

Curriculum News: Primary Classrooms

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West Room



During the month of December

In December, several new works and books relating to peace education were available throughout the classroom. As the children see preparations in the real world relating to the many winter holidays and celebrations, we try to be mindful to maintain a calm and consistent routine and environment. At our peace table, a new work called the Peace Spiral was introduced. The Peace Spiral is a work that implements the use of a simple outline of a logarithmic spiral picture and a basket of small river rocks. Your child sits quietly to focus on placing the river rocks in such a way to get them all to fit on the spiral. This work builds concentration and coordination in a calm and peaceful way. Along with this work the children were able to look through the book "Swirl by Swirl: Spirals in Nature" which was donated to our class during the fall Scholastic book fair by Olivia and her family.

Nearly every day in December, as a group we read a different book about peace. Some favorites the children really enjoyed included "The Peace Book" by Todd Parr, "What Does Peace Feel Like?" by Vladimir Radunsky and "When I Grow Up. I Will Win the Nobel Peace Prize" by Isabel Pin. Next time you are at the library with your child, look up these and other books about peace, all the children loved talking and reading about the idea of peace.

The children all had the opportunity to complete two different peace projects this month. One morning, Sebastian's Mom, came in to help the children to complete their own unique sponge painting peace dove-- Thank you Tori! Each child also created a pinecone peace dove and decorated a peace sign bag to wrap this special project to take home as a gift to their families. We hope you enjoy it at home for years to come!

Other new works this month focused on different ways to categorize animals. Two ways are what they do in winter (hibernate, migrate or adapt) and what they eat (herbivore, carnivore and omnivore). Our December tasting activity was fresh pomegranate. Only a few of the children had ever seen or tasted this winter fruit, so it was really fun and exciting for all of them to participate in trying something new. After using all five senses to explore the inside and outside of the fruit, we finally tasted the seeds and drank the juice. After a little hesitation nearly every child tried it and many said they really liked it!

During the Upcoming Month

In January, every child will continue to work at his or her own pace, however many new works will be available to each child when he/she is ready. New activities will mirror what the children are observing in the natural world and society at large. Some of the children will choose to try new works about the solar system, alphabetical order, adjectives and geometric solids.

We will also continue to spend a lot of time outdoors. Be sure to send your child with snow pants, a hat, water-proof mittens and a warm jacket every day! Also, your child should now have a pair of dedicated inside shoes that stay in their cubby at school for the winter months. Please be sure to label all of your child's belongings!

What You Can Do to Support Your Child's Learning

Most of the children are now really good at self-dressing with all of their many layers of outdoor gear. As you acquire new items, please allow enough time for your child to practice and get ready independently. If you are buying a new jacket or clothes, be sure take your child with you and have them try the zipper or fasteners before you purchase it- if it is difficult in the store it will be frustrating for your child when he or she is trying to be independent at school.

If your child stays for lunch, be sure to have your child practice opening and closing all of the containers you send, he or she will naturally gain self-esteem as they are able to complete all of these care-of-self activities independently.