

Dear Parents,

November is here and as hard as it may be to believe, we are starting to look ahead to our Holiday Program next month! The students are listening to and learning the song we will be performing. The program is only six weeks away so mark your calendars for December 15 and be prepared to be “wowed”!

The excitement this week of course was Halloween. The students were so excited to see each other’s costumes and show off theirs. We were fortunate enough to get to do a little “trick or treating” in the building and when a student reminded me that we didn’t have our buckets or bags from home, we came up with a solution; they wrote their names on ziploc bags and used those to hold their treats. We all enjoyed the lunch brought in by the PTO and one student asked if we could have pizza brought in everyday.

We spent Tuesday trying to fit in everything we could: we played Halloween bingo, carved our pumpkin after using dry erase markers to design the face, finished our 5 Little Pumpkin stories, listened and danced to Halloween music such as “The Monster Mash” and finally, watched a DVD of *Creepy Carrots*, a book we have really enjoyed in class. When I told the students that I had discovered a DVD version of the book, they couldn’t wait to see it and asked me each day if we could watch it. It was worth the wait, and it was rewarding to see some of the students reading along with the story, as the words were displayed at the bottom of the screen.

The costume parade was a great end to the day and the students were thrilled to see friends and family members along the route. As we walked around the school, I had a couple students stop each time they passed siblings and parents for hugs and kisses. We may have held up the line a bit but it was worth it!

Since we had finished our last novel, we voted on a new one and decided on *Bunnacula* by Deborah Howe. It was recommended by the librarian in the children’s section at the Des Plaines Library and while the response to our last

novel was a bit lackluster, the children are definitely fascinated by *Bunnicula*. We have been discussing the similarities and differences between this novel and the last one we read and discovered that main characters in both are cats and dogs. There are also problems to solve in both stories. We will be creating a Venn Diagram to organize our ideas visually and to identify the similarities and differences of both stories and will add more information as we continue reading.

This week we also roasted the pumpkin seeds we gathered from our class pumpkin, estimated how many there were:  $>100$  or  $<100$  and then discovered that there were over 300! We did a taste test and created a graph with our results, including a column for those who chose not to try any. We created math questions from our graph such as which category/column had the most, which had the least, how many people were included in the data, and how many more people liked/loved the pumpkin seeds than didn't like. We create many graphs in our class and if I don't suggest making ones, the students go to the board and write the different categories by themselves. Graphing allows them to collect, sort, and represent data in a way that is easier to understand than just numbers and words alone.

We also made pumpkin pancakes this week and the children are getting to be experts at measuring, stirring, cracking eggs, pouring batter, and flipping pancakes, all while being careful and safe. As we delivered pancakes to staff members around Plato, more than one suggested we start our own cafe or catering business. We do love to cook and I have twelve enthusiastic chefs so maybe it's something to think about.....

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

Ms. Leslie