

Nature with Emily

Nature Pictures

Welcome to the 2011-2012 school year!

We are already off to a great start in Nature class, exploring Children's Country Day, learning to make scientific observations, and caring for the gardens. I have enjoyed seeing so many familiar faces and meeting so many new friends during the first month of school.

Maps and Exploration

In our first week of school, we learned about maps, and what they are used for. Students drew their favorite parts of Country Day on their own map as we explored. We continued getting familiar and comfortable with the school grounds later in the week by going on a digital scavenger hunt where we took pictures of our finds to display in the Nature room. Students also learned what makes something a part of nature and participated in a mystery bag game. Pre-1 students spent some time exploring the garden and also learned what makes something a part of nature. The toddlers spent time getting comfortable being with me and had the opportunity to feel and smell a variety of nature objects including a 7 foot tall corn stalk.



Observation and Harvest

In our second week of nature we became scientists and learned how to make observations. We used a frame to focus on a small portion of the garden and the woods. Students made drawings of their finds in a notebook. Later in the week we harvested basil from the garden and made our own yummy pesto pasta (see recipe below). In pre-1 we learned how to use magnifying glasses and tape measures to explore the garden. In the toddler class, we also spent time harvesting in the garden and looking for worms.

Apples



We also explored apples. We learned about different kinds of apples and spent time sorting them. We tasted different types of apples to determine what their favorites are. We did an apple dissection to learn about the different parts of the apple. Later in the week we made apple breakfast cookies.

A New Snake at School

In other news, we got a new nature class pet! A Kenyan Sand Boa just joined the Country Day family! Students are beginning to meet our young male snake and will help with the naming process.

Here are a couple recipes we enjoyed this month:

Pesto

3 cups basil 1 cup olive oil
2 cloves garlic 1 cup Parmesan cheese

Put basil in a food processor and blend well with 1 tbsp. olive oil. Blend in garlic. Blend in cheese and then olive oil. Enjoy!

Breakfast Cookies

1/4 cup softened butter 3/4 cup brown sugar
2 eggs 1/2 cup unsweetened applesauce
1 cup wheat flour 1/2 tsp salt
1 tsp cinnamon 1 tsp baking soda
1 cup uncooked oats 1/2 cup dried cranberries
1/2 cup chopped apples

Combine butter and sugar, and then eggs and applesauce. Add dry ingredients. Fold in apples and cranberries. Spray cookie sheet. Bake at 350 degrees for 13-15 minutes.

-Emily

Sign Language and Music with Sylvia

It's great to be back teaching Sign Language on Tuesdays and Music on Thursdays. I'd like to share some of the areas we'll cover throughout the year.

Sign Language

In **Sign Language** the children will learn a variety of signs during group time. One of my main goals is that they develop an understanding of what it means to be deaf and that they realize that being deaf makes you no different other than you communicate with the visual language of Sign Language. They'll experience the beauty of the language as we read stories in sign, play games and sing songs in sign. Each month we practice the signs for a different topic as well as review the signs that we've already learned.



Sign for Pig

The main areas I cover will be: Animals, colors, numbers, the alphabet, family, foods, signs related with the seasons, basic phrases and deaf awareness. In September the children had fun learning the signs for farm animals as well as some signs for fall. They'll be bringing home some hand-outs soon that show some of the signs we've covered. For those children who are returning students, it's been fun to see how they have remembered a lot of signs from last year and are becoming more comfortable in signing simple sentences.

Your child may also tell you about my 2 puppets named Anna & Robby that come quite frequently to Sign Language. They always love it when I bring them as they are puppets that can "sign".

Music

In **Music** we'll be exploring music through a variety of activities. Each week the children will learn new songs and sing with string instruments such as the piano, guitar, autoharp and violin. We'll also do a lot of movement and dance and occasionally use the percussion instruments. Quite often the sign language we learn on Tuesday is reinforced with songs on Thursday. In September we sang about apple trees and farm animals. The children especially enjoyed singing "2 Little Apples Hanging on a Tree". We also sang & signed the animals in the song "I went to Visit a Farm One Day". Two other favorite songs with a lot of movement were "See the Ponies Galloping" and "Sammy".



Feel free to contact me anytime if you have any questions about the Music and Sign Language programs.

-Sylvia

Duck Class October News

Class Pictures

Reminders: Our Fall Harvest Party is scheduled for Weds. Oct. 5th from 8:30 - 9:30 a.m. This is a great opportunity to spend time with your child at school, meet other parents, visit our beautiful outdoor areas, and visit the animals as well. Please remember to bring one apple (of your choice) to be used to make apple cider. In addition to the freshly made cider, we will have seasonal snacks to enjoy. Parking will be available on-site.

Please label EVERYTHING that your child wears or brings to school. We also ask that you help your child to leave "special belongings" either at home or in their car seat. So often after a few minutes these "items" are left here, there and everywhere. This means finding them can cause some difficulties.

Licensing requires that water bottles not be used for the school year program. Therefore we ask that parents help their child to leave them at home. We do make sure that the children are getting plenty of drinks throughout the day.



Upcoming Units based upon Nature Class and time spent with Emily:

Week of October 3rd: Look at and feel bark, seeds and leaves. Make a kid-sized tree.

10th: Leaf hunt to find different colored leaves.

17th: Mammals and reptiles. Visits to other classrooms to see their "pets"

24th: Birds and Berries. Harvest and taste cranberries.

31st: Fun Halloween things. Pumpkins, bats, cats and so much more!

In addition to Emily's themes, we will continue to build on getting to know one another. We will spend time talking about Fall and the colors and shapes of newly fallen leaves.

Weather permitting, we will continue to spend time daily outside. Please help your child be comfortable by clearly labeling and sending appropriate outside gear.



We are also learning the following Halloween songs:

Big and Scary Eyes

See my big and scary eyes (make circles with your index fingers and thumbs - then place them around your eyes)

Look out now.... A big surprise.....BOO! (pulling your hands away from your eyes as you say BOO!)

Pumpkins are Gay

Pumpkins are gay on Halloween day,

Pumpkins are bright (CLAP) on Halloween night.

Fall conferences will be scheduled during the month of November. Further information will be sent at a later date.

We would both like to thank each and every one of you for a terrific start to this school year. Your quick, but most successful drop offs, help enable your child to feel your comfort in leaving them with us. Thanks for that! Each of the children has adjusted nicely and certainly has filled our days with joy and laughter. We are looking forward to continued opportunities in which we will explore both the inside and outside environments. Enjoy the crispness of October!

Congratulations!

We'd like to congratulate Ella and her family on the birth of Claire Addison-Coy!

-Angela and Nancy