

Dear Parents,

We are ending week two and getting used to our schedules and routines. We start each morning with a question of the day written on the board and the students come up and write their names or initials along with their answers. As soon as the children arrive, exploration begins. Interesting and fun activities or items are put out around the room to spark curiosity and engagement. The students are encouraged to explore any and all areas of our room and they do! Our days are filled with art, science, math, music, literacy, engineering, problem solving, self expression, creativity, and critical thinking.

Last week we made individual batches of ocean slime and it was so much fun that we decided that we should make a huge batch for our sensory table. Each student poured a full bottle of glue into our table and then filled the glue bottle with water and poured that in as well. We added food coloring, glitter, and the final ingredients of borax mixed in water. Now we have enough ocean slime for everyone to explore together.

Some of our art activities this week included putting mirrors on the tables and having the children draw self portraits. A few students drew stick figures and some drew very detailed faces. We will do this again at the end of the year to see how much we've changed and grown. The students also created beautiful ocean scenes with oil pastels and water colors paint. The results are hanging outside our room so take a look when you get the chance.

We received a set of snap circuits for our classroom and I put the box out on the table and watched to see what would happen. The students were so curious and fearless in their exploration. They worked together to set up different circuits that lit up light bulbs, made a fan turn, and played a tune. This was such an exciting and fun activity that they asked to keep working on it throughout the day whenever we were in the classroom.

We began reading buddies with Ms. Alexandra and Ms. Lorie Anne's classes this week. We do some partner reading and also work on projects together. We played a special math game with Ms. Lorie Anne's class and next week will engineer and construct structures and towers made from marshmallows and pipe cleaners with Ms. Alexandra's class.

We also went to the library this week to check out books and explore the children's area. The books stay in the classroom to enjoy at school during the week. The Monday after Labor Day we will be visiting the library to use their computers to access TumbleBooks. The students listen to animated picture books and can read along as well. Each child will need a pair of headphones or earbuds for this activity. Please send some in next week or if you'd like to purchase earbuds from the library, they are \$1.25.

We are reading longer chapter books for read alouds and this week began *The Octopus* by Cynthia Rylant. Reading longer chapter books strengthens attention spans and promotes excitement about reading and books. We stopped reading one day this week at a part of the book that was just about to introduce a main character - the octopus. Two of the characters (mice) are exploring the beach when the octopus' tentacle comes out of the water and touches one of them. I asked the students to write in their journals a prediction about what the octopus would be like or what it would do next. Some of the students' journal entries included the octopus eating everyone, being nice, becoming a friend, being rude, and saying "wow!"

Speaking of books: tomorrow is our deadline for ordering books from Scholastic this month. The students are so excited about new books and when you place orders, we also receive free books for our classroom. If you want to order, you can do so online with the code written on the form or you can send in a check and I can send it in.

A note about snacks: If you send a snack with your child, please make sure it is a healthy option. Things like fruit, vegetables, crackers, or cheese are all good options.

Also, we are collecting box tops for education. They help raise money for the school and the kids love taping them to our class sheet and counting how many we need to fill the sheet so we can turn it in and start a new one.

Thanks for sharing your amazing children with me. Have a great weekend!

Ms. Leslie