

Friday, October 27, 2017
Plato Academy- Room 9

Classroom Journal: **Pumpkin Smash**

Dear Families,

Our "Pumpkin Smash" continued throughout the week and concluded today. First, the children first had to remove the nails from last week and so, they practiced using the "claw" of the hammer. They used precision to grasp the nail-head between the claw of the hammer to pull out each nail. The children were asked to compare their hypothesis/estimate of nail-heads with the result of nail-heads used. "What was the difference between your hypothesis of nailheads and actual number of nails used to cover the circumference?" They counted their nail-heads and subtracted the two numbers. Rather than being instructed to subtract the two numbers the goal was to use words in solving math. The children connected that difference meant the number in between and after much discussion, together they concluded the best way to find a difference between two numbers is to subtract. They practiced this again for the conclusion of the "Pumpkin Smash" lab, when the children counted the seeds and found the difference of their hypothesis. On Thursday the children estimated the amount of seeds their pumpkin had and then began to gut the pumpkins. Some of the pumpkins had mold and became quite smelly so, "doctor masks" were created to mask the smell. The children used fine motor skills to pull apart the seeds from the "guts" and grouped them in cups of 20. One child suggested to put a little water and soap in each cup of 20 seeds to get the smell out of our classroom. Ms. Dionysia's class joined in during our designated buddy time and were able to support the lab write up and the seed counting. Some children chose to write out in the traditional form, 20 seeds x 20 cups. They practiced decomposing the number 100 to sets of 5 20's.

Through this lab, the children practiced writing skills, comprehension, and cooperative learning. They were accountable for writing two different lab reports this week, one referencing the nail-heads and the other regarding the seeds. For example, "Our group's pumpkin had ____ cups of 20 seeds. The total number of seeds was _____. The difference between my hypothesis and the result was _____. In conclusion, my hypothesis was _____ (fewer or more than) the results." The children wrote out this in their individual journals and in the meanwhile were discussing with their group members how to complete the sentences: "Wait, is it fewer or more? What does difference mean again?" They practiced recalling the amount of cups of 20 and then associating it with the total number of seeds. They worked together in their groups to negotiate ways of calculating, pulling the nails out, and gutting the pumpkin.



In "Cricket in Times Square", lark, coax, and tempt were quite prevalent words in the chapter! We are wrapping up our story with only two chapters left and a cliffhanger! Is Chester fed up with urban life? Will he move back to the city? Was the throng (new vocab word) watching him perform outside the newsstand too much? What will the denouement (vocab word) be? We will find out on Monday morning!

We are starting "Wonder" with Ms. Alex and Ms. Dionysias class with literacy circles set up today. The children are very excited about our collaborative read-aloud. To compliment the book of choice the movie is coming out late November!

Have a great weekend!
Warmly,
Ms. Bia & Mr. Foti