

March, 2011

Dear Families,

As our students prepare for our Industrial Revolution History Day, the environment is filled with stories of the Transcontinental Railroad, factories and the use of poor children in small places in coal mines and factories, horsecars, woman's rights movement, sweatshops, etc. Some of the older students are helping the younger ones learn to make notes and then organize them. Everyone is busy reading, illustrating, and creating 3-dimensional representations of their subjects.

In language there is much grammar work in progress. Games with prepositions and adverbs liven us all up as children are reading and writing commands to practice their knowledge of the functions of these parts of speech. So if you walk in and see one child standing on a table, another sitting under the table, and perhaps one sitting beside the table, you will know that their understanding of prepositions is going into their beings kinetically. (My husband always says, "Such fun. It seemed like in the old days if you were having fun, it was assumed that you could not be learning anything.")

The older students have been learning about clauses. Once they have clarity on the difference in a phrase and a clause, they learn to recognize noun, adjective, and adverbial clauses. They enjoy writing their own sentences with clauses and then helping other students understand these complex concepts.

Fractions are going on at every level, from the introduction of the concept to adding fractions concretely to reducing and raising fractions to adding and subtracting with unlike denominators. Squaring on the pegboard, cubing with wooden cubing materials, and early algebra work are common activities these days.

Almost everyone in our class is knitting now and many are purling. Some of the children have blankets that are getting quite large, and at least six baby hats have been completed. They have been teaching each other to decrease and to use the mattress stitch to complete their hats.

We look forward to seeing you on History Day!

Sincerely,

Mona