various point levels are reached. Students can read books from home or from Barr Library. Check out the Media Center tab on our website for titles and levels of books on which your child can test.

Return Internet Access forms

If your child brought home a **DoDEA Computer and Internet Access Agreement for Students**, please sign and return this form in order for your child to use computers at school. Your child cannot access any programs on our computers unless this form is returned.

I am a good reader!

Before reading, I think about:

- The title and the pictures
- What I already know about the topic
- My predictions about the text
- My purpose for reading
 - finding information
 - enjoying the story
 - remembering the events
 - learning about the characters

While I am reading, I:

- Ask myself, "Does this make sense?"
- Backtrack and reread when the meaning isn't clear
- Read on and reread when I come to hard words
- Build pictures in my mind
- Question aspects of the story (character behaviors, author's use of words, setting, plot)
- Use what I know and what I read to understand the actions of characters

After reading, I:

- Think about the author's message
- Think about experiences I've had and other books I've read that are similar to the story
- Reflect on my predictions
- Record new things I've learned
- Talk about the book with a friend