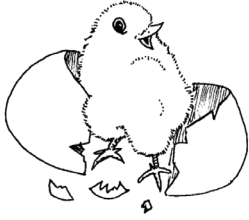


Chick Class

Newsletter for December, 2011



We had a busy November. We enjoyed watching the Chick class grow, learn and express themselves through creative play, large muscle and movement, nature and art activities. In the Dramatic Play area we focused on dressing up. One of the skills that we worked on was unzipping and snapping purses and practicing putting on gloves.

We also had another area dedicated to blocks and cars with people. Our little ones engaged in building roads and tall buildings.

Music with Sylvia also continues to be a favorite time. One song really enjoyed by all is the "Rainbow Song" where they incorporate sign language with color reinforcement. The class has also had the opportunity to play the bells and rhythm sticks in conjunction with some songs. Sylvia also gives the children the opportunity to strum Sylvia's guitar and autoharp.

In nature we explored all areas indoor and outdoor. We went for walks to look at the trees without leaves, watched various squirrel nests and even raked some leaves. With Teacher Emily we learn about animals and hibernation through looking at picture books of hibernating bears and petting furry animals. In the sensory table we gathered sticks, rocks, and water to create a home for a beaver. The children had a great time doing this activity.

For some of our art projects, our Chick class used different art materials such as dot paints, weather stampers, feathers and different colors of glitter and paints.

In the coming month of December, our little friends will be working on their Holidays gifts and learning more about wintertime animals and their homes.

Our dramatic play has been changed to housekeeping/babies. Our little ones can now wrap and rock the babies as well as cook and feed them. The best part is continuing to interact and play with their friends.

Welcome: We would like to welcome Evy Wells to the Chick classroom. She will be joining us 3 mornings starting this month. Also, we are excited to announce the addition of 2 teachers to the toddler environment; Melinda Gonzales and Lisa McCulloch. They will job share a position helping in both the Chick and Duck classrooms, interacting with your children and providing assistance to the teachers. Melinda will be working Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings while Lisa will work on Mondays and Fridays. Both have education backgrounds and are each the parent of a child in the Ponies classroom. We look forward to the additional help and support they will be providing.

-Beatriz and Wendy

**Class
Pictures**

**Nature
News**

**Music and
Sign Language**



Getting Ready for Winter: This month in Nature we focused on learning how animals survive the cold and harsh winter. In Pre-2 we learned about migration and the benefits of moving to a warmer climate for the winter. We focused on the Arctic Tern, which migrates from the North to South pole and back every year. We talked about the obstacles that animals face as they travel back and forth and built our own obstacle course to practice migrating. Students practiced making mental maps of the nature room just as animals do when they migrate. We even learned some basic compass skills and the directions.

We talked about how animals use hiding as a way to survive winter. We learned how animals hide in homes, in groups, and by camouflaging. We talked about how birds hide in groups and may join noisier birds like chickadees to avoid predation. The kids played a game of a tag to demonstrate the benefits of hiding in a group. We also learned about how some animals are able to change color to avoid predation. They played a camouflage game by hiding animals around the school and searched them out.

Pre-1 students also played the camouflage game. They also tried on different colored furs to see which would be better for camouflaging in winter or summer. The toddlers tried to find animals camouflaged in winter scenes. We looked at pictures of animals changing colors and tried on different fabrics to pretend to be winter or summer arctic hares.

Pre-2 students learned the difference between hibernation and dormancy. We talked about which types of animals hibernate and why they choose to. Students pretended to be bears and went to the woods to find the best hibernating spots. Later in the week, we also focused on the woodchuck and the legends behind Groundhog Day. Students listened to a poem about the groundhog and illustrated the story with their own pictures. Pre-1 students and toddlers both looked at pictures of a number of hibernating animals. Pre-1 students also looked for places around school to hibernate.

Pre-2 students learned about insulation and how animals use fur, fat, feathers, and winter coats to help them survive the extreme temperatures. We conducted an experiment where students insulated a small container of gelatin. If the gelatin stayed in liquid form, they kept enough heat in; if the gelatin turned solid than it became too cold. We also talked about snow's ability to insulate small animals.

Animal Homes:

Later in the week, we started our transition into learning about homes for animals. We learned about how bees and wasps make nests using hexagons and use their homes to protect themselves in winter. We acted out how honey bees find a new home.

As always we love having parent visitors and artifacts sent from home. We will be learning about animal homes in December and then water in January.



-Emily

Sign Language and Music with Sylvia

Music

In **Music**, we've been learning a variety of dances. Dancing to music comes natural for all ages and a wonderful way for children to express themselves. A few favorites have been "Bow to Your Partner" and "I'm your Friend". They love dancing with partners and it's been fun to see how quickly they've learned the actions for each dance. I also brought in my violin and we had a great time playing a game where the children listened for the contrast between a quiet classical lullaby and the lively fiddle music. They'd pretend they were sleeping to the lullaby and then quickly jump up and dance when they heard the fiddle music. It's been a fun month!

Sign Language

In **Sign Language** we've been learning to sign numbers. Sign Language is a great visual for the children to help in learning number quantity and recognition. They especially enjoy signing with my puppets as we read books, play games and sign songs. We also continue to sign our colors and animals. One of their favorite stories is my flannel board story "Little, Mouse". I have 10 houses, each a different color, where one house has a little mouse hiding behind it. They always love to guess which house the mouse is hiding in. Not only is it a fun story, but it also gives the children the opportunity to use their sign language to communicate a full story, not relying on any voice. Next month we'll begin signing the alphabet.



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-Sylvia