Our focus for the month of April was the ocean. As the weather got warmer, our thoughts turned to sandy beaches and the animals that live under the water.

Children sang and moved to songs like: “The Ocean Song”, “Slippery Fish” and “Down By The Bay”. As with every theme, literature shaped our explorations and we used the books “A House for Hermit Crab” by Eric Carle, Billy Twitters and his Blue Whale Problem” by Mac Barnett, “Rainbow Fish” by Marcus Pfister and “Life in the Sea” by Melvin Berger to inspire our curriculum.

Each classroom created an ocean mural that served as a record of their learning. As the children learned about coral or whales or jellyfish, they created one of their own and added it to the mural. By combining the information with art projects and physical activity, the children were able to encode their new knowledge in multiple ways and retain it more readily.

Some of the art projects that guided our understanding were creating paper bag puffer fish, making jellyfish with streamer tentacles, using real sponges to paint colorful coral, and drawing seaweed to cover the ocean floor of the mural.

One of the most effective learning centers for the three-year-olds this year has been the dramatic play center. For the past few weeks, it was transformed into an “Ocean Research Lab”, equipped with ocean animals, clipboards, paper, markers, nets, aquariums and informational books. The friends spent time comparing and sorting the different fish, drawing the animals, using magnifying glasses to investigate, and walking back and forth through the seaweed curtain!

We look forward to our last few weeks together investigating Light and Color and bringing back some of our favorite activities from the year!
EXPLORING THE DEPTHS OF THE OCEAN... AND OUR KNOWLEDGE!

* MIRA USING REAL SPONGES TO DECORATE CORAL.
* JACOB AND CHERRY PAINTING A BLUE WHALE.
* DAVID FISHING AND SORTING AT THE LIGHT TABLE.
* RESEARCHER MAEVE READY TO GO TO THE LAB.

(STARTING WITH TOP-LEFT AND MOVING CLOCKWISE...)

* MIRA USING REAL SPONGES TO DECORATE CORAL.
* JACOB AND CHERRY PAINTING A BLUE WHALE.
* DAVID FISHING AND SORTING AT THE LIGHT TABLE.
* RESEARCHER MAEVE READY TO GO TO THE LAB.
OUR YOUNG SCIENTISTS IN ACTION

Maeve making a rainstorm in the ocean...

David investigating different shells.

Jacob using a broom to catch “krill”, just as a whale would use its broom-like baleen.

Mira creating an ocean story.

... then spelling “rainstorm”!

Miss Stevens showing a real baleen.
The three-year-old friends dove headfirst into their ocean learning and have absorbed information like a sponge!

We were fortunate to once again reap the benefits of the Carnegie Museum’s educational loan program. The children had the opportunity to see and touch a real whale baleen and examine krill (small shrimp-like creatures that many whales eat). They also provided us with specimens like the cardinal fish, sargassum fish and needle fish.

Thank you to the parents that visited the classroom this month: Sammy’s mother for playing guitar and singing with the afternoon friends, Mira’s family for sharing stories and time together for Mira’s birthday, Jackie’s mother for teaching us about shells and fossils, Rhys’ father for letting us jam on his drum set and his mother and brother for playing with us, Avery’s mother for helping in the Red Room, and Michael’s mother and grandparents for making tropical smoothies for the morning friends.

(PICTURES FROM TOP LEFT AND MOVING CLOCKWISE) MICHAEL COMPARING DIFFERENT TYPES OF WHALES, JACOBO AND NOAH PLAYING WITH SHELLS AND “SEAWEED”, JACKIE AND JUDAH READING TOGETHER, BRANDON AND BRYLIE INVESTIGATING SEA STARS, SAMMY LOOKING AT A BOOK ABOUT SHARKS.

Mrs. Tomer      Mr. Salinetro      Ms. Stevens