

## BRANCH MARCH NEWSLETTER

Another month has come and gone in the Branch classroom- and might we say how fast the year is going so far? We wish we could slow time down! But as we like to say in the Branch room, "Time flies when you're having fun!" and trust us, we are having a ton of fun! In the month of February, we explored and studied teeth. When we do this study, we get a lot of feedback from parents, which we love. We had many children going home singing the "Brushing" song, talking about what foods on their plates were healthy for their teeth, requesting trips to the dentist, and we had children very adamant on brushing their teeth twice (sometimes more!) a day. We were delighted to hear that our Branchers have taken a liking to their teeth-health! It is always such a fun study.

We started the month off by exploring our teeth and learning all about what they do, how we can keep them healthy, and why we brush them. In every study, the Branch kids expand their vocabulary as we dive deeper into each subject. This month, the Branchers learned that we had three types of teeth: Incisors, Canines, and Molars. We were so impressed by how quickly they picked up these words! Before we could blink, the kids were pointing out which teeth were which in their mouths. We discovered that we had 8 Incisors in the front of our mouth, 4 Canines, and 8 Molars in the back of our mouth. When asked what we use our teeth for, the Branch kids were quick to shout out, "Eating!" and they couldn't be more right! We learned that Incisors and Canines were used to take bites out of food, while our molars were used to mash-up our food. After learning about the basic types of teeth, we dove into learning about what is inside a tooth. We discovered that on the outside of each tooth is a hard, white substance called Enamel. The Enamel of the tooth was seen as the armour of the tooth- it's strong and protects the tooth. Under the Enamel, we have Dentin which also protects the tooth by covering up the Pulp, which holds blood-vessels that keeps the tooth alive and healthy. But how can we help keep our teeth healthy? By brushing our teeth! The Branchers learned that it is very important to brush our teeth, as it fights against Plaque and harmful Cavities. We loved hearing the Branch kids practice using their new tooth vocabulary! It is always so encouraging hearing them pick up and understand new words.

In each study, we really strive to create fun, hands-on and creative activities for the children to participate in. We love to brainstorm various activities, but we love it even more when we get to share these activities with the Branch kiddos! This month, we decided to turn the Home Center into our very own Dental Office. It was a hit! We provided the children clipboards and phones to make appointments, dental tools like toothbrushes and floss to help take of their patients, and of course scrubs so that they

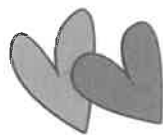
could really look the part! We loved watching the child perform 'check-ups' on the various babies and lovies in the classroom. We learned that our lovies really do need to take better care of their teeth- they had way too many cavities! But thankfully our Branch Dentists were able to come to the rescue!

One of our favorite activities during the month was our 'Egg-cellent' science experiment. During this experiment, we asked ourselves, "What would happen to our teeth if we drank or ate too much sugar?" To test it out, we used our imaginations to pretend that an egg was a tooth, they are rather similar! We submerged one egg into water, and another egg into sugary-soda. After a few days, we were able to see that the egg soaked in soda had begun to change colors! It went from a nice white color, to a dark-brown. The egg soaked in water had remained the same! We came to the conclusion that if we drank too much soda, our teeth would begin to change color and become unhealthy. But what if we brushed the now brown-egg? What would happen? Just ask the Branchers! When we brushed the brown-egg with toothpaste, we were able to see that the egg became whiter. Through this experiment, we learned that sugary foods and drinks can have a harmful effect on our teeth, but we can protect them by brushing!

Of course the month wouldn't have been complete without doing some fantastic artwork! Art activities are a great way for children to practice fine-motor skills which can be rather hard to master. Our art projects are very detailed and student-oriented. Every part of the project is done by the child; which can make it time-consuming. But by taking our time, we are able to ensure that each child is receiving one-on-one guidance so that we may promote their fine-motor skills. This month, we were able to put our fine-motor skills to the test by cutting out and lacing our own toothbrushes, creating toothbrushes out of popsicle sticks and q-tips, making smiles out of marshmallows, as well as making Tooth Diagrams that showed the various layers of a tooth. Each one of these art projects are multi-step processed which help the Brancher's fine-motor skills flourish!

And of course the month of February brought us Valentine's Day! We loved being able to celebrate this fun holiday in the Branch classroom. It is fair to say that we definitely felt the love from each child! To celebrate, we made fun tie-dye heart Valentines bags. And trust us, those bags were bursting at the seams with Valentines from the Branch kids! Thank you for making Valentine's Day yet another hit at Growing Tree. We are sad to see February go, but us Branch teachers have a lot of tricks up our sleeves for our March study... Rainbows & Rhymes!

Cheers to another fun month ahead,



Ms.Kenzie & Ms. Heather

