

TriBeCa Community School Newsletter

January 15, 2010

General Notices

PARENTS WORKSHOPS ARE HERE!

We invite you to see the work that the children have been doing.

If you did not RSVP yet, please do so to your child's teacher:

All workshops are held here at the school 7:00PM-8:30PM (no children).

RM1: Monday, Feb 1, 2010

RM2: Monday, Feb 1, 2010

RM3: Wednesday, Jan 27, 2010

RM5: Wednesday, Jan 27, 2010

Upcoming Holiday

In observance of Martin Luther King's holiday, our school will be closed on Monday January 18, 2010.

The school will reopen as usual Tuesday January 19, 2010

NYU Child Study Center

The NYU Child Study Center is providing a FREE talk: IS YOUR CHILD A WORRIER?

If interested, please see document at the end of this newsletter.

Next week's snack:

Tricia Williams (chefanator@mac.com), a certified holistic nutritionist and chef (also a parent in our school!) plans and prepares our snack. For next week, the menu is (snack may change without notice):

Tuesday: fruity-oat power

bites **Wednesday:** apples

Thursday: sunbutter & jelly sandwiches on spelt bread

Friday: winter veg crudités & humus

Nutrition Tip: spelt is an ancient variety of wheat that is more digestible than other varieties, as it has not been modified over time.

Room 1

The Mini Atelier

The exploration and manipulation of clay that started in September in our mini-atelier is a constant and on-going process that we hope will continue throughout the year. To challenge the

children along their exploration of such a rich material, we altered the setting of our mini-atelier. This change was done to continue to support and challenge the children in their exploration of light, clay, wire, and clay.

This new combination provides a different perspective for both painting and clay. Since this change, the children have been focusing on creating more three-dimensional structures with clay and wire. They have been engaging in more focused work. Based on their growing interest in capabilities, we have provided the children with new tools to work with the wire: pliers and wire cutters. The children have also been focusing on how this material interferes and reacts with the light.

Over the past few weeks in painting, as the children began filling their papers with paint, and showing an interest in painting on their own hands and their friends, we recognized an interest in larger scale painting. The children seemed to be requesting a larger and more challenging space to paint on. The children are now working on the wall of the mini atelier (our easel.) Here, the children can freely decide if they want to work on by themselves or if they prefer to cooperate. The large space and the large paper also offers the opportunity to experiment larger brush strokes, and room for more experimentation. We also hope that by providing more space, the children will begin to notice colors and the way they blend together.

Light, Reflection, and Shadows

In light, the children begin to notice a direct correlation with moving items on face of projector and objects moving on the wall. A new relationship is built with this newfound knowledge.

The children have been focusing their

efforts in understanding how items emerge from this machine and project onto the wall. Children have noticed shadows of their body parts up on our projector screen, but have had trouble understanding how it gets up there. Some children only focus on moving items on the projector, while other children hold their hands up to the screen, expecting it to be projected onto the sheet. A few children have begun to notice that they need to do both: place their hand on the projector and look up at the screen in order to both visualize and move the projection. Within this experience possibilities of color and light are endless. The emergence of mysterious shadows are inevitable.

Light is an abstract concept to perceive. We challenge the children through continuing observe their interests and by adding provocations. Several items were added this week that are transparent, opaque, liquid, solid, heavy, light, and displaying shadows and incorporating various colors. The children have been anxious to establish new relationships with these materials and to use them to form interconnections with light.

Reminders

Parents Workshop is coming up soon! If you have not RSVP to this seminar (on February 1st, 2010) please do so by February 19th. Looking forward to seeing you there!

Also, since we are still going outside, please remember to leave a warm coat, hat, scarf, mittens and shoes for your child!

Room 2

N.M turned 3 over Christmas break. His mom came in this past week to help us celebrate by sharing pictures of NM when he was a baby, baking a cake and reading a story. Thanks so much for your time and effort.

Snail Hospital

This week we asked the children to predict how they thought our smashed snail was feeling and how they knew that. The snail that spent a few days resting on the inside of an eggshell is now moving about and beginning to seal up the crack in its shell. M.M noticed the “new shell” and was asked to report the change to the group, but seemed too timid to share with the larger group during reflection meeting.

Again we asked what the students thought would make our patient feel better and were offered one new response: KJA said that a Gummy Bear would be a good idea.

Dramatic Play

Even though we have ceased to provoke the ghost investigation, the students are once again showing interest in searching for the ghost. Lately more and more often, students have been leaving “food” for it in the closet and chanting for the ghost to come out. Even though the students had lost interest in discussing the characteristics of the ghost with their teachers, it remains an important part of their dramatic play. It gives the students the opportunity to create theories together. Last week O.P and D.B ran around the classroom searching its nooks and crannies for the ghost. At the

end of the day, they decided that the ghost was inside a bottle that contained an opaque white liquid.

Storytelling

VR seemed very excited to have to opportunity to tell a story. He climb up on the couch next to the teacher, a beamed a big smile. The teacher said she was ready when he was and he said “I’m ready,” and continued to smile. Then the teacher said, “I will write whatever you say.” VR sat and smiled what looked to be a nervous smile. At that point, JO came to the couch and said he wanted to tell a story. Thinking that VR might benefit from a model, she asks if he would like to hear JO go first. He says no and sits quietly for a few more seconds and begins his story:

“Thomas. A lot of Thomases. And its time for Julius’ story.”

Mini-Atelier

This week’s prevocational projection was Vincent Van Gogh’s *Starry Night*. We noticed that as time goes on, the children are more open to using the paintings as inspiration for their own work. This week, HH sat with ND and WS at the painting table, waiting for Monique to enter the classroom. HH looked at the projection and announced “I’m gonna paint stars! It’s *Starry Night*.”

Materials Request

We would like to request, if you have these things around the house or come upon them in the next few weeks, that you donate them to our classroom: we need baby food jars with lids and shoeboxes or shoebox-sized boxes.

Room 3

Room 3 is off to an incredibly exciting

and dynamic 2010. We're really proud to

note the social and intellectual growth of students in class from September to January, when we returned from vacation.

You may notice children making letter and word sounds at home. They may also be recognizing their names and other written language parts--we've started signing in and out of class!

In Morning Meeting, after our "Hello Song", children see each written name--one at a time-- on sentence strips. We allow them a few moments to determine the written name themselves, and then we begin to model the sounds of each letter in the name we are looking at. When a student realizes his or her name, he or she places the name on the sign-in board, from left to right (and top to bottom). After one week of signing in, many students recognize their own names AND first letters to full names of most of their classmates! After all children have posted their names, we count the number of students who have signed in under "here", and then the number of students sitting in our circle. At home, you can reinforce this pre-reading experience by clearly and slowly emphasizing individual letter sounds in words that children are looking at. Remember to give children a few moments to think about the sounds you are modeling, and allow them the

opportunity to try making them themselves.

In conjunction with this, students have begun messaging each other with the addition of student mailboxes. In class, we've highlighted the importance of sending messages with meaning to classmates. Children should respond to each other's expressed feelings and observed experiences. This includes life events such as new siblings and other significant celebrations. Similar to signing in, this can also be reinforced at home. When you ask your child how his or her day was and what happened, listen carefully. Find something involving your child and another student and ask him or her how he or she feels about it. Ask why, also. Then, suggest he or she send a message to the other student about it. Discuss what they may want to include in the message. Remind them about the message before they go to school the next morning. Encouraging children to write--and to also think about why they're responding-- is related to the processes of learning to read, write, and think analytically.

Next on our immediate agenda is implementing elements of Fee, Fie, Phonemic Awareness, which we'll share next newsletter!

Room 4: Atelier

Room 1

This week Room 1 has continued their painting exploration in the mini atelier. Independently, the children are deciding to paint. Their main focus is on mark

making, gesture and color. They have been experimenting with overlapping colors and drips. Towards the end of the week Room 1 teachers changed the light table set up.

Room 2

Room 2's mini atelier continues to focus on painting with tempera paints. The students have independently choosing what colors they will be working on based on the projected image for inspiration. We changed the image to Starry Night by Vincent Van Gogh. The children have been very engaged with mixing shades of green and brown this week. I have begun meeting with the snail group in the atelier. The students have started expressing their interpretations of the snails in clay.

Room 5

Room 5 has continued working with

Room 5

Transportation

The teachers in room 5 have noticed a growing thread in the classroom involving the idea of transportation. We have observed the children using cars, trucks, and trains in the classroom, and over the last few weeks an increased interest in the subways and the noise and speed of the trains. We have begun visiting the subway more and more, asking the children questions to provoke theories and ideas. Some of the things the children have shown interest in include, the color of the train cars, whether the trains move fast or slow, the sounds the train makes, and where the trains go when they leave the station. Because revisiting is such an important part of our philosophy, we have brought videos and pictures back to the children, showing them their previous theories and encouraging them to challenge others ideas. We will continue to foster

watercolors at the light table. Both morning and afternoon classes have been strongly engaged with the painting process of watercolors. Room 6 students will be coming into the class to

demonstrate new techniques in mark making during small groups.

Room 6

Watercolors were added as a new material in the am class in Room 6. The afternoon class demonstrated how to use the new materials to the students in morning meeting along with during small group time. The morning clay group has continued their development of larger more intentional works which each tell a story of their own.

the children's interests in transportation and the subway, and we are excited to share the children's ideas with you during our next parent's workshop on January 27th!

Small Group Time

At TriBeCa Community School, we promote small group time as a part of the daily curriculum. We usually break the children into smaller groups according to the children's theories, thoughts, interests and ideas. Furthermore the small groups are also based on what dynamic each child will bring to the group. During this period of time the children work on long terms investigations and new materials are introduced. The sizes of the groups, give us the opportunity to ask all the children open questions that foster their process of thinking. One of our biggest challenges is to continue to reflect over

praxis and the way we communicate with the children.

Functions of teachers' language:

"Preschool teachers use language to communicate with children for multiple purposes:

1. Encouraging participation
2. Responding to children's needs and ideas
3. Managing the class or providing a necessary instruction
4. Fostering children's language
5. Conveying ideas
6. Assessing children's knowledge
7. Promoting children's thinking".

Source:

Dangel, J.R, Durden, T.R. (2010) The Nature of teacher talk during Small Group Activities . Young Children v.65, N.1: Naeyc, Wasington, DC

Work in the Classroom

The children continued using all areas of Room 5 this week and worked with new materials such as the overhead

projector, dirt, glue and beans. The teachers and afternoon class created home-made dough, and it is currently being used in the mini-atelier. The teachers documented the children's work with the dough and asked the children question such as, "How does working with the dough differ from working with the clay?" The teachers also observed the children commenting on the dough's texture and malleability. New pretend people and animals were added to the block area and the children were obsessed with the dinosaurs!

They used the dinosaurs while building together on the block table and in dramatic play scenarios. Many friends often made a "rooooooooooaaar" accompanied by scary hand and body movements. The teachers provided additional opportunities to explore this interest by offering dinosaur books in the reading area, singing the "Dinosaur Song" at meeting, creating a dinosaur stomping ground in the sensory table filled with dirt, and encouraging the use of the dinosaur's image on the overhead projector.

Room 6

Parent's Workshop

It was wonderful to see many of you at our parent's workshop on Monday evening. It is always a delight for us to share all the hard work that your children do in the classroom. As a result of the workshop, we have several new features in our classroom. The newest addition to our class game collection is called Devo Bowling, a bowling game created by parents using

open-ended materials from our classroom and the Atelier. In addition to playing the game as designed, children have been inspired by watching video footage of parents working on the game and there has been a renewed interest in many of the materials used. In our mini-atelier, we have watercolor works done by several parents. Children were delighted to find notes in their mailboxes left by parents. On Thursday and Friday we shared documentation of parents working with the children and they have been exploring all of the new

developments in the room. If you were unable to attend, please feel free to get in touch with us to arrange a viewing of the presentation at the school, we would like you to have the opportunity to see your children's recent work.

Literacy

We have begun using some new literacy materials. We have acquired a Montessori moveable alphabet and have introduced it to the children in small groups. Our approach has been to start with their word rings. On each child's word ring is that child's name as well as other personally significant words of interest that child has requested. Common words include names of family members, classmates, favorite animals, places and media characters. Using the wooden pieces of the moveable alphabet, children have begun locating and selecting letters to spell out their selected words. We also recently acquired a set of sandpaper letters. These letters are flat pieces of wood with sandpaper on the surface in the shape of letters. This allows children to have a multi-sensory experience, as they connect the shape of letters to the

sounds as they trace their fingers along the sandpaper. Our final literacy addition to the classroom is a series of twenty-six containers, each labeled with a letter. Inside these containers are six objects that begin with that letter. For example, the "R" bin has a robot, a rose, a rainbow, a ring, a rat and a radio. Working with these materials allows the children to connect the beginning letter sound of the object's name to the letter on the bin.

Light and Shadow

We have reintroduced the projector in our classroom and the children have been using a variety of materials to explore light and shadow. Several children have used the circular shaped open-ended materials to create and project intricate patterns of circles. Several children have been very interested in sea animals, sharks in particular. Toy sharks and whales were introduced in the block area to support this interest and they have made their way to the projector, providing the backdrop for exploring a popular shark book.



NYU
STUDY CENTER CHILD
CENTER



IS YOUR CHILD A WORRIER?

Does your child get easily frightened or anxious?



The NYU Child Study Center is providing a FREE talk to parents, teachers, and school directors of children between 3 to 5 years old

Please join us on: **Tuesday January 26th, 6:00-7:00pm** at
215 Lexington Avenue, 16th Floor
(Between 32nd and 33rd Streets in Manhattan)

We will review normal development for young children and talk about early anxiety symptoms, including typical worries and fears. We will also discuss how you can help your child during the transition to kindergarten.

Our discussion will also review a unique opportunity for parents whose children are shy or slow to warm up—a state-of-the-art prevention program that can help facilitate the development of confidence, independence, and competence.

For more information, please contact Amy Lerner at 212-263-8474 or
Amy.Lerner@nyumc.org.