

120 FCAT Activities

adapted from 180 Days of FCAT Activities, *Pensacola News Journal*

On the next few pages you will find 120 newspaper activities in the areas of Reading, Language Arts and Math where you can use the *St. Petersburg Times* in your classroom to prepare your students for the FCAT. Feel free to pick and choose among the activities in order to meet your students' individual needs. Each activity is marked with the Sunshine State Standards for Reading & Math (3rd-5th grades and 6th-8th grades). Many of these activities can be completed in less than 15 minutes and make excellent warm-up or closing activities for your class. Some activities can take longer – be sure to take note of several activities that require 2-4 days to complete.

DAY 1

What's Ahead? (LAA121, LAB121 - LAA131, LAB131)

Cut out a variety of headlines (only!) from the newspaper. Have students pick a headline and work with a partner. Using the headlines, they predict the content and/or purpose of the article/editorial. Pairs can write a short summary of what they think the article is about. Great A.M. journal writing activity! Remind students to look up any words they do not know.

DAY 2

>More than, <Less than : Hundreds to Thousands (MAA221) (Gr. 3-5)

Find a number or numbers in today's *St. Petersburg Times* that is/are less than 1997 but more than 100. How many in the thousands? Hundreds?

DAY 3

>More than, <Less than: Millions to Billions (MAA221) (Grades 4-6)

Find numbers in today's *St. Petersburg Times* that are more than a million. Any ten millions? Any hundred millions? Any billions? Have students create a place value chart to record the numbers they found (and note the page # next to each one!)

DAY 4

Long Vowel "A" /Digraphs (LAA122 & following directions) (Grades 1-5)

Have students locate the long "A" sound in words (ai, ay, a"consonant"e, etc.) in the *St. Petersburg Times*. Assign them an article or a specific page. Divide class into small teams or pairs. Using a timer, give them 5 minutes to look for them. One team member is responsible for circling the words, another writes down the words found, underlining the vowel digraph. Teams can also record their words in columns; labeled "ai", "ay", a"consonant" e, etc. Teams get a point for each one found and recorded correctly.

DAY 5

Expanded Form (MAA221 – MAA131)

Find at least 5 numbers in today's *St. Petersburg Times* which have more than five digits. Write these numbers in expanded form. Take note of the page #s where you found them.

DAY 6

Match, Set, Game (LAA122 - LAA132)

Find an article that has a detailed description of a place or event. Draw a picture based on exactly what is written in the news story. Make a game out of it. Cut out news stories and arrange them out of order with the pictures. Have students try to match the pictures with the stories. Students can work in teams. Make this a monthly event!

DAY 7

Beginning Digraphs & Blends (LAA122) (Grades 1-5)

According to the needs of your students, have them locate beginning phonic sounds (ph, str, thr, scr, sh, ch, fl, etc.) in a news article. You may want to set students up in teams or pairs. Teams get points for finding them correctly and sounding them out. You also can assign an unusual sound and challenge all teams to find one!

DAY 8

UV (Ultra Violet) Rays (MAA322 – MAA332)

Look at the UV index numbers for 10 AM, Noon, 2 PM & 4 PM today. What is the average UV index for today? Based on this number, what is the need for sun protection?

DAY 9

Measuring Estimate (MAB121, MAA421 – MAB231, MAB232)

See if you can find the longest word on the front page of the *St. Petersburg Times*. Measure how long it is (in inches & centimeters). Using that word, what would you estimate the width of the newspaper to be (folded out)? How would you figure it out? For older students, have them measure it in inches and convert it to centimeters.

DAY 10

D.E.A.R. Share/Main Idea (LAA122, LAA224 – LAA132, LAA234)

As an alternative to reading books during DEAR (Drop Everything And Read) time, have students find an article that is interesting to them and then read it. Encourage students to then reread the article and underline any important facts or details. Give them a visual organizer so they can write out the 5 W's (Who, What, When, Where, Why – and How!) Then, have students share their articles with the class, retelling briefly what the article is about (the main idea), and why they chose that particular article. This activity encourages your students to be verbally articulate!

DAY 11

Sun and Moon – August (MAB321 - MAB331)

According to the times listed on the weather page, how many hours of daylight will there be tomorrow? How many hours of darkness tonight? How many hours of the day is the moon visible? How many days until the next Full Moon?

DAY 12

Suffix City (LAA123–LAA132)

Comparison of Characters (LAA227, LAE123– LAE132)

-ful, -less suffixes can describe something or someone who has an over abundance or a lack of something. Find two articles in the *St. Petersburg Times* written about a person. Compare the two “characters” and make a comprehensive list of their “-ful”s and “-less”s based on the information/details in the articles. Explain why you think so.

DAY 13

National Forecast – Map Reading – summer (LAA122 – LAA132)

In which areas of the country do you find a forecast for showers? Thunderstorms? Rain? Flurries? Snow? Ice? Use the map symbol key. Refer to the following areas: Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, Northwest, and Southwest.

DAY 14

Rectangle Perimeter (MAB121 – MAB131)

Find a rectangular ad in today's *St. Petersburg Times*. If you measure two of the sides (length & width), can you tell what the perimeter is? Measure in inches & centimeters.

DAY 15

Test word: data

Long-term FCAT activity: High & Low Temps (MAD121, MAE133, MAE331) (Grades 6-8)

Have each student pick a state; track the high and low temperatures for its capital city; find the range and averages for a month. Create individual and group data tables; summarize by categorizing states with similar temperature patterns (whole class activity). Use a computer spread-sheet program to keep track of data and display results.

DAY 16

Main Idea (LAA221 – LAA231)

Teach your students, using the *St. Petersburg Times*, that the main idea of an article or reading passage is usually evident in the first or second paragraph. The last paragraph or two will usually wrap it up. Give your students article clippings without their headlines.

Teachers: Keep the headlines and spread them out on a table for students to match up with their articles after they've finished their work. Have them determine the main idea in pairs, then have them work up to doing it individually. Pair students who struggle with finding the main idea with a stronger partner. Their peer tutor will model a pattern of success.

DAY 17

Extreme Temps – August (MAA122, MAA322, MAE122 – MAA132, MAA332, MAE132)

Located at the bottom of U.S. Cities' temperature reports on the weather page, read the extreme high and low temperatures for today. What is the difference between them? What is the average of these two temperatures? Does this average correlate with temperatures around the country?

Geography challenge: Locate the extreme temp cities on the U.S. map. How far apart are they? Use the mileage key and a ruler to find out!

DAY 18

Find it! (LAA121)

Using the index on the front page and/or scanning the *St. Petersburg Times* have students find:

- a word puzzle (sections B or E – crosswords, jumble)

DAY 19

Peruse for Patterns (MAD121 – MAD131)

Look for number patterns in today's *St. Petersburg Times*. Will you find them in the sports section, on the weather page, money section, or stock listings? Look for a pattern of at least 3-4 numbers. What comes next? You figure it out, then try to stump your neighbor! Discuss patterns found in class. Note newspaper page #'s.

DAY 20

Context Clues (LAA122 - LAA132)

Have individuals or pairs read an article and locate at least 3 unknown vocabulary words. Before reading, give students a mini-lesson on constructing meaning using context clues. Students circle each vocabulary word with a different color and then underline the clues for that word in the same color. Assign students to write the word and its meaning with a magic marker on a piece of 8 1/2" X 11" paper, in big letters, and post it along with the news article. Encourage students to use these words in their journal, expository, or creative writing assignments. You don't really learn them until you use them!

DAY 21

Sunny Florida (MAE122 – MAE132)

Find the average, mean, and median temperatures for Florida cities for today in the Travelers' Forecast (Weather page). For an extended project, do this activity in the summer, fall, winter, and spring. Save your results for graphing in the spring!

DAY 22

Rhyming Pairs (Phonograms) (LAA123)

Challenge students to find rhyming pairs of words in an article or section of the *St. Petersburg Times*. Instruct students to circle the words and keep track of the ones they find on a separate piece of paper, divided into columns. How many kinds of rhymes can they find? Use this rhyme bank later to create poetry!

DAY 23

National Forecast – Map Reading –(LAA122 – LAA132)

Using the color-coded temperature range chart located above the U.S. map, which area/state/city shows temperatures in the 100's? 80's? 60's? 50's?

DAY 24

Positive Press (LAA221 - LAA132)

Find an article in today's *St. Petersburg Times* which reports about something good that happened. What qualities does this happening or person exemplify? (perseverance, humanity, endurance, dependability, responsibility, humility, honesty, etc.) Give details from the article to support each theme you choose.

Teachers: Create a "Positive Press" bulletin board!

DAY 25**River Stages: Drought or Flood? (MAA322 – MAA332)**

Pick one or two rivers on the list included in the weather page. What is the difference between the actual reading and the flood height? From these readings, can you tell if any of these rivers are near drought or flood stages? Discuss your results. Compare river stages during different seasons.

DAY 26**Find it! (LAA121)**

Using the index on the front page and/or scanning the *St. Petersburg Times* have students find a man who died who is over 65 years old. How many children did he have? What is one interesting fact about his life?

DAY 27**Newspaper Area (MAB121 – MAB131)**

Find a large photo in your favorite section of the *St. Petersburg Times*. Measure and draw lines at 1 inch intervals along the base and side of the picture, creating a grid pattern. Using these 1 inches boxes, what is the approximate area of the photograph?

DAY 28**Long Vowel “E” /Digraphs (LAA122 & following directions) (Grades 1-5)**

Have students locate the long “E” sound in words (e, ee, ea, ei, etc.) in the *St. Petersburg Times*. Assign them an article or a specific page. Divide class into small teams or pairs. Using a timer, give them 5 minutes to look for them. One team member is responsible for circling the words, another writes down the words found, underlining the vowel digraph. Teams can also record their words in columns; labeled “ee”, “ea”, “ei”, etc. Teams get a point for each one found and recorded correctly.

DAY 29

Global Extremes/Sept. (MAA122, MAA322, MAE122 – MAA132, MAA332, MAE132) Check out the world cities listing of “Hi” and “Lo” temperatures today. What is the lowest temperature? The highest? Can you find a higher or lower temperature in any of the U.S. cities? Find the difference and average of the high & low temps.

DAY 30**Divulge the Dialogue (LAB223 – LAB233)**

Find an article in today’s local section that includes quotes/dialogue. Pick out them out and take note of who was speaking. Then, recreate the conversation that might have taken place between the reporter and the person/people being interviewed. Be sure to add correct punctuation, quotation marks in appropriate places, and add “speaker tags”, such as ...the reporter questioned, asked the reporter, replied Mr. White, answered Mr. White, etc.

DAY 31**Average Chance of Rain – September (MAE122 – MAE132)**

What is the average chance of rain this week? Use the information on the weather page to calculate your answer.

DAY 32**Ending Digraphs & Blends (LAA122) (Grades 1-5)**

According to the needs of your students, have them locate ending phonic sounds (-ing, -ft, -lm, -mp, -sp, -tion, -ies, -ent, -ment, etc.) or plural endings in a news article. You may want to set students up in teams to look for plural endings/other ending sounds. Teams get points for finding them correctly and sounding them out. You also can assign an unusual sound and challenge all teams to find one!

DAY 33**Multiple Mania 2 (MAA521 - MAA531)**

You’re on a search for multiples in today’s *St. Petersburg Times*. Find multiples of the number 2! What is a multiple? (Look it up in the glossary at the back of your math book). Circle the multiples you find and share them with the class.

DAY 34**Pro/Con Prefix Power (LAA123 – LAA132)**

There are a lot of ways to say “no, not, or opposite”: Anti-, dis-, im-, in-, mis-, non-, un-, de-. Students might have more success looking for these prefixes in an editorial, letters to the Editor, or the comics. Prefixes should be circled and the root word underlined. Students can then see if any of the prefixes and root words can be mixed & matched. Model this for them. Pairs or teams can find them and then see how many words they can create with all the roots & prefixes. Do they know what all the words mean? Use the dictionary!

DAY 35**Perfect Perimeter (MAB121 – MAB131)**

Find a square ad or photo in today’s *St. Petersburg Times*. If you measure one of the sides, can you tell what the perimeter is? Measure in inches & centimeters.

DAY 36**With a Purpose (LAA222 – LAA232)**

News articles inform with many different purposes: public service, honor community members, entertain, persuade / opinion, etc. Have your students read a variety of articles and challenge them to determine the purpose of them being in print/or what was the writer’s purpose? First, show your student examples of articles with different purposes. Talk about key vocabulary words that give the reader clues!

DAY 37**Estimate the Ad Space (MAB121 – MAB131)**

Find an ad you like in the local section of today’s *St. Petersburg Times*. Using estimation, how many ads of its size could fill one page of the newspaper? (Dimensions for fillable space should be about 11 _ “ X 20”).

DAY 38**Find it! (LAA121)**

Using the index on the front page and/or scanning the *St. Petersburg Times* have students find any articles about education. Extension: Have students share articles with class or write an editorial about the issue discussed

DAY 39**Tide Patterns (MAA122, MAA322 – MAA132, MAA332)**

Check out the high & low tides for your city this week. What patterns can you find? Compare all high tides, all low tides, and the difference between highs & lows over the seven-day period. Explain your findings.

DAY 40**Main Idea (LAA221 – LAA231)**

Give your students article clippings without their headlines. Have them determine the main idea in pairs, then have them work up to doing it individually. Pair students who struggle with finding the main idea with a stronger partner. Their peer tutor will model a pattern of success. Keep the headlines and spread them out on a table for students to match up with their articles after they’ve finished their work. Teachers: Be sure to teach or reinforce that the main idea of an article or reading passage is usually evident in the first or second paragraph. The last paragraph or two will usually wrap it up.

DAY 41**Find it! (LAA121)**

Using the index on the front page and/or scanning the *St. Petersburg Times* have students find an article about computers. Have them write down three facts they learned from the article.

DAY 42**How Do They Compare? (MAE122 – MAE132)**

Find the average, mean, mode, and median temperatures for Florida cities for today on the weather page. How do these compare to other states? Give specific information about the differences between two states and write a short paragraph explaining your results.

DAY 43

Is that a Fact? Furniture (LAA226 – LAA238)

Look through the classifieds & other sections and peruse the furniture ads. Which do you think is factual information or is a subjective opinion given by the owner or furniture store? Underline the facts in black, the opinions in red. Discuss as a class and make a two-column table comparing the fact vs. opinion words/phrases.

DAY 44

Tickle Your Elbow Awards (MAA122, MAE321 – MAA132, MAE131)

Have students turn to the comics and give them 5 minutes to read all of the strips. Then have them rank the five funniest by numbering them 1 to 5, with 1 being the funniest. Write their #1 choices on the board. Then students can graph the results of the class poll and compute the percentage of the vote each strip received. Make bar and/or pie graphs. Extend by asking for range, mode, and median.

DAY 45

Long Vowel “I” /Digraphs (LAA122 & following directions) (Grades 1-5)

Have students locate the long “I” sound in words (i”consonant”e,) in the *St. Petersburg Times*. Assign them an article or a specific page. Divide class into small teams or pairs. Using a timer, give them 5 minutes to look for them. One team member is responsible for circling the words, another writes down the words found, underlining the vowel digraph. Teams can also record their words in columns; labeled “ee”, “ea”, “ei”, etc. Teams get a point for each one found and recorded correctly.

DAY 46

Sun and Moon (MAB122 – MAB132)

According to the times listed on the weather page, how many hours of daylight will there be tomorrow? How many hours of darkness tonight? How many hours of the day is the moon visible? How many days until the next Full Moon?

DAY 47

Double O find (LAA122 & following directions) (Grades K-2)

Students are looking for short “oo” sound as in good and the long “oo” sound as in “soon”. See Day 45 for management ideas.

DAY 48

National Forecast – Map Reading – fall (LAA122 – LAA132)

In which areas of the country do you find a forecast for showers? Thunderstorms? Rain? Flurries? Snow? Ice? Use the map symbol key. Refer to the following areas: Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, Northwest, and Southwest.

DAY 49

Find it! (LAA121)

Using the index on the front page and/or scanning the *St. Petersburg Times* have students find:

- time & place for a local football, basketball, baseball, or soccer games. Extension: Have them predict the outcome and chart their predictions. Have students follow up by posted final scores and when all games have been completed—analyze which students predicted most accurately.

DAY 50

Extreme Temps (MAA122, MAA322, MAE122 – MAA132, MAA332, MAE132)

Located at the bottom of U.S. Cities’ temperature reports on the weather page, read the extreme high and low temperatures for today. What is the difference between them? What is the average of these two temperatures? Does this average correlate with temperatures around the country?

Geography challenge: Locate the extreme temp cities on the U.S. map. How far apart are they? Use the mileage key and a ruler to find out!

DAY 51

D.E.A.R. Share/Main Idea (LAA122, LAA224 – LAA132, LAA234)

As an alternative to reading books during DEAR time, have students find an article that is interesting to them and then read it. Encourage students to then reread the article and underline any important facts or details. Give them a visual organizer so they can write out the 5 W’s (Who, What, When, Where, Why – and How!)

Then, have students share their articles with the class, retelling briefly what the article is about (the main idea), and why they chose that particular article. This activity encourages your students to be verbally articulate!

DAY 52

Presents! (MAA322, MAB321, MAE121 – MAA332, MAB331, MAE131)

You like to do your holiday shopping REALLY early. Make a list of who you need to shop for first. Then, make a wish list of what you'd like to get them. Now look for these items in today's *St. Petersburg Times*. If what you're looking for isn't there, you may need to adjust your list. Buy only one item for each person on your list. What did you spend? Have the class create a graph showing how much they spent on each person, or compare how much each student spent all together.

DAY 53

Play by Play (LAA225, LAB223 - LAB131, LAB233)

Read an article about a sporting event in today's sports section. Pretend you are the sportscaster for this event. Write an "ad lib" of what you might say during the course of this game. Be sure to use quotation marks and punctuation appropriately. Include a second commentator for a challenge!

DAY 54

Sunny Florida (MAE122 – MAE132)

Find the average, mean, and median temperatures for Florida cities for today on the weather page. For an extended project, do this activity in the summer, fall, winter, and spring. Save your results for graphing in the spring!

DAY 55

Personal Suffix City (LAA123 – LAA132)

Brainstorm a list of -ful and -less words with your class. Use the *St. Petersburg Times* to help you find some. Divide your paper in half and label each column "ful" and "less". Next to the "ful" which describes you (circle it), write its corresponding "less" on the other side & vice versa. Share your results with classmates if you want to.

DAY 56

Pairing Up (MAA322 – MAA331)

Your teacher wants you to read the obituaries in small groups of equal size. Count the number of obituaries and figure out how many students will be in each group. Due to an odd number, some groups may have one more or one less than another. Have each group share something they learned from their reading.

DAY 57

Find it! (LAA121)

Using the index on the front page and/or scanning the *St. Petersburg Times* have students find:

- programs on Discovery Channel tonight – take note of times & titles. (You can select other channels).

DAY 58

Sequencing - Predict the Plot (LAA221 - LAA231)

Read a news/feature article in today's *St. Petersburg Times*. Write out the events of the story in the order in which they happened, allowing space between each line. Cut apart each event on the paper into strips. Mix them up. Exchange strips with someone else. Using the article, put the strips in order (number them).

Challenge: Without the article, try to put the events in order. Then, use the article to see if you're right!

Teachers: You may want to save all your students' work – keep event strips and corresponding articles in envelopes for students to work on anytime!

DAY 59

National Forecast – Map Reading – fall II (LAA122 – LAA132)

Using the color-coded temperature range chart located above the U.S. map, which area/state/city shows temperatures in the 90's? 70's? 60's? 50's? 40's?

DAY 60**Is that a Fact? Clothing (LAA226 – LAA238)**

Look through the classifieds & other sections and peruse the Department store ads. Which do you think is factual information or is a subjective opinion given by the store advertiser? Underline the facts in black, the opinions in red. Discuss as a class and make a two-column table comparing the fact vs. opinion words/phrases.

DAY 61**River Stages: Drought or Flood? – fall (MAA322 – MAA332)**

Pick one or two rivers on the list included in the weather page. What is the difference between the actual reading and the flood height? From these readings, can you tell if any of these rivers are near drought or flood stages? Discuss your results. Compare river stages during different seasons.

DAY 62**What's Ahead? (LAA121, LAB121 - LAA131, LAB131)**

Cut out a variety of headlines (only!) from the *St. Petersburg Times*. Have students pick a headline and work with a partner. Using the headlines, they predict the content and/or purpose of the article/editorial. Pairs can write a short summary of what they think the article is about. Great AM journal writing activity! Remind students to look up any words they do not know.

DAY 63**Peruse for Patterns (MAD121 – MAD131)**

Look for number patterns in today's *St. Petersburg Times*. Will you find them in the sports section, on the weather page, money section, or stock listings? Look for a pattern of at least 3-4 numbers. What comes next? You figure it out, then try to stump your neighbor! Discuss patterns found in class. Note newspaper page #'s.

DAY 64**Enticing Editorial (LAA223–LAA232)**

Read 2 or more news editorials carefully. What is his/her viewpoint? If you disagree with it, write your own editorial persuading the reader to go the other way.

DAY 65**Fact & Opinion (LAA226–LAA238)**

Look through the editorial(s) and underline the facts in black and the opinions in red. Discuss with class or share with a partner or small group.

DAY 66**Multiple Mania 3 (MAA521 - MAA531)**

You're on a search for multiples in today's *St. Petersburg Times*. Find multiples of the number 3! Circle the multiples you find and share them with the class.

DAY 67**Fractional Ads (MAA122, MAB122 - MAA132, MAB132)**

Find ads in today's *St. Petersburg Times*, which are a $\frac{_}{_}$ page, $\frac{_}{_}$ page, $\frac{1}{8}$ page, $\frac{1}{12}$ of a page, $\frac{1}{24}$ of a page, and $\frac{1}{60}$ of a page. Label each one with the correct fraction, color over the ad lightly with crayon or colored pencil, then paste onto another page in the *St. Petersburg Times*. You will need a ruler to do this activity.

DAY 68**Jeopardy Answers (LAA225 - LAA235)**

Stories about top players will tip off any sports season. Look for these stories in the sports section. Challenge your students to construct the questions the reporter may have asked in getting the information for the story.

DAY 69**Shape Up! (MAC121, MAC222 – MAC131, MAC231)**

How many different shapes can you find in today's *St. Petersburg Times*? Label them by name (square, rectangle, triangle, circle, trapezoid, etc.) Look carefully! Set the timer for 10-15 minutes. Challenge students to find, circle, and count all the shapes they can find. Student who finds the most wins! Prizes also for finding the most unusual shapes!

DAY 70

Is that a Fact? Cars (LAA226 – LAA238)

Look through the classifieds and peruse the car ads. Which do you think is factual information or a subjective opinion given by the car owner or dealership? Underline the facts in black, the opinions in red. Discuss as a class and make a two-column table comparing the fact vs. opinion words/phrases.

DAY 71

TV Time (MAB122 – MAB132)

Look through today's TV listings in the *St. Petersburg Times*. Circle all the programs that you'd be interested in watching. If you watched all of these programs, how many hours would you be watching TV? Compare your results on Tuesday & Thursday. Create a Venn diagram to compare what you'd be watching on both days.

DAY 72

Find it! (LAA121)

Using the index on the front page and/or scanning the *St. Petersburg Times* have students find:

- an ad for your favorite dog (Have students read the ad and explain why they want that dog.)

DAY 73

Where is it happening? – Two Day Activity – DAY ONE (MAD121, MAE123 – MAD131, MAE131, MAA431)

Make a list of all the countries mentioned in the *St. Petersburg Times* in the next two days. If a country is mentioned twice, three times, etc., make a note of it. Make a data table and bar graph of the results showing "Where the news is happening". Is there a pattern? Can you predict who will be featured in next week's news?

DAY 74

Where is it happening? – Two Day Activity – DAY TWO (MAD121, MAE123 – MAD131, MAE131, MAA431)

Make a list of all the countries mentioned in the *St. Petersburg Times* in the next two days. If a country is mentioned twice, three times, etc., make a note of it. Make a data table and bar graph of the results showing "Where the news is happening". Is there a pattern? Can you predict who will be featured in next week's news?

DAY 75

Beginning Digraphs & Blends (LAA122) (Grades 1-5)

According to the needs of your students, have them locate beginning phonic sounds (ph, str, thr, scr, sh, ch, fl, etc.) in a news article. You may want to set students up in teams or pairs. Teams get points for finding them correctly and sounding them out. You also can assign an unusual sound and challenge all teams to find one!

DAY 76

Degree Turn Around

Find a photo you like in today's *St. Petersburg Times*. How many degrees do you have to turn it so it is upside down? Rotate it around so it is right-side up again? Where would your picture be if you rotated it 45 degrees to the right? Your neighbor or teacher can check your work.

DAY 77

High vs. Low Tides (MAA122, MAA322 – MAA132, MAA332)

What is the time difference between high and low tide today in five towns/cities near you? (Include difference between AM & PM low tides).

DAY 78

Context Clues (LAA122 - LAA132)

Have individuals or pairs read an article and locate at least 3 unknown vocabulary words. Before reading, give students a mini-lesson on constructing meaning using context clues from the sentence or sentences around the word. Students circle each vocabulary word with a different color and then underline the clues for that word in the same color. Assign students to write the word and its meaning with a magic marker on a piece of 8 1/2" X 11" paper, in big letters, and post it along with the news article. Encourage students to use these words in their journal, expository, or creative writing assignments. You don't really learn them until you use them!

DAY 79**Setting up House (MAA322,MAA421,MAB321-MAA332,MAB331)**

You have a _ a million dollars to spend. Look through the classified ads and pick your ideal house. Note the price. You can't live in an empty house, can you? Go furniture shopping! Using the classifieds and other ads throughout the *St. Petersburg Times*, make a list of what you need to fill each room in your house. Include accessories like lamps, if you want. Will you spend more on the house or the furniture? Explain your reasoning for your decisions.

DAY 80**Match, Set, Game (LAA122 - LAA132)**

Find an article that has a detailed description of a place or event. Draw a picture based on exactly what is written in the news story. Make a game out of it. Cut out news stories and arrange them out of order with the pictures. Have students try to match the pictures with the stories. Students can work in teams. Make this a monthly event!

DAY 81**Average Temp for the Week (MAE122 – MAE132)**

Using the local forecast on the weather page, calculate the average temperature for the week. Can you also find the mean, median, and mode?

DAY 82**D.E.A.R. Share/Main Idea (LAA122, LAA224 – LAA132, LAA234)**

As an alternative to reading books during DEAR time, have students read the *St. Petersburg Times*. Encourage students to then reread the article and underline any important facts or details. Give them a visual organizer so they can write out the 5 W's (Who, What, When, Where, Why – and How!) Then, have students share their articles with the class, retelling briefly what the article is about (the main idea), and why they chose that particular article. This activity encourages your students to be verbally articulate!

DAY 83**Mini News (MAA122, MAB122 - MAA132, MAB132)**

What would the *St. Petersburg Times* measure (length & width) if it was _ its actual size? What about 1/8 of its size? By what fraction or percent would you have to reduce the size of the newspaper so a mouse could hold it in its paws? Estimate.

DAY 84**Paper Jumble Probability (MAE123 – MAE133)**

A young child has separated all the pages in today's *St. Petersburg Times* and has spread them all over the floor. What is the probability you'll pick up the front page so you can start putting it back together in order?

DAY 85**Rhyming Pairs (Phonograms) (LAA123)**

Challenge students to find rhyming pairs of words in an article or section of the *St. Petersburg Times*. Instruct students to circle the words and keep track of the ones they find on a separate piece of paper, divided into columns. How many kinds of rhymes can they find? Use this rhyme bank later to create poetry!

DAY 86**Inch by Inch (MAB122, MAE121 – MAB231, MAE131)**

The price that advertisers pay for ads is based on the size of the ad. An ad that is two columns wide and five inches long is 10 column inches ($2 \times 5 = 10$). Divide the class into three teams. Team A measures all the furniture/household ads, Team B the car ads, and Team C the clothing ads. Team members need to cut out each ad and label its column inches in bold marker (Write: 3 columns \times 8 inches = 24 column inches). Teams should add up their column inches for all ads. Graph the results for today's *St. Petersburg Times*, by topic. Do it again with another day's newspaper (For example, you may want to compare a Monday with a Friday paper) and see if the amount of ad space changes or stays about the same. Figure out percent changes. You may also want to compare advertisement vs. news space!

DAY 87

Extreme Temps – December (MAE122 – MAE132)

Located at the bottom of U.S. Cities' temperature reports on the weather page, read the extreme high and low temperatures for today. What is the difference between them? What is the average of these two temperatures? Does this average correlate with temperatures around the country? Geography challenge: Locate the extreme temp cities on the U.S. map. How far apart are they? Use the mileage key and a ruler to find out!

DAY 88

Order them around! (MAA132) (Grades 6-8)

Scan the *St. Petersburg Times* for numbers (look in ads first) represented as decimals, percents, and fractions. Cut out the ones you find and put them in order from least to greatest (or greatest to least, depending upon your teacher's preference). Paste them in order on a piece of notebook/blank piece of paper. Switch papers with someone and check each other's work.

DAY 89

Sun and Moon (MAB122 – MAB132)

According to the times listed on the weather page, how many hours of daylight will there be tomorrow? How many hours of darkness tonight? How many hours of the day is the moon visible? How many days until the next Full Moon?

DAY 90

What's Ahead? (LAA121, LAB121 - LAA131, LAB131)

Cut out a variety of headlines (only!) from the *St. Petersburg Times*. Have students pick a headline and work with a partner. Using the headlines, they predict the content and/or purpose of the article/editorial. Pairs can write a short summary of what they think the article is about. Great AM journal writing activity! Remind students to look up any words they do not know.

DAY 91

Exponentially Large

Find at least 5 numbers in today's *St. Petersburg Times* that are over 10,000. Write down the numbers you find, then convert them to a whole number or decimal times an exponent of 10 (scientific notation).

For example: $3,575,000 = 3575 \times 10^3$ OR $11,750 = 11.75 \times 10^3$

DAY 92

Sequencing - Predict the Plot (LAA221 - LAA231)

Read a news/feature article in today's *St. Petersburg Times*. Write out the events of the story in the order in which they happened, allowing space between each line. Cut apart each event on the paper into strips. Mix them up. Exchange strips with someone else. Using the article, put the strips in order (number them).

Challenge: Without the article, try to put the events in order. Teachers: You may want to save all your students' work – keep event strips and corresponding articles in envelopes for students to work on anytime!

DAY 93

Multiple Mania 4 (MAA521 - MAA531)

You're on a search for multiples in today's *St. Petersburg Times*. Find multiples of the number 2! Circle the multiples you find and share.

DAY 94

Divulge the Dialogue

Find an article in today's local section that includes quotes/dialogue. Pick out them out and take note of who was speaking. Then, recreate the conversation that might have taken place between the reporter and the person/people being interviewed. Be sure to add correct punctuation, quotation marks in appropriate places, and add "speaker tags", such as ...the reporter questioned, asked the reporter, replied Mr. White, answered Mr. White, etc.

DAY 95**Margins of Victory (MAE321 - MAE132)**

Using the sports pages, take a look at the scores for one sport. For each region or division, what is the average margin of victory? What is the range of winning scores? Range of winning scores for all regions? What is the median score for margin of victory?

DAY 96**Sneaky Synonyms (LAA123 – LAA133)**

Read an article that interests you in today's *St. Petersburg Times*. As you read, look for words in the story that have almost the same meaning. For example: ran & scurried, jumped & leaped, answered & replied, asked & queried, etc.

DAY 97**High & Low (MAA122, MAA322 – MAA132, MAA332)**

Find the lowest and highest selling price for a house in your town. Also, apartment, business, etc. for additional work. What is the difference in the prices?

(Grades 6-8) What is the percentage difference?

DAY 98**Headliners, Please (LAA221 – LAA231)**

Find an article which interests you in today's *St. Petersburg Times* and read it carefully. As you read, think about the main idea of this article. If the article needed a new title, what would you call it? Read the article aloud to your class and share your inventive title.

DAY 99**Keep it Simple (LAA221, LAB223 – LAA231, LAB233)**

Read an article which draws your interest in today's *St. Petersburg Times*. Write ONE simple sentence that best describes what the story is about. You may want to use a descriptive word from the article. It can be a compound sentence, but not a run-on!

DAY 100**What are you trying to say? (LAA221 – LAA231)**

Read an editorial from today's *St. Petersburg Times*. What conclusion does the St. Pete Times Editorial Board want you to arrive at? What is the subject being discussed and what is their overall opinion on the matter? Discuss in class, sharing your opinions.

DAY 101**Global Extremes (MAA122, MAA322, MAE122 – MAA132, MAA332, MAE132)**

Check out the world cities listing of "Hi" and "Lo" temperatures today. What is the lowest temperature? The highest? Can you find a higher or lower temperature in any of the U.S. cities? Find the difference and average of the high & low temps.

DAY 102**In a Nutshell (LAA221 – LAA231)**

Read an article about a person's efforts to do good in our community. What word best describes this person? Use specific information from the article to support your answer.

DAY 103-104-105**Stats a Fact? (MAE322 - MAE332) (3-Day Activity)**

Go on a scavenger hunt through the papers of the next three days. Look for articles/ads/letters featuring statistical data. From your study of the *St. Petersburg Times*, what are some of the common uses or misuses of statistical data/analysis? Do you think the statistics are true or at least reasonable? See if you can verify any of the statistics by doing some research on the Internet. Report your findings to the class. Write a paragraph, noting specific examples from the newspaper.

DAY 106**Change for the Better (LAA221, LAB223 – LAA231, LAB233)**

Locate an article in today's paper that tells about story about positive change in our community. What was changed? What are/will be the results of the change(s)? Who is responsible for these positive steps? Write a short summary to read aloud.

DAY 107**Set for Science (LAA221 – LAA231)**

Look in today's *Times* for science-related articles. Read the article carefully. The information in the article could be best used for a student research project about _____(finish the sentence!)

DAY 108**Organized Reporter (LAB226 – LAB233)**

Choose an article written by a staff writer from the *St. Petersburg Times* in one of today's sections. How does the writer organize the first two paragraphs of the story? Was the Who, What, When, Where, and Why revealed? Explain what you think and use specific examples from the text (copy).

DAY 109**Summary Showdown (LAA221, LAB226 – LAA231, LAB233)**

Every student in the class should read the same article. Your class can vote on it. Students have 15 minutes on the timer to read the article and write a one-paragraph summary of the story. Everyone reads their summary. Students give "thumbs up" or "try again" (sideways thumb) or "thumbs down" for each one (voting can be done with heads down on the desks). Those who receive "try again" may make small corrections to improve theirs for the final showdown with all those who received a thumbs-up. Students and teacher work together to judge the summaries and declare a winner. It would be a good idea to go over the winning summary on the overhead the next day and talk about why it is a good summary.

DAY 110**Today's Temps (MAA322, MAE122 – MAA332, MAE132)**

What is the difference between the median temperature in Florida cities today and the mode temperature today for these Sunshine State cities?

DAY 111**Order them around! (MAA122) (Grades 3-5)**

Scan the *St. Petersburg Times* for numbers (look in ads first) represented as whole numbers (can include easy fractions & percents, too). Cut out the ones you find and put them in order from least to greatest or greatest to least; paste them in order on a piece of scrap paper. Switch papers with someone and check each other's work.

DAY 112**Home Sweet Home (LAA221, LAB226, LAD121 – LAA231, LAB233, LAD131)**

Read an article from the *St. Petersburg Times* (Teachers: You may want to check out Sunday's paper online, too!) about a local house or business. Which feature of the house/business does the reporter emphasize most in the article? Support your answer with evidence from the article. As you read, make a list of adjectives used to describe rooms, furniture, ambience, colors, yard, etc. Then, write a paragraph to describe your room at home (or your dream room!). Try to use some of the adjectives you found in the article!

DAY 113**Prime Time (MAA521 - MAA531)**

You're on a search for prime numbers in today's *St. Petersburg Times*. Up to what number can you find? Look up the definition for a prime number in the glossary of your math book if you can't remember what they are.

DAY 114**Ending Digraphs & Blends (LAA122) (Grades 1-5)**

According to the needs of your students, have them locate ending phonic sounds (-ing, -ft, -lm, -mp, -sp, -tion, -ies, -ent, -ment, etc.) or plural endings in a news article. You may want to set students up in teams to look for plural endings/other ending sounds. Teams get points for finding them correctly and sounding them out. You also can assign an unusual sound and challenge all teams to find one!

DAY 115**Factor Fun (MAA521 - MAA531)**

You're on a search for factors in today's *St. Petersburg Times*. Look for factors of 12, 18, 20, 24, 25, 28, 32, 36, 40, 42, and 48. Create factor trees or other visual representations to show the patterns / cut out numbers from the *St. Petersburg Times* and glue them onto your paper. What numbers listed above have factors in common. Explain what you found out! Exchange papers with someone else to compare and correct work. Share your ideas with the class.

DAY 116**Car Deal? (MAA333, MAD131) (Grades 6-8)**

Cars are offered at many different prices, and different car dealers offer varying interest rates. A cheaper car can actually end up being more expensive if the interest rate is high. Look through the car ads for automobiles for sale. Compare several different cars from different dealers. Who's got the best deal? Why? Look through the classifieds for cars that are being sold by private owners. The current bank interest rate is 7.5%. Can you get a better deal from them? Create a table and compare your data.

DAY 117**Play by Play (LAA225, LAB223 - LAB131, LAB233)**

Read an article about a sporting event in today's sports section. Pretend you are the sportscaster for this event. Write an "ad lib" of what you might say during the course of this game. Be sure to use quotation marks and punctuation appropriately. Include a second commentator for a challenge!

DAY 118**Consider the Source (LAA221, LAB226 – LAA231, LAB233)**

Find an article, by skimming & scanning, which required the reporter to interview several different people and/or companies. What sources did the reporter use to write this article? Keep a running list of people, companies, agencies, etc. as you read the article. Next to each one, write a simple sentence explaining why that source was needed in the article.

DAY 119**Elementary Evidence (LAA122 – LAA132)**

Read an article you choose or assigned to you by your teacher. What kind of evidence does the author/reporter use most in the article: Scientific facts? Personal experience? Opinions? Statements from experts? Relies on the reader's common knowledge of the subject? Other kinds of evidence?

DAY 120**Stepping Out (MAA323, MAA421, MAE121 – MAA431, MAE131, MAE331)**

Plan a great day with your friends. Look for events, movies, classes, etc. in today's *St. Petersburg Times* that you want you and your friends to attend. Make a guest list. Estimate how much it would cost to go to all the events and how much time it would take to do them all, including driving time, picking up your friends...don't forget to plan a meal during the day! Search the Times for a good place to eat and estimate the cost for everyone. How much will it cost per person for this awesome day out? (Don't forget to estimate cost for gas!) Create a table for your data. (Grades 6-8): Make a pie chart showing what percentage each activity/item represents of the total cost of your outing.

Teachers: Before doing this entire activity, have students predict which activities/items will occupy the biggest pieces of the pie!

Do you have a great FCAT activity that utilizes the *St. Petersburg Times*? Please share with us by emailing NIE Education Specialist Jill Wilson at jillwilson@sptimes.com.