



# Our Classroom News

February 2010

Dear Parents,

Happy February! I enjoyed meeting with many of you for conferences and talking with others for phone conferences in the last week. As of the writing of this newsletter, I may have 2-3 more of you still to call and visit with regarding your child's progress at St. Matthew's this year. It is a joy to teach your children each week, and I have loved speaking with you about the progress we are making everyday at school. ☺

The children are doing wonderfully as we *gradually* add steps to our morning routine. Mrs. Newland or I will assist with each step until each child can be successful. With regards to our dismissal routine, please keep practicing with your child to put on their coat - this is a very big help to us and makes your children feel so "big" when they can do things independently! Remember the "flip trick" so they can also put their coat on independently at home! **\*\*PLEASE** also make sure that you are dressing your child for the weather every day. Some children have commented that they are chilly out on the playground. We go outside daily unless there is a torrential downpour or severe temperature. We'd hate for your child to miss out on tossing a few snowballs because they were too cold to enjoy the morning.

"Question of The Day" started a few weeks ago. Each child votes "yes" or "no" on a daily question. We count the results (this is an important new class job), and talk about more, less, and which number is bigger/smaller. This is a first introduction for most of the children to this "math language". Counting the responses promotes one to one correspondence as the children count each vote, an important step in understanding numbers and counting.

The children are really enjoying the Name of The Day! They feel important when they see their own name on the pocket chart, and are becoming more aware of others' names. They are so excited when they realize a classmate has some of the same letters in their name! This activity accomplishes many things, from simple letter recognition to sounds, as well as more than/less than comparisons (number of letters in your name).

In February we'll be exploring MAGNETS and MEALWORMS! See if you can find things at home that magnets will attract! We will be experimenting with a variety of objects at school. Ask your child what kinds of things were "attracted" to the magnets during small group? What does your child think of the mealworms? We'll be exploring how/what they eat and what they look like using magnifying glasses. I will be interested to hear what the children are sharing with you about this experience.

We will be having a Valentine exchange in class on February 11. The children will have painted a Valentine bag prior to the 11<sup>th</sup>, and then each child will "deliver" Valentine cards to their classmates' via the bags. Please make this as easy as possible for yourself and your child. We want this to be a fun activity, not one that causes stress! Simply have your child "write" his/her name on each card (this may be the first letter of the name, the whole name, or a scribble - wherever your child is in the name-writing process). **Do not worry about addressing the cards/writing a classmate's name on the card - too much!** The task of simply putting ONE Valentine in ONE bag will certainly be enough of a challenge. We wouldn't want to add to that by asking children to try and read a name on a card and match it to the name on the bag. This skill will come - but we're not there yet. ☺ Due to several student allergies, please DO NOT enclose any kind of treat/candy with the Valentine. Thanks so much for understanding.

We appreciate all our volunteers from this past month. We enjoy having you share time with us in the classroom and seeing what we accomplish each day. We still have openings for you to volunteer in February, and especially need two helpers on February 11 for our Valentine Exchange. If you would like to sign up please give me a call or send me a note via e-mail or tote mail.

*Jenni and Sarah*

As always, you can reach me at home by phone 703-583-7973 or by e-mail at [jenni.booth@gmail.com](mailto:jenni.booth@gmail.com)

## **Songs we're learning:**

### **Circle of Friends**

Friends, friends, the more that we know.  
The bigger and better our circle will grow.  
Don't stop with just one,  
more friends are more fun.  
Keep building our circle of friends.

Each boy and girl, go find a friend  
that adds to our circle that has no end.  
Each friend that we bring will widen our ring  
and add to our circle of friends, friends.

*The game begins with two children forming a circle during the first verse. During the second verse, each child in the circle chooses another child to join them. The game continues until ALL the children are included in the circle of friends.*

### **Magic Penny**

Love is something if you give it away,  
Give it away, give it away.  
Love is something if you give it away,  
You end up having more.

It's just like a magic penny,  
Hold it tight and you won't have any.  
Lend it, spend it, you'll have so many,  
They'll roll all over the floor, for:

Love is something if you give it away,  
Give it away, give it away.  
Love is something if you give it away,  
You end up having more.

### **Playmate**

Say, say oh playmate,  
Come out and play with me.  
And bring your dollies three  
Climb up my apple tree.

Cry down my rain barrel,  
Slide down my cellar door.  
And we'll be jolly friends, forever more,  
More, more.  
(children can substitute other toys for dollies)

## **Stories We're Enjoying**

Three Little Pigs - Folktale

Hi Pizza Man! - Virginia Walter

The Valentine Bears -

Many versions of The Gingerbread Boy story continue to be very popular!