

THE MONTHLY BRANCH

GROWING TREE CHILDREN'S CENTER

October 2021

What an amazing beginning to what will be an amazing school year in the Branch classroom! We started September, getting acquainted with the classroom's rules and safety was a must! We discussed how we have rules in and out of the classroom to keep us safe. Once that important information was established, we then conversed about different stations and areas in the classroom. We also spoke about what was similar and what was different with their new classroom verses their old classroom. Knowing and understating their new environment was key to having fun but also keeping safe! Safety knowledge didn't stop there...we then moved to rules of the playground! Our first week of school was solely dedicated to classroom and playground safety...the "do's and the don'ts" were established. Our Brancher's have shown a great deal of responsibility so without further ado...the play structure is now open for business!

In the Branch classroom we love introducing new activities, stations as fun ways to learn and discover! We have incorporated 'partner play' to our classroom table stations and daily routine. With partner play, two friends are chosen at a time to discuss which station they would like to play at. This simple choice activity involves discussion, communication and often time problem solving between the two friends as they navigate throughout the classroom observing the provided stations available for them.

A new class with not only new students, but new teachers as well, means it is a necessity to learn more about one another. "What I Like About Me" is a book we read at circle time. It discussed how each one of us is different and how to embrace each wonderful quality that we each have! It also allowed each student to think about what makes them special and what they love about themselves. As an art activity, each student was asked to draw a picture of themselves...the term "self-portrait" was introduced.

Using only a mirror, a pencil and a single piece of paper, each Brancher drew what they saw in the mirror. They observed their face, eyes, ears, nose, hair, eyebrows, eyelashes...and with that, they became artists! Seeing their facial expression when we showed a side by side comparison to actual drawing was priceless! Because "self-portraits" are something new to the Branchers, this art activity is definitely a "work in progress". Throughout the school year, your Brancher will participate in a monthly self-portrait. You will be amazed at the progression and attention to detail each portrait will have by the end of the school year! This art activity has always been one of our favorites!

As our month continued, we began our discussion on GERMS! We discovered that everyone has germs, both good and bad ones. Unlike books, games and toys...germs are NOT for sharing! Hand washing is such an important piece to germ control. We learned a couple fun new hand washing ditties...that I'm sure you all know by now! "Icky Sticky Sherm the Germ" is rather catchy...it has definitely become a classroom favorite! Because germs cannot be seen, visual activities, table stations and circle time activities were set in place to further educate. Using pom-poms, we were able to demonstrate just how important it is to cover your sneezes and coughs. When using a tissue, your germs (pom-poms) stay confined in the tissue, but when a tissue isn't used, germs (pom-poms) spread and go EVERYWHERE! Throwing dozens and dozens of pom-poms out as germs served as a great visual at our circle time. Did your child show you their pom-pom germ?

We also conducted a super fun science experiment called "glitter handshake". By sprinkling just a little bit of glitter into our hand, Ms. Kenzie and I began shaking each Brancher's hand, then each Brancher began shaking their friend's hands. At the end of this whole group activity, each and every hand had glitter on them

We talked about how germs are so tiny, it is impossible to see with just our eyes, so simulating germs with glitter gave them a different perspective on germs and sharing them with just a simple handshake.

Another rather fun, educational and visual science experiment we conducted was the “clean hand vs. dirty hand.” By using two pieces of bread, we took turns going around the circle passing one piece of bread with clean, freshly washed hands and then another piece of bread with hands that were unwashed....freshly off the playground! Our next step was placing each piece of bread into their very own separate Ziploc bag. We let the bacteria and germs do the rest. Hand washing before each meal is quite important, and the bread was a great way to demonstrate it just that!

As September came to an end, I think it is safe to say that being a Brancher is pretty awesome! Ms. Kenzie and myself feel honored to have such a fun, caring, creative, and enthusiastic group of children. We are truly enjoying getting to know each and every one of their personalities! October is sure to bring more art, fun and games as we “Fall into Autumn....with our 5 Senses”. Apple tasting, applesauce making and pumpkin carving....OH MY! All of the sights smells and tastes of Autumn will prove to make an awesome month full of learning!

Our Family Board is filling up and looking amazing! We love seeing all the beautiful faces and families! Please feel free to keep those pictures coming in, as we will continue adding pictures throughout the school year!

-Ms. Heather & Ms. Kenzie



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Falling into Autumn.....and Our 5 Senses!

| MON | TUES | WED | THURS | FRI |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| <p>Making Sense Of Our 5 Senses</p> | <p>Sense Of Touch 'Mystery Bag'</p> | <p>Textured Hand Print Sensory High 5</p> | <p>'Can't Touch This' (Temperature Test)</p> | <p>Amazing Autumn Self Portraits</p> |
| <p>Pumpkin Sights & Smells</p> | <p>Dig In & Dig Out! Pumpkin Texture Seed Search</p> | <p>Pumpkin Seeds Roast, Toast & Taste!</p> | <p>Symmetrical Pumpkin Trace & Lace</p> | <p>Sweet VS Sour Math Graphing</p> |
| <p>Autumn Apple Taste Test Compare & Describe</p> | <p>Whole Apple Half Apple Quarter Apple</p> | <p>Aromatic Homemade Applesauce</p> | <p>Warming Tray Press & Melt Fall Foliage</p> | <p>Scented Cotton Ball Match Up</p> |
| <p>Poppin' Corn Delicious Super Science</p> | <p>Coffee Bean Textured Playdough</p> | <p>'I Hear a Pickle' By: Rachel Isadora</p> | <p>I Hear. I See. I Smell. I Taste. I Touch.</p> | <p>5 Senses Make Sense! Month Wrap Up.</p> |