

BRANCH NEWS

And....that's a wrap; January 2018 is officially in the books! We say this every month, so we'll say it again, "this last month flew by". Would you agree yourself? Studying snowflakes was our study focus in the Branch room, along with a few other fun topics and interests throughout the month. Although Ms. McKenzie and myself are pretty pleased with the mild season thus far, it proved to be quite a challenge throughout the month when it came time for circle, science and hands on activities. Without snow, what do we do? We improvise. Some activities did not require snow, but some of them would have been a lost cause without it.

As we began our snowless month, we discussed the season winter. With winter, typically comes snow. "How is snow created?" was one of our morning circle time Q & A activities. Each child was asked to come up with their own idea as to how snow is created. We had some pretty outrageous, witty and knowledgeable answers. Once every friend at circle had given their answer, we then read a nonfictional informative book that provided us with the proper answers regarding the question, "How is snow created" We now know as a class, that snow is created when water vapors in the air freeze before they can turn into water. This happens when the temperature in the clouds is very cold.

With that established, it was time to get started! Our first art project of the month involved both small and large popsicle sticks. We discovered that by crossing criss crossing a total of 4 sticks, a wooden snowflake could be created. Once each student had done a small and large snowflake, proper snowflake paint colors were to be suggested. We could have gone with basic white, but decided to "mix" it up a bit. As a circle time activity, the children were asked to close their eyes while descriptive words were vocally used. They were in charge of putting color to each word. Snow, snowflakes, snowmen, starry night, and trees were just a few descriptive words that needed color. As we went around the circle, many colors were mentioned, but the color white was the most popular. So, we came up with the idea that we would add white paint to a few other colors that were mentioned throughout the circle. Purple and blue for the starry sky, and green for the trees were the chosen colors. We then added white paint to each, mixed it and before we knew it, we had created new colors...pastel colors! The amazement beamed from each Brancher's eyes, as they realized that they had made new, fun and soft colors! Once the snowflakes were painted, they were of course sprinkled with glitter, because well, everything is better with glitter! You can see these pretty little gems sparkling in the sunshine hanging in the windows of our classroom. This activity, much like many of our activities, took time, patience, discussion and problem solving!

Measuring snowfall was going to be an amazing math activity for our Brancher's. But, when they snow never fell and accumulated, we discovered that measuring ice blocks (plastic hollow cubes) would just have to do! A ruler and a yard stick were both introduced during a morning circle time. Each child was able to examine each measuring stick and pass to their circle time neighbor once done, allowing about 5 seconds per child. Taking turns was key when it came to this circle time. It was such a pleasure not only watching them be so patient, but also using their pleases and thank yous as they passed them around. We discovered that a ruler is smaller than a yard stick, but they share some of the same numbers. Those numbers help you figure out how small or big something is. We focused on using the numbers which measured the "inches". After that information was established, each child was given an ice cube and then asked to lay them out side by side, and we would measure each time. We even challenged them to stack the ice cubes on top of one another and measure that way as well. I think it is safe to say, that when the snow actually does arrive, our Brancher's will be outside on recess with a ruler in hand measuring and putting their number knowledge and recognition to the test!

BRANCH NEWS

As we conduct our studies each month, we always incorporate our circle time, books, art activities, sensory and hands on stations (or centers) to help further the informative and educational aspect to learning. Some of our activities this last month included: cotton ball alphabet searching, blue sensory beads and magnifying glasses, ice block igloo construction, symmetrical snowflakes, paper snowflakes, paper ripping and pasting snowflakes, open art folders, name strips and snowy self portraits were just a few of the many fun hands on activities that filled up our month of learning!

February is sure to be a fun month for us in the Branch room, as we will be learning, discussing, and discovering tooth and dental care! Did you know that February is National Children's Dental Health Month? This dental study is going to be nothing but amazing! Let the learning begin!

Have a great month

Heather, McKenzie, & Stacie

FEB 18

DENTAL WORK

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			A TOOTH IS...	TOOTH KNOWLEDGE
WHAT IS TOOTH CARE?	HAPPY TOOTH. SAD TOOTH.	TOOTH DIAGRAM	Q & A	WEB
TOOTHPASTE GLITTER SLIME	THE FRAGILE ENAMEL	VALENTINE'S DAY!	DENTAL FLOSS TOOTH LACING	Q-TIP TOOTHBRUSH
CLOSED PRESIDENT'S DAY	LOOSE TOOTH SUBTRACTION	MARSHMALLOW SMILE	HARD BOILED EGG STAIN	TOOTHPASTE HYPOTHOSIS
HEALTHY TEETH COLLAGE	GERMS + FOOD SCIENCE EXPERIMENT	HEALTHY TEETH CARE PACKAGE	SUPER SMILE SELF PORTRAIT	HAPPY TOOTH WAND AND SONG

BRANCH