

Billy Goat Class

News for January, 2012

Class Pictures

This past month we have enjoyed learning about snow, germs, and spiders. When it snowed we made snow angels, snowballs, and little snow people. During the rainy days we spent time playing in the gym, both jumping off the foam blocks and hanging from the bar.

Nature News

Sign Language and Music

Luckily, the weather cooperated with our theme of snow and winter. We were able to enjoy the snow and talked about what changes happens to our world during winter. We learned about adaptation, migration, and hibernation. For art projects, we created snowflakes using toilet papers rolls as stampers and also designed a snowman. We even went sledding during Animal Adventures.



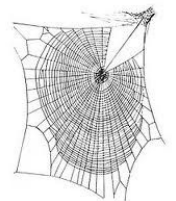
Staying Healthy

We learned about germs and how to keep our bodies healthy. We practiced washing our hands while singing the ABC's to make sure we scrubbed off all the germs. We learned that it is also important to dry our hands to get rid of the germs. We read many stories about germs and keeping our bodies healthy, but our favorite was Those Mean Nasty Dirty Downright Disgusting but Invisible Germs. After talking about germs, the friends have started reminding each other to use Kleenex when needed and to cover their coughs.

One morning during group time, one friend handed out a Kleenex to a few friends that had runny noses. It's great to see them applying what they are learning!

Spiders

We talked about spiders, how many legs they have, what they like to eat, and their life cycle. We made handprint spiders and painted spiderwebs. We learned that spiders hatch from eggs as baby spiders or spiderlings, go through a molting phase, and create webs as adult spiders. During group time, we have been using our word wall to incorporate different words about spiders and identifying what letter these words start with.



We hope you enjoyed a wonderful break with your family!

-Shirley and Joy

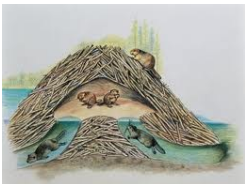
Animal Homes: Mounds, Nests, Webs , and Lodges

This month we have been very busy learning about animal homes and constructing them around Children's Country Day. We started out learning about termites and the homes they construct out of sand, dirt, saliva, and wood. Pre-2 students helped paper mache a life size termite mound as well as make clay termites. We also went outside and constructed a termite mound out of snow. From termites we switched to another animal architect, birds. Students learned about a variety of different birds and the nests they make. Oven birds construct their nests out of mud, while weaver birds create hanging nests that look like baskets. Pre-2 students created their own nests and hung them from a tree in the nature room. Pre-1 students and toddlers also attempted to build nests out of sticks.



Spiders were our next topic. Pre-2 students learned that some spiders make webs, while others actually dig their home. We talked about the different aspects of the trapdoor spider homes and students created pictures of their favorite spider homes in their nature notebooks. We went outside to the woods and students built webs from yarn. For our final nature classes,

we learned about Beavers. Students learned about the different steps that beavers use to build their lodges. We went out to the woods to create our own beaver lodge. Pre-1 students enthusiastically helped build up the lodge. Toddlers had the chance to create their own little beaver lodges out of wood and rocks.



Coming in January:

If you are looking for some opportunities to explore nature with your family, here are some local options:

- The Minnesota Science Museum has an amazing exhibit on extreme weather. I highly recommend it!

- In February, the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center will be hosting their annual open house.

The staff will share how they care and rehabilitate Minnesota's wild animals. Check out their website for more information.

In January we will be learning about water. Students will explore the different characteristics of water, learn about Minnesota's water habitats, and spend some time learning about the ocean.

-Emily

Sign Language and Music

In Sign Language we're learning to sign the alphabet and how to finger spell our names. Signing the letters is a wonderful visual that helps children in learning their letters and another way to practice the spelling of their name. The Preschool 1 classes have been signing the first letter only of their name. The Burro, Ponies and Llamas practice their full name. We've also learned to sign the phrase, "My name is _____" and "What's your name?" We ended the month playing a fun Sign Language Bingo Alphabet game.

In Music we've had fun with creative movement as we sing the winter songs we've learned. The children especially enjoy dancing with scarves as we sing "One Little Snowflake" or pretending they're a bear as we sing about the hibernating bears in the winter. We've also been singing and signing the "Alphabet Song" and "What is Your Name?" to reinforce what we're learning in Sign Language. Another favorite song has been, "Three Little Fishies". Everyone enjoys acting this out and swimming with the rainbow colored ribbons. There's also a rhythmic clapping part they love to do on the chorus. Your child might enjoy listening to it at this website. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iK_wrM8OdGY&feature=fvw

