

Mrs. Baumgart's Class Newsletter

Hello everyone! I hope you all are enjoying this beautiful fall weather as much as our class is. The children are enjoying the beautiful fall leaves in many ways. Bouquets of leaves are a favorite item to collect and the cherry tree in the front yard is a dependable source of red, ovate shaped leaves! We are also bringing the colorful leaves to the art shelf to make leaf rubbings. Printing work is out for the first time this year, using a leaf stamp and paint. The children are also enjoying poems and songs about leaves.

Apples are another favorite theme this time of year. In mid October, the oldest group of children in our class went on a field trip to an apple orchard. We had prepared for it by learning about the growth cycle of an apple tree, parts of a flower and pollination. Unfortunately, when scheduled this trip I had no idea that the drought this summer would cause the apples to be ready for harvesting earlier than usual! Despite the lack of apples to pick from the trees, we had a wonderful time. Each student did get to choose from several varieties of apple that were in bins. I purchased apples for the remaining students in our class. Later that week Jacob Martin's mom, Odalys Martin, helped each child peel and chop up an apple to make applesauce for our class to eat. We also had cinnamon and nutmeg grinding on the shelf to obtain the needed spices. Our classroom smelled great while our applesauce was cooking in the crockpot!

I really enjoy observing the students as they progress through the curriculum. The work I see ranges from learning how to button, to learning to tie your own shoe; learning to count to 10 without skipping a number, to counting every number from 1 to 1000. I enjoy hearing an older student read a simple book to a younger one who is just learning to sit still and listen quietly. It is wonderful to watch each student's growth throughout the school year!

Observing is an important part of my job. I get much insight into each student by watching the class between presenting lessons. This gives me information about which child is ready to progress to the next lesson that follows what they have been exploring or if a child needs a representation with that material. The parent observers we have had so far have also enjoyed watching the interactions and work the children are doing. They are always amazed at how busy and productive the children are. There is no better way to understand how our environment helps a child to grow and develop, than to come and observe.

The group of the oldest children that are with me each afternoon at 1:00 have enjoyed our reading of a chapter book, "Charlotte's Web". This led to interesting discussions about life cycles of animals. Next we will return to our study of early American history in preparation for the Thanksgiving holiday. We will learn about the early colonists and how the Native Americans helped them. The students in this group have all learned the Pledge of Allegiance. They take turns being the flag bearer and are always eager to take on that honor. We will also continue learning about the beginning of our independence, studying George Washington and Betsy Ross.

I hope those of you that have not been able to come and watch our class will be able to do so at some point. You are always welcome! - Sandy Baumgart