

Billy Goat Class

News for February, 2012

Class Pictures

We started out the new year with a warm streak and ended January finally being able to play in the snow. We had a blast at the all school winter party where we enjoyed hot chocolate, cookies and playing in the snow!

Nature News

TRACKS

One of the fun things we did in the snow was to find cool tracks as well as making some of our own. We found squirrel tracks, rabbit tracks, and bird tracks along with looking at the tracks our own burros, llamas, horses and goats made. We also

made a neat art project using animal track stamps.



Sign Language and Music

COLORS

One of the first topics we had a lot of fun with was “Colors” which involved a lot of color mixing to make new colors. Shirley did an experiment with the children using food coloring and water to see what would happen when you mixed them together. The children all thought this experiment was the greatest thing and they all wanted to do it again! We also made a colorful masterpiece using marbles covered with blue and yellow paint. It was a lot of fun rolling the marbles around to make the green paint appear. Let’s not forget the time the water turned green at snack time, “It’s Magic!” said many of the children.



OCEAN: We spent a week discovering the ocean and what lives in the deep blue waters. We found out that sharks skin feels a lot like sand paper and that a dolphin is a mammal just like us. We sang many new songs and even made a shark puppet.

ROOM CHANGES: Many of the learning materials were changed in our room too. We brought in water for the sensory table, new puzzles and books along with a new construction area for dramatic play. We also are working on fine motor skills using tweezers and spoons to transfer objects form one container to the next.

Valentine's Day



Valentine's Day is approaching very quickly and we would like to let you know our plans. We will have special activities in the classroom on Feb. 13th and 14th. We will decorate bags at school for your children to collect their Valentines. Your child can bring in Valentines for their classmates if they would like. We have 20 children in our class. If you choose to send more than just the card, please remember that no food or candy may be sent home. Here are some other options: play-doh, stickers, tattoos, pencils, bubbles and notepads. When you fill out your cards, please fill out the "From" section with your child's name and leave the "To" section blank or write "my friend". This allows the children to easily pass out their own Valentines.



Some of the upcoming themes will be:

January 30-Feb 2 Dinosaurs
February 6-10 Dental week
February 13-14 Valentine's Day
February 15,16,17 Alphabet and Numbers
February 21-24 Shapes
Feb 27 – Mar 2 Occupations

(Parents welcome to come in and share their occupation)

We also look forward to getting outside to observe our wild and domesticated animals.

Thanks,

-Shirley and Todd

January Nature News

Nature Pictures

January has been a water filled month at Children's Country Day School. Pre-2 and Pre-1 students began by learning about the different characteristics of water and how much water there is on earth. Students conducted their own freezing and melting experiments. All students, including toddlers, tested different objects' ability to float.

LAKES AND PONDS: From our study of water, we moved into water habitats. Pre-2 students constructed a mountain range and then sprayed the geographic feature with colored water to see where rivers and lakes would form in their habitat. We discussed the challenges of living in a river environment and examined river organisms for adaptations that would help them survive. We then began our exploration of lakes and ponds. Pre-2 and Pre-1 students learned about the different types of habitats that animals can live in within a lake or pond. Pre-2 students learned about the different zones in a lake caused by different amounts of sunlight that they receive. Pre-1 and Toddler students read the book *Scoot!* about 6 little turtles and their friends in a pond. Toddlers played with turtles in make believe ponds. Pre-2 students also learned about wetlands. We talked about what they are, where we can find them, and who lives in them. Students learned about the cleaning abilities of this habitat. We used a wetland model (made of sponges and aluminum foil) to test a wetlands ability to clean pollutants out of water.



OCEANS: Once we had studied the different water habitats of Minnesota, we began our exploration of the ocean. Each Pre-2 nature group got their own ocean habitat to focus on. The groups became experts on the kelp forest, coral reefs, sea shore, deep sea, and open ocean. After learning about the habitat and the animals that live there, they created the habitats on the walls of the nature room. We spent the whole week creating an underwater world in the nature room. From our exploration of underwater habitats, we started studying mammals of the sea, specifically whales and dolphins. We reviewed what mammals are and talked about the characteristics that make a whale or dolphin a mammal. Students learned about how some whales have teeth because of the big prey they eat and others have baleen to catch very tiny krill. Students had the opportunity to listen to a variety of whale and dolphin noises. We then learned about sharks and rays. We focused on the characteristics that make sharks great predators in the ocean. Students were able to see and feel real ray skin, eggs, and a shark jaw from the Bell Museum. We created sharks in our nature notebooks based on what we learned about their anatomy. Students also examined a real puffer fish, four different kinds of coral, a sea sponge, and a sea urchin from the museum.



To begin our unit on Minnesota and start to wrap up our unit on water, we learned about Minnesota fish. Students learned about the characteristics of prey and predator fish. Students then pretended to fish and we studied their catch. We began to learn how to identify the different types of Minnesota fish and learned about their place in the food chain.

-Emily

Sign Language and Music

In Music, we've learned some new chants, rhythms and echo songs and enjoyed singing with the autoharp as well as the piano. The children especially love the chant, Oliver Twist, where they feel the beat in the movement.

The all time favorite echo song is I am a Pizza by Charlotte Diamond. You can find the song online at www.youtube.com/watch?v=O2Zwvyhms8c and I'm sure your child would have fun singing it with you at home.



We've also been singing songs about the zoo to reinforce our sign language. A great one to sing and sign is Going to the Zoo Tomorrow, by Raffi.

It's been a fun month in **Sign Language**. We started out the month with a special guest. You may have heard from your child that my son Trent came in one week to help with Sign Language. He is deaf and was home from college over winter break. (Many of the children already know Trent as this past summer he helped with summer camp.) It was a great experience for the children to sign with him and learn about his hobbies and interests. Trent was amazed to see how so many of them could finger spell their names and felt so comfortable signing with him.

We've also have been learning the signs for a variety of zoo animals. We had fun singing songs, reading books and playing games using these signs along with the signs we've previously learned. They're looking forward to bringing home their own coloring book with zoo animal signs. I'm sure your child will enjoy teaching them to you.

-Sylvia



American Sign language for "hippo"