



Preschool Newsletter  
Preschool Webpage

January 11, 2007



On Thursday morning, preschool children visited the Grade III classrooms for their "partner time". Thus far this school year, we have been hosting our third grade partners in our space.

What a treat to see third graders at home in their own element! Half of us visited in Ms. Scattergood's room and the rest of the class went to Tr. Melissa's room. For some of these preschoolers, being in the School House was a new experience. We were considerate and remembered that it was "quiet space" in the halls.

We admired the art work that lined the walls and in the display cases and when we arrived, the older partners worked hard to help us feel welcome. They shared their toys, blocks, books, pencils, markers and paper. We look forward to more visits like this one in our year long journey of building friendships across the grades.



IMPORTANT DATES

January 12  
Friday In-Service Day  
PUPIL HOLIDAY

January 15  
Monday  
Martin Luther King Day  
SCHOOL HOLIDAY

January 16  
Tuesday  
Parent/Teacher  
Conferences PS & PK  
PUPIL HOLIDAY

February 2-4  
FSH Book Fair  
Barnes and Noble  
Bryn Mawr

February 13  
Tuesday  
PTO Meeting  
7:00pm

February 14  
Wednesday  
Valentine's Day  
(details to follow)



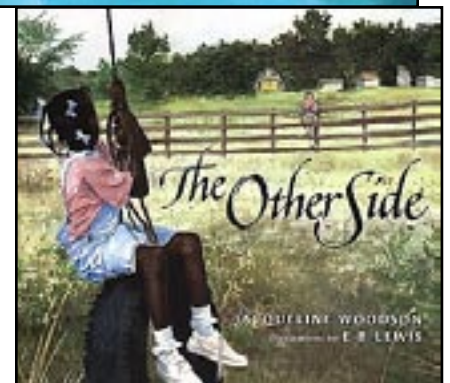
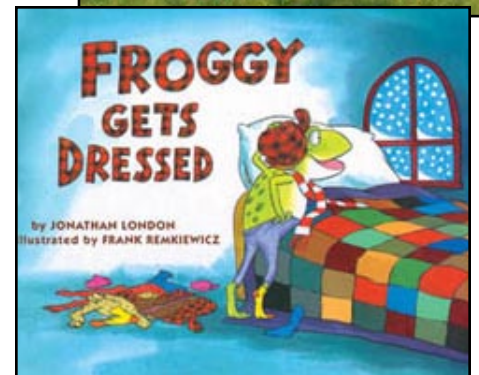
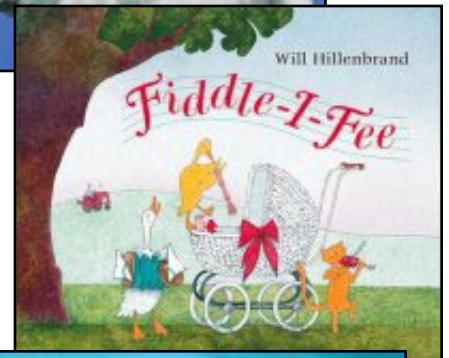
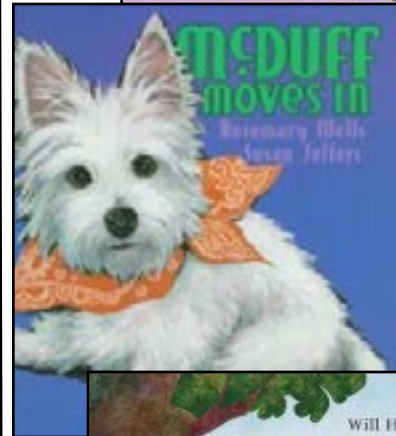
Children are learning that reading a book with a friend(s) can really enhance the pre-reading experience. They are learning to treat books with care, to turn pages from the bottom right-hand corner, and to return them to the book shelf -- spine facing out. These two pictures were snapped on Friday morning as children formed small reading groups spontaneously and independently.

We are really looking forward to February's Book Fair!



Books we have recently read include:

- Bark, George*, Jules Feiffer
- McDuff Moves In*, Rosemary Wells
- Fiddle-I-Fee*, Will Hillenbrand
- Froggy Gets Dressed*, Jonathan London
- The Other Side*, Jacqueline Woodson



*Integrated Curriculum: Math (shapes), fine motor (folding, tying), Interpersonal (reading body language and facial expressions), Music (I Can Sing a Rainbow), Social Studies (problem solving, moving as a group)*

At a recent circle time, and in silence, Mrs. Thompson folded a scarf into a triangle and tied it around her neck. Watching intently and following the teacher's non-verbal cues, the children silently proceeded to do the same. In silence, the children rose, held hands in a circle and joined in singing the rainbow song. It was magical!



Happy birthday to Tessa who turned four years old January 4



Happy birthday to Kyle who turned four-and-a-half years old December 19



Happy birthday to Cole who turned four years old January 6

*Integrated Curriculum: Science (heat, solid, liquid, melting, absorption) Art (color mixing) Fine Motor (small crayon stubs) OR : Another use for a hostess warming tray (another throwback to the mid-century ca. 1960!)*



On the left, Susanna is guiding the melting crayon across the foil-lined warming tray. Many colors are used to create new colors and designs.

On the upper-right, James carefully presses a clean sheet of construction paper on the top of the foil to absorb the colored wax, transferring his drawing to the paper.

To the right is the final product. You might notice that Zoe used glitter crayons for this piece.



## Snack Salad

Today the Snack Salad (more like a glorified trail mix) was truly a one-of-a-kind creation. Ingredients included pretzels, yogurt raisins, Pirates' Booty, chips, dried pineapple, currants, raisins, popcorn, Cap'n Crunch, Cheerios, Raisinettes, Bunny Grahams, and Trix. It was impressive to realize that we were the first and last people on earth to experience this unique creation. Thank you for your help in this.

We talked about our own uniqueness and our ability to play peacefully together just as young Martin believed we could.

## *Spanish*

A note from Profesora Adriana:

The Epiphany of the Lord is a very special holiday for children in many Spanish speaking countries like Mexico, Spain and Puerto Rico. Children get their presents on January 6. The Three Kings bring their presents.

New vocabulary:

Los Tres Reyes / The Three Kings

tres / three

la estrella / star

camellos / camels

regalos / presents

bebe / baby



**MUSINGS:** The following are excerpts from a recent e-mail exchange between Lily's mom, Lauren, and the classroom teachers (with Lauren's permission)

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*Lauren (to the teachers):*

*"Happy New Year - hope you both had a restful vacation. Ours was nice (despite both kids being sick for a large part of the vacation)! The second week, I decided to declare the television broken and I was absolutely AMAZED at the decrease in whining and the increase in creativity on Lily's part. It was such a lovely experience that I convinced Andrew to do a trial period of disconnecting our cable so that we now only can watch videos and DVDs."*

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*Mrs. Thompson (to Lauren):*

*It was fun to hear about your TV boycott. Our family did the same sort of thing when our kids were young. They both credit that experience with being life changing. Our daughter does not own a TV and our son has one that is used only for news. Pretty neat!*

*This sounds like fodder for an upcoming "Musings" section! Thanks for sharing.*

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*Tr. Jen (to Lauren):*

*We think we're conservative in what we allow our son (age 5) to see on TV. We get videos from the library and stick to Noggin, Sprout, Playhouse Disney on TV. I think he's getting bored of the regular programs and now actually asks to turn off the TV for some other activity. Thought I'd never witness that!*

*Hoping to have the courage to try the TV boycott some time in our house too. It's an interesting topic. At school teachers have been talking about the characters that show up in the kids imaginative play. So many come straight out of the movies - super heroes, princesses, etc. Wouldn't it be great if their play were inspired by characters in books instead?! I'm feeling encouraged!*

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*Lauren (to the teachers):*

*It is a really interesting topic.....while Lily does integrate book characters as well as TV characters into her play, I find that she can become obsessed by TV characters (at one point she was speaking in a British accent (on purpose) from watching Charlie and Lola).*

*We had TiVo and are very selective about what Lily watched, but it seemed that once Lily was in "TV watching mode" she often had a total lack of inertia in terms of moving to another activity. Often she intersperses TV watching and art activities or dancing along with the show, but she was whining a lot for TV and I also can't stand how most channels sneak ads in even if they aren't full-blown commercials. I'll never forget when Lily was younger and she said "mom, kids and germs go hand in hand!" (from the Lysol commercial on PBS)!!*

*Anyway, after only a few days of no TV, Lily was playing with more of her toys, we were having fun sitting down and playing games and doing art projects more often, and she was whining so much less. She still asks for TV - but only asks once and doesn't whine for it. Andrew and I have also stopped watching TV and we actually sat down and played Scrabble the other night!*

*As of tomorrow the TV will be "fixed" and Lily will be able to watch videos and DVDs, but we have cancelled our direct TV and TiVo service. So, we'll see how it goes. We have talked about using some sort of "coupon" system where she gets 2 coupons a day to either watch two 1/2 hour shows OR play on the computer for 20 minutes.*

*I am hoping the whining won't resume along with the TV watching, but we have talked to Lily about why we won't be watching as much TV and she seems to be OK with it. We'll see! I'll keep you posted.*

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*Lauren (to the teachers)*

*We ended up creating a coupon system - Lily gets 2 coupons a day ; each of which she can redeem for either a 30-minute video or 20 minutes of computer time. Today, we went to the library to get some books and pick out a few videos. She redeemed one coupon for computer time and is now watching a "sing-along" video for her second coupon.*

*Seems to be working beautifully, so far - she has had no problem accepting the limits....I'll keep you posted. Thanks for your interest in this topic.*

*P.S. Lily loved "The Hungry Thing" so much that we took it out of the library along with "The Hungry Thing Returns," which is also really cute. Reading those took precedence over tv or computer time today :-)*

**The following is a true account of what happened in Tina's house 20 years ago that had a life-long impact on her family:**

Thompson household - Summer of 1986

Cringing at the thought of seeing two young kids sitting passively in front of a TV on a summer day, Don and I knew that we had to come up with a plan to control the use of the TV in our home. After a family meeting that included the kids - Beth (6 years) and David (9 years) - we felt that we had a plan worth trying.

Each child received a pot of 100 chips, each worth \$1 - a \$100 value! The chips would be exchanged for TV time.

There were ground rules:

- 1.) You had to plan the day's TV viewing in the morning - no channel surfing!
- 2.) One chip was to be placed in the TV jar for one half-hour show or any part of a half-hour show (a two hour movie required 4 chips).
- 3.) Like reading a book, you had to watch the show from the very beginning, but could turn it off at any point.
- 4.) Any chips remaining at the end of the summer would be converted to cash. Two chips equaled \$2.

At first the kids were obsessed with the TV Guide, looking and planning and worrying about whether any particular show was worth the cost of a chip.

The summer days were quickly filled with an amazing spectrum of alternative activities. By the end of the summer, Beth had collected large boxes full of empty cicada shells and seeds and had drawn on every square inch of sidewalk and driveway with chalk. She developed an interest in wildflowers and took walks with the family at Tyler Arboretum and Riverbend to cultivate this hobby. David had mastered "Autumn Leaves" on his trumpet (our neighbors can attest to this) and with the help of the Ardmore librarian, discovered the joy of reading science fiction.

End result (Labor Day 1986):

\*Beth netted a \$50 bill that she squirreled away in a music box and had enough left over for a shopping spree at Mapes Toy Store.

\*David ended up with almost all of his chips intact and was able to purchase a world band radio for his bedroom. His evenings became filled with music and the spoken word from countries around the world.