

The Blossom Newsletter

March 2010

Page 1



Math

In the month of March, we continued with our measurements, using standard and non-standard units. The children used rulers to measure books, pencils and other objects in inches. One fun measurement activity was measuring their long jump. First the children measured their jump with a length of yarn and then with a measuring tape. They compared their long jump with those of their classmates to find out who the longest jumper was and who was the shortest. It was so much fun for them to jump and see their distance. Soon, we will introduce the basic concepts of telling time.

We introduced three new shapes to the pre-k groups: the trapezoid, pentagon, and hexagon. The children were asked to look for these shapes in the environment and count the ones they found.

The children started to learn counting by twos, and two ways to divide a group of 10 objects. We will continue practicing estimation using a guessing jar.

We provided some special math activities for St. Patrick's Day. In one, the children enjoyed a counting exercise using green shamrocks that they created out of cut-out hearts. In another, we made a graph to document the answers to the question, "Have you ever seen a rainbow?" The graph shows that the majority of children have not seen one. The children continue to do math hands-on-activities, games and writing numbers.



Art

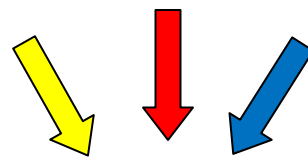


During the month of March the activities in the Art Room have been based around kid's choice. Three art stations were available to choose from within the Art Room; a drawing station, a building station, and a project station. Each child was given time at each station each day to create. The purpose for the variety of stations was to inspire a sense of independent choice, and to provide an environment of daily ritual.

Every day, when arriving in the Art Room, we begin by sitting quietly with hug-hands. This provides a sense of control for the kids, as well as an organized beginning to our class. The kids then have the opportunity to share any news or ideas which they are thinking about. It is important for the development of creativity to be able to allow the thought process to flourish, and feel comfortable enough to share. This communication session is followed by setting up the stations. The kids are entirely responsible for setting up their art stations, and I must add that they are exceptional at it! They gather their tools, their materials, and properly protect the Art Room furniture so art doesn't spread to the walls, tables and floors! The idea is to allow them to take care of themselves and learn to help others in need. Each child has displayed their preference of art stations, but they have also embraced developing their ideas with different mediums of art in the other stations as well.

Currently on display in the Art Room you will find Figure Drawings done with pencil, marker, and crayon. During this activity an emphasis was put on line development and using our shapes to create pictures—in this case.... PEOPLE! We became aware of the basic body parts of the human figure and where we locate them on the body. For example, the neck is an important part that connects the head to the torso.

Spring has sprung and I'm sure that we will soon begin to bring the art classes outside to enjoy the warm weather beginning to arrive.



Announcements:

- The Seed will be **CLOSED** for Easter April 1 and 2
- Save the date: Scholastic Book Fair April 12, 13, 14

March Birthdays

- Ryan O.
- Nicholas F.
- Aidan
- Helen
- Clare

Pet News

Winter was a difficult season for our Blossom pets and some of them did not survive.

We had to say goodbye forever to Gill, our betta fish, Sunny D. and Ms. Universe, our hermit crabs, and Shorty, one of our African clawed frogs.

Fortunately, Hipster (African clawed frog), Theodosia (mud turtle), and Waxy, Mona, and Little Louie (land snails) are alive and thriving!

These pets are lots of fun to observe, and--in the case of the snails--even play with.

Now that spring is here, the animals are more active, and they eat a lot! Theodosia has more than doubled her size since Ms. Ali gave her to us almost two years ago.

We will soon be expanding our pet population to include temporary visitors such as pill bugs, spiders, moths, toads, and more!



Spring has sprung in language arts. We are going to have an exciting month with spring poems, stories, and activities!!

Language Arts

In the beginning of March we enjoyed our first annual Teddy Bear Picnic! We enjoyed this day so much! We were able to bring in our teddies from home to language arts class; we ate crackers, played with our teddies, drew pictures of bears, and played a bear hunt game! In the month of April we will have a Pajama Day and pretend to have a sleep over party! These themed days seem to bring such excitement to the children. We will try to keep these special days simple for parents 😊 and we will try to have them once a month.

The month of March also brought us the start of springtime and spring projects! We have started a hand-painted flower project that has a photo of our faces as the center of the flower! We shared with our teachers three things that we enjoy about spring. This project was fun for us and we were able to express our feelings about the new season. We also created our own list springtime poems; it's a list of things we think about when we think of springtime.

We also read the series of Crockett Johnson's *Harold and the Purple Crayon* adventures. If you saw any purple drawings in our art files, now you know what inspired them! We collected a variety of different shades of purple crayons and made some amazing drawings. Now Crockett Johnson's photo was added to our author picture corner of the language arts room. We are learning and remembering so many authors; it's terrific!

The month of April will bring much more! We will be creating our own books and working on name writing. Also we will be going on a "listening walk" outside if the weather gets warmer. We will learn different words to describe what we are hearing outside.

This Month's Song List

Eensy, Weensy Leprechaun (Tune: Teensy, Weensy Spider)

An eensy, weensy leprechaun
Came out St. Patrick's Day
To look for the gold
That was hidden far away.

Over the rainbow
Was where he was told.
So, with a wink of his green eye,
He ran to get the gold.

We Like Milk

We like milk, we like milk,
Yes, we do,
Yes, we do
Good for your bones
Good for your teeth
Drink you milk,
Yum, yum, yum
Yum, yum, yum

So Early in the Morning (Tune: The Mulberry bush)

This is the way we feed the cow,
Feed the cow, feed the cow.
This is the way we feed the cow,
So early Monday morning.

This is the way we clean the cow,
Clean the cow, clean the cow.
This is the way we clean the cow,
So early Tuesday morning.

This is the way we milk the cow,
Milk the cow, milk the cow.
This is the way we milk the cow,
So early Wednesday morning.

This is the way we drink the milk,
Drink the milk, drink the milk.
This is the way we drink the milk,
So early Thursday morning.

This is the way we brush our teeth,
Brush our teeth, brush our teeth.
This is the way we brush our teeth,
So early Friday morning.



Science

Spring is already here and our always-interested scientists started the month of March by becoming **brilliant botanists** (growing potato roots, carrots leaves, comparing seeds, etc) and super fantastic **“experts” in good nutrition**. We have all been having great fun and making marvelous scientific discoveries!

The children treasured their science time as they started the theme of **Good Nutrition** by learning all about dairy products. Here are some activities they enjoyed greatly:

- ✚ Watching a variety of DVDs about dairy farms, cookie factories, and working on a farm
- ✚ Becoming farmers and taking care of toy cows
- ✚ Selling and buying dairy products using empty containers with play money and a cash register
- ✚ Pretending to milk a cow using rubber gloves with colored water
- ✚ Transforming their classroom into a dairy farm where they worked filling up empty dairy containers (using water and white tempera).

The children's fascination in this theme encouraged them to drink more milk and feel grateful to all the farmers in the world.

In studying the topic of **fruits and vegetables**, the children got to observe the growth of leaves and roots firsthand. During their many discoveries and explorations, the children were encouraged to try to eat more fruits and vegetables and also to take responsibility for the plants they have in the classroom.

Here are some more activities the children loved, and which caused them to raise their voices in excitement each time they spotted something new:

- ✚ Discussing families and food in different places like China, Australia, Egypt, Chad, Mali, Costa Rica, Mexico, India, Ecuador and, of course, the United States
- ✚ Sprouting potatoes in water
- ✚ Tasting carrots and growing the carrot tops. Beautiful green leaves are growing!
- ✚ Selling and buying toy vegetables and fruits.
- ✚ Washing toy fruits and vegetables with water, sponges, and brushes
- ✚ Tasting and comparing oranges and lemons
- ✚ “Reading” books about potatoes, carrots, oranges, lemons, watermelons, peaches, beans, onions, pumpkins, apples, bananas, and more
- ✚ Comparing vegetable seeds (beans, peas, carrots, potatoes, cucumbers pumpkins, tomatoes, etc), and fruit seeds (lemons, oranges, apples, banana, watermelon, etc)



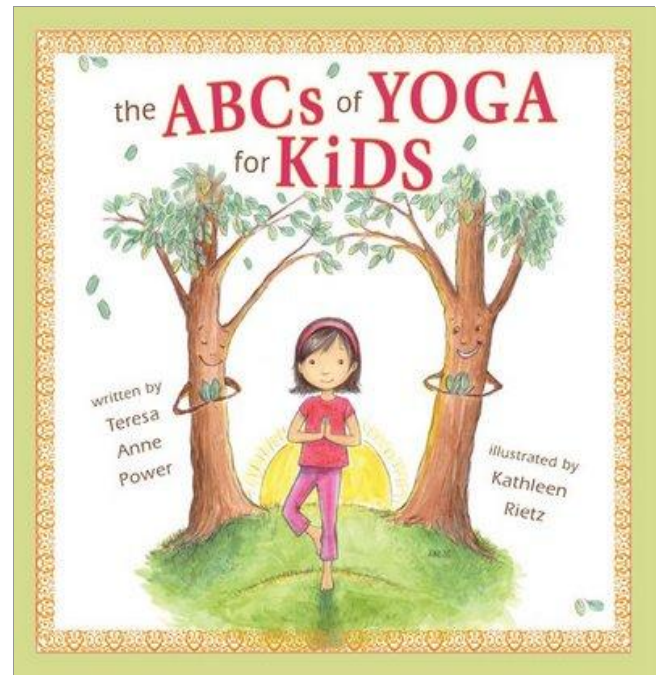
As an extra fun to do during science, this month the children made a **Leprechaun trap**. Everyone had such a good time imagining catching the leprechaun and asking for the pot of gold. What an excellent idea! Have a lovely spring!

Yoga and Movement

This month we started a new song called "Count Bounce". "Count Bounce" supports children's listening skills and also encourages them to form numbers one through ten using their bodies. The children really enjoy the song when it speeds up toward the end and the children have to transform into a particular number at a faster pace.

We have also continued with trust games. One in particular, called "Lean on Me," requires one child at a time to lean back into another friend. The child leaning back must trust that friend to catch them.

Since the weather has been so nice, we have taken advantage of it and played some fun games outside. These games that the children have enjoyed include: "Duck, Duck, Goose", "Red Light, Green Light, One, Two, Three", and "What Time is it, Mr. Fox?" These games not only encourage movement, but support the children's listening, cooperation and turn-taking skills as well.



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Spanish

The children in Spanish class have been reviewing colors in many different ways. If you get a chance, look at the Spanish bulletin board with your child; she/he can tell you the difference between an *oso negro*, an *oso blanco*, and an *oso marron*.

The youngest children can count *Los Patitos Amarillos*.

The six groups of students now have many different words in their Spanish vocabulary. Next month we will focus on projects that will display their knowledge in preparation for Family Day/ Open House which will take place June 13th, 2010.

