



VMS Weekly News - November 18, 2016

"Education is for improving the lives of others and for leaving your community and world better than you found it."

Marian Wright Edelman



Tomorrow is Family Yard Day 9:00 a.m.-Noon

The Grounds & Greens Team has organized some incredible improvements to the playground and front entrance area. There is a lot of work to be done on the yard on Saturday. Please join in to make our grounds beautiful. Feel free to bring a morning healthy snack to share.

Also, if you can bring rakes, shovels, clippers, and child-size equipment, it would be very helpful.

We are looking for donations of 6-10 inch diameter tree limbs to build a barrier around the sand box. You can drop off the tree stumps or limbs in Miss Ty's garden. We will be cutting them down. If you have a leaf blower, and/or sander please bring that to clean up the leaves on the ground and sand the stump tops around the sandbox.

Please join in to make our grounds beautiful!

Primary 1 Classroom

-Miss Ty, Miss Cristina and Miss Rebecca

There was lots of art happening in our class during the last week. The first was necklace making. This activity has been "in process" for many weeks. First, we introduced the skill of snipping yarn. Taking a pair of scissors and snipping a piece of yarn is challenging for young hands, but most children in our class have practiced this with quite a bit of success. (These small pieces of yarn are saved over the winter and will be spread in our outdoor environment for the birds to use in their nests!) Then, children practiced threading a needle. They took a needle, placed a "needle threader" in the hole, and then proceeded to do the very complex work of drawing the yarn through the hole in the needle. It's not an easy task, but many of the students are experiencing success with this. The last step was to place bits of paper and straws on the thread. Voila, they made a beautiful necklace!



We are using our stand-up easel now for painting big pictures with tempura paint. It is important for pre-school children to have experiences with large motor activities, and this large brush work will allow them to stretch and draw their dominant hand across their "midline" (an imaginary line drawn from head down to the feet that separates the left and right halves of the body). Plus, it is just fun to paint big pictures! As with everything in the classroom, the children are learning to clean up after themselves and ready the exercise for the next person who will use the easel.



Primary 2 Classroom

- Miss Chris and Miss Holly

Since the weather was not cooperating during gardening this week, Miss Ava did a project with the children that showed which foods are healthy ones and which are not. She talked about what makes a food healthy and gave the children



pictures to look through and then separated them between healthy and non-healthy items. The children then picked a few items to color and glue on their plates to represent the foods that they enjoy that are good for them. We will not be having gardening next week as Ava will be away.

Many of the children are still excited about the new lessons of sink and float and magnetic and non-magnetic. These lessons are used throughout the day, and I have been observing the children using the magnetic wand to find other items in our class that might be magnetic. I have also introduced painting at the easel. While many children have done easel painting at home, doing it at school provides many more opportunities to expand the lesson while still enjoying the aspect of painting. A child must first put on an apron, get the paper on the easel (which many times needs a friend's help), put their name on their paper, (which also needs a friend's or teacher's help), decide what to create and then clean up after they are finished. The clean-up process has many steps starting with hanging the finished product on the rack to dry. A bucket with water and a sponge is used to wash the easel to remove any leftover paint, and if needed, a towel is used to dry off any excess water so that the next person's paper doesn't get wet. The apron gets rolled back up and put back on top of the easel. It seems so natural for us as adults to assume that this is what would happen when one was done painting, but for a child, each and every step is a growth in his/hersense of order and level of concentration. Following each step and checking to see if the lesson is ready for the next child is a complex sequence which builds independence, order, concentration and coordination.

Our class had an exciting visitor this week. I found a large praying mantis outside and brought it in for a couple of days for the children to enjoy and observe. We researched praying mantises and found out that the one I found was a female due to the fact that she had six abdominal sections, whereas males have eight. We let her go back to nature yesterday, but it was fun observing her for a short time.



Elementary Classroom - Miss Irene and Miss Nora

Our visit to M.V. Museum

piqued great interest in the extinct heath hen. Our group gathered on the lawn at the museum to hear the story of the heath hen and view a large picture of them. This was followed by a group discussion on what students noticed about their outer appearance, and then they predicted what their diet and habitat might have been.



We later went into the museum to view the two stuffed specimens encased in glass. We learned that the museum may use the DNA from these two to clone a new heath hen! We listened to an audio recording of an island man who remembers watching the heath hens in his back yard. During his youth, he would sit on his porch and watch the males jump high in the air at each other to compete for a mate. The males have two sacs at the base of their neck, which they used to blow up in order to amplify the sounds of their mating call. We saw a short black-and-white film of some of the hens in the state forest, which was their habitat. Another short film showed us the likeness of the prairie chicken, which exists in dwindling numbers in some of the mid-western states. As a follow up, the students recorded facts in their own booklets of what they learned. It was stamped with a heath hen stamp and stored until next week's class.

Elementary I students were very busy this week reading, laying out skip-counting chains, using bead frames for addition, working with fractions and making 7-days-of-the-week booklets. As a group, they were introduced to the year and its parts. This will lead the children into personal timelines and the history of timekeeping.

Some of the Elementary II students have been getting geometry lessons involving polygons and their relationship to the circle with a focus on the apothem and the radius. Other students are finding and making equivalent triangles and rectangles. A first in a series of lessons, this lesson leads students to the realization that a triangle and rectangle are equivalent when their bases are the same and the height of the triangle is twice the height of the rectangle. When I give the students the measurements of the base and height of a rectangle, they can use their formula to construct an equivalent triangle by using their brains, a pencil and a ruler!



Late Day

- Miss Weezie and Miss Cristina

The art class this week provided students with a unique opportunity to meet and observe an artist who demonstrated use of a potter's wheel. Last week's work with clay was an introduction to the medium, but creating a student's own design piece at the wheel was a thrill.



Tuesday's rain allowed us to enjoy some indoor activities, including Marble Run, Lincoln Logs, modeling clay and seasonal drawings to color.

We continue to explore the magical world of puppetry to enhance creativity and foster skill development in many areas. Puppets can be a teaching tool to promote the language arts experience and develop listening skills, fluency, grammar and expressive communication; all while experiencing joy with others. See you at Family Yard Day!



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Looking for a unique item or holiday gifts? Purchase our school-themed items and support VMS at the same time. Check out our collection of t-shirts, sweatshirts, mugs and more by clicking [here](#).

Recommended Reading

"What do P. Diddy, Sergey Brin, and Peter Drucker have in common?"
by Glenn Rifkin

"Succeeding at their own pace" by Alex Beam, Boston Globe Columnist

Book Corner for Parents

"Last Child in the Woods": Saving our children from Nature-Deficit Disorder
by Richard Louv

"Montessori Madness!": A parent to parent argument for Montessori education

by Trevor Eissler

"Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius" by Angeline Stoll Lillard

Book Corner for Children

"What Do You Do With An Idea?" by Kobi Yamada

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