

OPEN DOOR NEWSLETTER

The month of January was very fickle. Some days were bitterly cold, while other days were almost balmy. The very cold days forced us to stay indoors and it was a springboard for many discussions about temperature, ice and how to stay warm.

We discussed in length all the ways we could keep our bodies warm and protected. Aside from warm articles of clothing, we talked about warm pajamas, blankets, beds and houses. We also agreed that hot soup and warm hot chocolate were two things that we enjoyed. We compared the difference between how people and animals stay warm when it snows and how penguins and polar bears like cold weather, live in cold places and their bodies are made to not feel the cold as we do.

We did experiments with ice. At our circle time each child was given either a mitten or glove to wear on **ONE** hand. Then I placed one ice cube on each child's hand (one in the bare hand, and one in the covered hand). The children compared and verbalized how each hand felt. "Cold, wet, hot, drippy" were some of their responses. We observed that the ice cube in the bare hand was dripping and melting much faster than the covered hand. I explained that our bodies are hot and that is why the ice was melting. Heat melts ice. The next day I gave each child a cup with two ice cubes in it. They selected **any place** in the classroom to put their cup. Some by the radiator, some by the toys, some on the tables and mine was placed in the freezer. We brainstormed what was going to happen to the ice. At snack time, the children gathered their individual cups and we emptied them into a large bowl. Some had changed into water, some were slightly melted and mine was big and firm. We concluded that the ice cubes placed nearest to the heat, melted the quickest. The ice cubes in the freezer stayed frozen because of the cold. We then took the bowl and put it back into the freezer and checked on it the next day at circle time. The water refroze into a large block of ice. The children held onto the block ice as a group and we watched how quickly the ice melted with the warmth of all of our hands. They children really enjoyed these activities.

We used our mittens and gloves in a math activity. I made a chart of mittens vs. gloves and then asked each child and teacher what they wore to school that day. We had to get 14 answers. It turned out that six people wore mittens and eight people wore gloves. We compared the numbers and we all agreed that there were more gloves that day (easy graphing).

Cooking gives us opportunities to use our math and vocabulary skills. The children followed the large cookie recipe and each child put measured ingredients into the batter. We counted two sticks of margarine, two eggs, one tablespoon of vanilla, and the cups of sugar, etc. The most fun was adding the abundance of chocolate chips and nibbling them on the side. They loved making Chicken soup with rice, celery and carrots. Not many of the children ate it, but they enjoyed watching the liquid heat, boil, and their participation in the preparation. Making birdfeeders out of oranges was also fun. We cut the oranges in half and then used the manual juicers to enjoy fresh squeezed orange juice. On Friday we made vanilla pudding. We measured and poured the milk into our bowl, we used a "whisk" to whip it up and a "ladle" to put into cups for snack. On another day we made "goop" to play with. This is a mixture of cornstarch and water. The texture is both powder and liquid and is a very tactile art activity. All the children enjoy working as a group and I call them my "little chefs". Soon we will be making pizza bagels in class for snack. All the children seemed happy about that one!

We have been using our water table more often and children are having such a good time, pouring, funneling and straining the water. **Please make sure you have change of clothing in their boxes because we do get a bit wet at times.** ☺

CLASS TRIP ON MONDAY, MARCH 3 TO THE ALLEY POND ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER.