

TriBeCa Community School Newsletter

May 29, 2009

General Notices

End of the Year Picnic:

As in every year, we invite you to attend our end of the year fun- filled picnic:

- WHEN:** Thursday June 11th, 2009 (rain day: Friday- June 12, 2009)
TIME: 10:30AM- 1PM.
WHERE: Rockefeller Park (Location: North end of Battery Park City, west of River Terrace). <http://www.bpcparks.org/bpcp/parks/parks.php#rockefeller>
WHO: Currently enrolled children and their families (siblings, parents...).
WHAT: Fun outdoor activities to all.
LUNCH: Will be catered for all.
NOTE: No sessions (AM/ PM) will be held at the school on that entire day.
DRESS: Shorts/ T-shirts (in previous years, children were comfortable in bathing-suites). Please apply sun protection cream.
SUPERVISION: Adults (parents/ grandparents/ nannies) must supervise the children they bring to the event.
RSVP: **By the end of June 3rd, 2009 (thank you for all those that already RSVP)**
Please specify number of adults and number of children:
zvia@tribecacommunityschool.com
HELP: **We are looking for volunteers to help with the various activity stations-**
please indicate whether you are willing to help for an hour or so (very simple activities- bubble making, planting, craft. etc).

From Maggie, our atelierista:

The children of Room 3 continue to work on their found materials alphabet. As the children work, they offer support to one another, and are challenged to understand the basic forms of the letters. Using a printed alphabet as a reference, children can refer to the letter's image, and check to see if it looks the same as the one they are creating from found objects. Some children seem to have an easier time creating the letters after they write it out.

As we come to the final letters of the alphabet some observations have been made. One child observed that the final 9 letters all share something, "they are all curved!" When asked why there were so many curved letters still left to make, the child's response was: "lower case are harder for me." The children have been working on an alphabet of upper case and lowercase letters, and it seems that curves of the lower case alphabet have been more difficult to execute. As the children continue to work on the rest of the alphabet I am

curious to see how they create the curves for their final letters.

OUTSIDE SAFETY:

Please assume that we go outside on all beautiful days, and:

- apply sunscreen prior to coming to the school.
- avoid sandals/ flip flops/ crocs

Next Week's Snack:

Monday: Whole Wheat Pita Chips and Humus

Tuesday: Chocolate Banana Baby Cakes

Wednesday: Superfood Granola

Thursday: Pineapple

Friday: Happy Herbert's Organic Pretzels

Tricia Williams, a certified holistic nutritionist and chef (also a parent in our school!) can be reached at: chefanator@mac.com

PHOTOS • PHOTOS • PHOTOS

After such a successful School's Photo shoot, Jinsey Dauk is pleased to offer to all families of Tribeca Community School, past and present, a \$100 Discount for a Pro Kids/Family/Baby Shoot shot by her, Jinsey Dauk Photography in her natural light studio — aka very casual living room at 50 Murray Street! (The Equinox gym building.)

See details on her site: <http://www.Jinsey.com/>

Contact her to schedule a fun shoot! Great gift for Father's Day! You can also get Gift Certificates that Jinsey will make available at same discounted price!

jinsey@jinsey.com
212 243 0652

Room 1

Early Literacy

I SPY an Alphabet in Art by Lucy Micklethwait was introduced to the children in Room 1 and Room 2. This book is a composition of twenty-six works of art by world renowned artists including Pablo Picasso, Pierre Renoir, and Marc Chagall, to name a few. We asked the children to take a closer look at this book and to interpret the complex paintings. They noticed very complicated details. Several themes incorporated into the artwork include man vs. woman, small or hidden animals, and the use of tones and shades. These images help us to interpret and conceptualize their interpretation of the world around them.

Building

New materials for building were introduced to the class this week including Plexi-glass, clear tubes, and plastic cups. The children built extremely complex structures, which presented the challenges of balance and understanding of the way things fit together. They also collaborated and worked together by sharing ideas and helping each other. These new materials allowed the children to be inventive in their building while experimenting with transparency and perspective. Some students were brought in small groups to the parent seating area and asked to draw and write notes about the large block structure there. Small group work is

important because it gives confidence to those children who are shy or nervous about speaking in front of the whole class and validates that they have an opinion. Room 3 children were asked to join the small group to help them with their drawings. We suggested that they show the younger children details that they may have missed, explain to them what shapes can be found in the structure and how these shapes can be recreated, two dimensionally, on paper. This small one on one interaction between the 2 age levels allowed the children to share differences in their experiences, knowledge, and abilities on the same subject in a way that they are familiar with and may better understand.

Mini Atelier

In keeping with the color spectrum, inspired by the traces parents left after

the workshop last week, the children were presented with the three primary colors and many containers of clear water to be used with the medicine droppers. They created both light and dark shades of colors including green, purple, and orange. The new colors and primary colors were transferred onto the coffee filters creating new shades and tones of the already created colors and presenting a tie-dye like pattern. When a child works with mixing colors, they are theorizing and questioning, for example, if blue and yellow always make green? Can blue and yellow combine to make another color? They are revisiting and revising this hypothesis constantly when the opportunity to mix blue and yellow, and different tones and shades of these colors, arises.

Room 2

We have had many opportunities to mix the children from all rooms for several explorations throughout the year. Room two children have helped room one children with learning how to properly use painting materials, take care of books, sign in etc. Room three has joined us in our block area and also helped the younger children with our outside time.

The following is an excerpt from an interesting article titled, *Mixed-Age Groups in Early Childhood Education*, by Demetra Evangelou. You may read the full article by visiting the following link:

<http://www.ericdigests.org/pre-9212/mixed.htm>

It is assumed that the wider the range of competencies manifested in a mixed-

age group, the greater the opportunities for group members to develop relationships and friendships with others who match, complement, or supplement the participants' own needs and styles. The greater diversity of maturity and competence present in a mixed-age group, as compared to a same-age group, provides a sufficient number of models to allow most participants to identify models suitable for their learning. Mixed-age grouping invites cooperation and other prosocial behaviors, the discipline problems of competitive environments can often be minimized.

Prosocial behaviors are often treated as indices of social development. Prosocial behaviors such as help-giving, sharing,

and turn taking facilitate interaction and promote socialization. Social perceptions also play an important role in the development of social competence. They are an essential part of a child's increasing social awareness. The formation of friendships is often based on a child's perceptions of the roles of peers in a variety of social contexts. Research evidence suggests that children of different ages are usually aware of differences and attributes associated with age. Consequently, both younger and older children in mixed-age groups differentiate their expectations depending on the ages of the participants. Interaction in mixed-age groups elicits prosocial behaviors that are important in the social development of the young child. Mixed-age interaction among young children can

offer a variety of developmental benefits to all participants. However, this is not to suggest that merely mixing children of different ages in a group will guarantee that the benefits mentioned earlier will be realized. Before grouping, one must consider the optimum age range, the proportion of older to younger children, the allocation of time to the mixed-age group and the curriculum and teaching strategies that will maximize the educational benefits for the group. The empirical data on the educational principles that should guide instruction in mixed-age environments are not yet available. When the data become available, they should support the position that mixed-age group interaction can have unique adaptive, facilitating and enriching effects on children's development.

Room 3

Sink or float?

It all began with a leaky water table and the children searching for materials to fix the leak. Several children looked around the room for materials that would fit on the plug in the water table. Some materials tested were too large, too small, and some just floated to the top. The children first tested cork. They placed the cork at the bottom of the table and realized it was too large. They then tested a sink strainer and stopper. The stopper floated to the top and the children then looked for heavy items to make it stay down over the hole in the water table. It was at this point that E.P. suggested that we needed something heavy enough to stay down! "It doesn't weigh enough", and using her theory of weight, the children began looking for

objects. A few of the children then went to the writing area to look for found materials (which they had been using to construct alphabet letters) and found a large screw. E.P. placed the screw in the hole and voila! It fit! The children then asked for a screwdriver to tighten the screw.

The experiment the children performed on their own, in order to fix the table, had us interested in their theories about weight and buoyancy. The next day a few found materials were placed out for the children to test, some looked the same but were different in density. At meeting the children observed these materials and made predictions as to whether or not they would float or sink. The children voted on certain objects.

For example, 6 children thought cork would float while 4 thought it would sink. The children came up with another category for the objects. On the day they had tested stoppers for the leaky water table they also came across a found material that did both; sink and

float, depending on the position it was placed in the water. Working in small groups, we tested materials and then traced the objects under the headings "sink", "float" or "both". We will continue this exploration with the larger group next week.