

Children's House Two Newsletter

February 2010



Sia has chosen the continent puzzle map. She will explore, recreate, trace, color, and label her own map including the oceans. This is a predominantly language based activity through which a child's ability to handle a writing implement, read and write text, and follow a long sequential process is further developed.

Roots creep underground everywhere and make a firm foundation. Shoots seem very weak, but to reach the light, they can break open brick walls. Imagine that the brick walls are all the problems we have inflicted on our planet. Hundreds of thousands of roots & shoots, hundreds of thousands of young people around the world, can break through these walls. We CAN change the world.

- Dr. Jane Goodall

The past month and a half has provided wonderful opportunity to delve into a range of scientific topics, some planned and some cultivated by curiosity.

In pursuing our study of influential women we investigated the life and work of Jane Goodall (a native of England). The children were exposed to the concepts of anthropology, sociology, and the study of behavior. They were fascinated by the concept of chimpanzees being the first animals documented to utilize tools. In my own collection, I have a series of children's books produced through the Jane Goodall Institute. The "Okomi" books cover a series of documented events in the life of a baby chimpanzee. The children were enthralled by the series, which they continue to revisit on our library shelves.

We recently introduced land and water forms which gave way to a wave of curiosity around "land, air, and water", "living and non-living", and geography activities. There's been a lot of discussion about where and why certain animals live as they do, hibernate, migrate, sleep patterns, and their food choices. We've also had interesting discussions regarding the criteria on living versus non-living things. The explanation is basically as follows; living things do some or all of the following: eat (consume nutrients), breath (use oxygen or carbon dioxide), reproduce (make babies), and create waste (pee and or poop). Just so you know, play-doh is a living thing because it needs to stay sealed up from the air or it will dry out and the little pieces left over after playing with it are its waste (the poop). ☺

Jane Goodall Institute website addresses:

www.janegoodall.org

www.rootsandshoots.org (kids programming)



The above pictures illustrate principles we've been discussing regarding structural stability.

Sarah, using geometric blocks, built a wide base "to secure her mini tower" and then added platforms making sure there was "counter balance to hold them in place" (her own words).

Noah and Patrick combined the pink tower and brown stairs to show how objects can remain balanced when the weight is distributed evenly

Up-coming Events

Our next main units of study will highlight the continent of South America.

This will include a continuation of our bird unit as well as a unit on South American mammals. We will introduce the children to a variety of cultures, traditions, and celebrations of this continent. Included will be discussions and examples of art, music, and cuisine of South America.

A heads up for the following dates:

February

- No School – Mon. Feb. 15
- Winter Camp - Feb. 16-19
- Sneak Peek Elementary – Tue. Feb. 23
- Re-enrollment contracts and Financial aid paperwork due – Feb. 24

March

- First Friday – Fri. Mar 5
- Morning Share – Tue. Mar. 16
- No school – Fri. Mar 26 Teacher work day



Reid and friends sketch their dream back yard.

Many Thanks To...

Reid Bertone-Johnson (James' Dad) for an engaging presentation on Landscape Architecture.

The children had the opportunity to see many tools of the trade (including markers, pencils, measuring, and digging devices) and hear about how Reid gets to hike and draw for his job. What fun! They also got to layout a backyard landscape, and plot the existing landmarks of our school grounds from an aerial view photograph. Reid left us with the photograph for further review as well as beginning plot plans for future landscape imagination.



Highlight on: Music and Spanish



Music: This may be hard to believe, but...the already popular music class has been further invigorated by an array of fabulous new songs. They vary widely in topic, language, beat, and tempo. Ms. Leticia has been teaching sign language accompaniment and sharing her basket of instruments. Be on the look out for music sheets coming home.

Spanish: Last month we added an audio book listening station to the classroom. So far, we have had featured two Spanish books ("The Very Hungry Caterpillar" and "Buenos Dias, Buenas Noches"). Next up will be a classroom favorite, "The Story of Ferdinand". The children get to hear Katies familiar voice reading the books on CD's she has recorded for us. They are truly enjoying this activity.

Poetic News

Poetry has been a hot topic within our classroom community lately. We've been playing word rhyming games and routinely read our monthly poems at circle (both past and present).

The children discovered stringing the words together to make a rhyming poem. Although not having intended to study poetry, we ran with their curious and inventive spirit.

They learned that poetry could come in different forms and be delivered in different ways.

Some poetry is put to music and creates a song, some rhymes and some does not, and some poetry is constructed by a formula, like Haiku. While there is more, this is what we've covered. They have really enjoyed playing with the words, ideas, and sounds.

In the adjacent box is a poem generated by two of our friends. This one really stuck and the children love to recite it

Monthly Poem



Violin Boots

By Anthea Kaplan & Chelsea Brown

Whose is out

Whose is in

Who can play the violin