



Our Classroom News

February 2010

Thanks for coming in for conferences! I so enjoying learning about your child from you!
The weather outside has been frightful, but inside we have been so delightful!

Winter clothing

We read a delightful Jan Brett story called The Mitten about a child who lost a mitten and the happy animals who found shelter inside. Ms. Brett's books have side narrations which foreshadow the next event in the story. Using the side pictures, our class enjoyed guessing which animal would enter the mitten next. Piggybacking the story, we played a mitten game where children placed upper case alphabet letters in the correct order by hanging with clothes pin on a clothesline. (Grasping clothespins is an excellent skill to work on the pincher grip by the way!) Our questions of the day focused on winter clothing items worn to school. "Did you wear mittens?" This question encouraged children to distinguish the difference between a glove and a mitten.

Rebus stories

We read our first rebus story entitled The Jacket I Wear in the Snow by Shirley Neitzel. A rebus story in one that substitutes words for pictures. In this repetitious book, a little girl has difficulty with her winter clothing. "These are the mittens that hang from each arm. This is the zipper that's stuck on the jacket I wear in the snow." The children delighted in reading the pictures and the last line. Our voices could be heard in Dr. Deadman's office! Natalie suggested we make a class book about the jackets **WE** wear in the snow! Look for our rewrite to come home soon!

Seeing the joy on faces when participating in the story, the class began to "read" other rebus stories. Eric Carle wrote The Secret Birthday Message and the children used the pictures to solve the birthday secret. Listen for your child to tell you about The Bag I'm Taking to Grandmas. We also read rebus nursery rhymes. You can find rebus stories to read and print at EnchantedLearning.com/rhymes.html or highlightskids.com/stories/rebus. When reading the words, use your finger to move from left to right and stop when you come to a picture so your child may read the picture. Picture reading is the first step toward actually reading.

RE reading stories

Ever wonder why your child likes to hear the same story over and over again? **Rereading** is a great way to boost a child's confidence, **reinforce** literacy skills and enhance their understanding of the story. Each time you **reread**, ask important questions like who was the main character, what happened when.....? Why do you think.....? Asking questions encourages comprehension and gives you a little insight into what your child is thinking! So the next time you are asked to read a story again, grin and bare it knowing it is good for your child!

With that in mind, **YOUR HOMEWORK** is to read your child's library book **THREE** times!

Ice experiments

The snow added greatly to our lessons! In small group, each child was given a cup of ice and then asked to predict what would happen. What an "ah ha" discovery lesson! The children knew the ice would melt, but actually observing the melting process while holding ice in their hands was amazing! Avabella, Landon and Luke squealed with the amount of water on the table. Keya and Neal observed the water on their hands as it

disappeared! We discussed places around the room where the ice would melt faster, like near the heater, and slower, like near the classroom door. Each child tested his/her hypothesis and placed their cup of ice in special places around the classroom. Throughout the day, the children checked on their cup of melting ice. Emi and Arabella commented on how much water they had in their cups. You could continue this experiment at home by measuring how much snow (or ice) is in a cup and then measure again to see how much water is in the cup. We continued to play with cold elements and painted with ice cubes. The children sprinkled a little white powder paint on their paper and went to town with the ice cubes! The painted pictures looked like real blizzards!

Meal worms

Have you heard about the new critters in our classroom -- the mealworms? Another science experiment to visually demonstrate changes in matter - egg, larva, pupa and beetle. This center has been a hit with Ava, Bralyn, Kate and Serkan! Our children are eager to see the changes the next school day will bring! We may even have mealworm races!

Random Happenings

For snack one day, I happened to bring in pineapple. The children were curious about what I was eating so the next day I brought in a real pineapple! After touching the bumpy outside, the children sat in silence as I cut open the pineapple to reveal the juicy yellow inside. Talk about another discovery lesson! After tasting the sweetness, the children couldn't get enough! Ashton and Mekhi REALLY wanted more! Several days later, Luke brought in pineapple to share with the class! We eat good during snack!

During transition periods in class, we often sing nursery rhymes. We sing in really low voices and in really high squeaky voices. When singing "I'm a little teapot," it occurred to me that the children probably didn't know what "stout" meant or what "hear me shout" really meant. So, Mrs. Malloy brought in her teapot and I brought in some tea and honey and we had a tea party! Kelly and I talked about the changes in matter from liquid to steam to evaporation, but the children really wanted to listen to the water percolate and then actually hear the teapot SHOUT! And boy, does Mrs. Malloy's teapot shout!

Volunteers - Thank you Crystel Calderon for helping in our classroom!

Save a box

Ever since I was a child I have loved decorating a box for Valentines. I loved adding doilies, hearts and ribbon! I remember running home after the Valentine's Day party and eagerly rereading each Valentine. I treasured that box and those cards for months! Perhaps this activity will create memories for your child. We will read a Mary Engelbreit story called The Queen of Hearts about a little girl who also delights in decorating a Valentine box. Ann Estelle gets so excited about taking her box to school that she forgets the Valentine cards for friends. She ends up sharing precious decorations from her box. A real heart warming story! We will decorate Valentine boxes the week of **February 8**. Please send in any type of box for collecting Valentines - shoe box, Kleenex box, cereal box, whatever! We will have a **Valentine exchange on Friday, February 12**. Have your child write their name on 20 cards. You might want to start NOW and do a few a night! Please do not write the receiver's name on the cards. Just cards please!

Up coming events

February 1	Music and Movement WITH PARENTS – 1:05 Zipper Club
February 8	Kindergarten Info night – 7:00 – 8:30
Friday, February 12	Valentine exchange
Monday, February 15	President's Day – No school
Monday, February 22	Dad's night- 7:00 - 8:00 PM - dads, grandfathers, uncles - mini day in school Music and Movement

Thanks for sharing your children with us! Learning is SO MUCH FUN!

Lisa Dravvorn and Kelly Malloy