



Classroom I Newsletter

October 2011

We are already having tons of fun in Classroom I! The children have been busy spooning, pouring, scrubbing, polishing, planting, watering, counting, word building and so much more! We invite you to make an appointment to come and observe the children as they discover their love for learning!!

The Latest

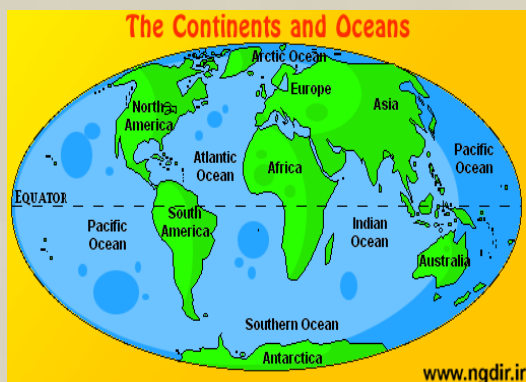


Mrs. Spencer began a series of lessons on the four seasons, which will be continuing on throughout the year as the seasons change. To begin, we looked at a book called *Sky Tree: Seeing Science through Art*, by Candace Christiansen and Thomas Locker. This beautifully illustrated book depicts how a tree, as well as the surrounding landscape, changes with the seasons. The children had an

opportunity to make their own version of a "Sky Tree" by choosing a label and placing the appropriate flowers, leaves, blossoms, snowflakes, etc. on a bare tree to make it change for each season. Our art table featured a work choice where the children, using their thumbprints, painted four trees to show how a tree changes with each season. This was a very popular work choice! Each painting was truly a unique work of art.

In the peace area of our classroom, Mrs. Spencer placed a book with photos of spring, summer, fall, and winter, along with a personal CD player containing an excerpt from each of Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*. Our classroom has a peace area which contains activities that allow a child to practice making silence, and to calm him/herself. This is a valuable skill to possess for adults and children alike in our fast-paced, noisy world!

In addition, we also talked about the life cycle of a butterfly, as well as the migration of the monarch butterfly to warmer climates every year. For scientists, this long journey to Mexico and back is one of nature's greatest mysteries. Monarchs make the trip purely by instinct and return to the same exact mountainside to which previous generations of monarchs traveled even though they themselves have never made the trip. Amazing!



Classroom I will be doing a yearlong study of the oceans. Mrs. Rach began her lessons by showing the children a book on the oceans and asked each child what they might be interested in learning. These are some of their suggestions:

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| Penguins | Whales | Sharks |
| Octopus | Dolphins | Eels |
| Viper Fish | Sea Lions | Seahorse |
| Sting Ray | Manatees | Sea Turtles |

Mrs. Rach introduced the 5 oceans and showed the children where they are located in the world. She began lessons on sea life by talking about fish. Fish are some of the most abundant animals on our planet and our oceans are teeming with them. The children learned the parts of a fish and various facts. Additionally, the children had the opportunity to trace and label the parts of a fish.

Mrs. Rach also talked about our coldest continent, Antarctica. Here are some interesting facts the children learned about Antarctica:

- Antarctica is the 5th largest continent
- It is the coldest, driest and windiest continent. The coldest temperature ever recorded was -129 degrees in 1983.
- The continent only receives 2" of precipitation each year. There is so much ice and snow because it never melts.
- People do not live on Antarctica. Only scientists visit for parts of the year to study the wildlife, climate and for other scientific research.
- The seasons in Antarctica are opposite from our seasons in North America.
- The sun sets at the end of March and doesn't rise again until October.

Mrs. Rach then told the story of Ernest Shackleton and the boat, *Endurance*. Shackleton was an Antarctic explorer who hoped to cross the continent on foot with his crew and sled dogs. Unfortunately, they were trapped in an ice floe before they reached the continent. Their ship was eventually crushed by the ice and sank. They had to travel over the ice and snow, towing their life boats, until they reached the ocean. They then made a treacherous crossing to Elephant Island. Shackleton and three other members of his crew then left and braved open ocean and huge waves to reach a whaling station 800 miles away. They were successful and were able to bring rescue to the crew member left behind on Elephant Island. The crew was gone for almost two years and all members survived. A true story of adventure and heroism. The children have been able to enjoy two books on this adventure with actual photographs taken during the expedition.



Many children expressed a great interest in snakes. So, in the spirit of "following the child" (children), Mrs. Young entered the slippery, slithering fascinating world of snakes. We

learned that there are over 2700 species of snakes in the world... 32 of which live in Kentucky (only 4 being poisonous)! The

children were taught the characteristics and parts of a snake. Lucky for us, Classroom V has a pet snake! Her name is Candy. Candy is a corn snake. Ms. Zachritz brought Candy to our classroom for a visit. Each child was able to get a close look at Candy. They were able to see her forked tongue and feel her dry, scaly skin if they chose to do so. We measured Candy to discover that she is 42" long! The children learned that as a snake's body grows they outgrow and shed their skin. This is called molting. Ms. Zachritz had a sample of Candy's skin that she had outgrown. Snakes shed their skin in one whole piece! Most importantly, the children were taught the beneficial role that snakes play in our world. Snakes are carnivores so if it wasn't for snakes our planet would be overpopulated with rodents! If you don't like snakes there are a few places you can live that don't have any snakes at all. These places are Antarctica, New Zealand and Ireland....but look out for rats and mice!! :)

Reminders

Snack day comes with many special privileges. On your child's snack day:

- He/she may bring a favorite item or book from home to show to the class.
- He/she has the opportunity to make Jell-o, which will then be served on
- pizza day.
- He/she can invite a guest for lunch (usually Mom or Dad, but if no parent can make it that day, your child may invite a friend from our class).
- He/she decides how to dismiss the children to lunch.

Please remember to label jackets, gloves, hats, scarves etc. We want to ensure that all personal items make it home to their rightful owners.

Dates to Remember

October 13th- No school-Conference Day for 1st year children

October 14th- No school- Professional Development Day

October 15th- No school- Professional Development Day

October 20th- Parent Education Night- 7pm

October 30th- Grandparents Day/Open House 1-4pm

November 4th- No school- Conference Day for 2nd year children (We will be contacting you soon to schedule a conference).

November 18th- Chili Night

November 23-25th- No school- Thanksgiving Break

Just For Fun

Mrs. Kessinger came to school for a surprise visit a few weeks ago! The children were so excited when they saw her! John, a second year student, summed it up for all of us when he exclaimed, "Mrs.Kessinger, you're home!"

Thanks To You

To Mrs. Dugan for the donation of many wonderful books!

To Shawnetta Okpebholo for the beads and beaders!

To the Swan family for the donation of clothes and for always choosing just the right day to bring bagels to the staff!

To Chloe and family for the Animal Life book!

To Ms. Zachritz for bringing Candy the corn snake to our classroom!

To Mrs. Schwering for brightening our classroom with fresh cut flowers from her garden.

To Mrs. Conti, Mrs. Young's mom, for ALL the hours she spends helping us make materials.

To all our families for donating items to our Halloween basket for the Founder's Day Bash!

Have a wonderful fall break!

Joan, Diane and Melissa

“Free the child's potential, and you will transform him into the world.”

Dr. Maria Montessori