

Blue Room News

February 2010

Hi Families! February is here! Which means one more month of winter is over! Am I the only one excited about that??? Yay!!!

Last Month:

January was a fantastic month. Our class did a book study on Lois Ehlert's Snowballs. We read the book several times pointing out the unique objects and rare words. We made our own snowmen which are hanging up in our classroom now. We studied how snow melts and even made bird seed cookies and feeder sticks (birds feeding begins the Snowballs story). We ended our book study with Small Group reading... everyone gets a book and we start with the first word on the page and read through the book together. This activity promotes so many pre-reading skills like book awareness (cover, title, author), reading awareness (left to right, top to bottom) letter awareness (what letter do we start with? Notice the "a" in this book looks different than "ɑ" we usually write). But the best thing Small Group reading does is promote word recognition. By the time we do our group read, the kids can almost recite the whole story. But during the group read, we're pointing to the words as we say them planting the seed for sight word development. And as they close the book, they are very proud of themselves that they read the whole book nearly independently!

We also got knee deep in science last month! We had a science center with five different experiments/experiences each week and did group science experiments during both Large and Small groups. I am working on compiling a list of all Science activities we did during that month so you can see how busy your child was in the Blue Room! Plus, I'd be interested in seeing if they can remember how and why things happened the way we witnessed them happening.

This Month:

This month we will be having several more focal points added to the classroom. We have the woodworking table in the dramatic play area this month. We also will be studying sounds and music, and doing a book study of Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed. And of course, there's Valentine's Day mid-month. Each of these requires a little explanation:

Woodworking Center:

The children love the woodworking center. However, one of our center rules is that they can only be in the woodworking center when there is an adult present. So if you have an available hour (1:45-2:45) this month and would like to be our grown-up on-duty, please let me know and/or sign up on our Volunteer calendar.

Music:

Musical Petting Zoo is coming today (Thursday, February 4th). The kids will get to play, touch, and learn about all different musical instruments. To honor this in-school field trip, we are making our own set of

rhythm sticks in Small Group and will be exploring all different types of rhythms and sounds in our Large Group. If you have a musical skill you'd like to share this month, please let me know!

Valentines Day:

I know Kristie said to not label Valentines. This DOES make distribution easier. However, I'm never one to dismiss a great opportunity to practice name writing. I will attach a list of names of our classmates IF your child wants to write their classmate's name. If not, "My Blue Room Friend" works just fine, too. If your child decides to write names, please arrange them alphabetically to make distribution easier on Valentines Day. The Valentine baskets will be arranged alphabetically. Here's a tip if your child is planning on writing names: start early. Asking them to sit down and write 19 names in a single setting is a lot, and you may end up with a frustrated child. If you start this weekend, write out a couple after dinner each night, it can be an enjoyable experience for all! You are welcome to add a treat to the Valentine (but completely optional). I have my own rule about taking all treats home so parents can supervise what and how much is eaten.

Classroom Needs:

Thanks to everyone who continues to check the Wish Board (by the mail files)! This is a new thing we tried out this year and it is REALLY helping cut our spending at the school! Please continue to do so if you are able. Today, I will be adding a few things:

- *Wood bases for our end-of-the-month wood sculptures: Flat piece of wood approximately 4-7 square inches (no set size)
- *Wood pieces to add to our sculpture
- *Acrylic Paints
- *1 bag of conversation hearts (by Wednesday of next week)
- *Nails
- *Screws
- *Tongue Depressors

Thanks to all who brought stuff for our busy Pajama Day week last week! It would have been a flop without your help!!!!

Questions? Comments? Concerns? Please feel free to email me! Have a great month! Be on the look-out for Pajama Day pictures and Science Center pictures. I'll be getting them within a week!