As our year together ebbs, our attentions turn to our “Ocean” theme. Each week, our friends learned about new ocean animals and the characteristics that make them so special and interesting.

**Red Room Ocean Mural**

One of the ways we made the ocean come alive was to create an ocean mural, adding things as we learned them. First, we painted the ocean different shades of blue, making it darker at the bottom because less light reaches the ocean floor. We learned that starfish can grow back lost limbs and that sea horses camouflage to protect themselves from predators. We know that jellyfish have tentacles that sting and that sea anemones can sting, too, although they don’t hurt the clownfish that hide in anemones to keep safe. Our friends investigated sharks, which can keep losing and growing back teeth and they discovered that dolphins can jump 20 feet out of the water and they can make their sounds really loud by using their melon, a fatty lump on the top of their head. We supplemented the mural with books like “Sea of Life” by Melvin Berger, “A Dolphin is Not a Fish” by Betsey Chessen, “What Comes in a Shell?” by Susan Canizares and “Where Whale Went” by Laura Datta.

**World Map and Whales**

Using a large map of the world, the friends were able to see just how much of the world is ocean and how so many animals, big and small, can live there. But it was the big animals, the whales, that really captivated us. We looked at the differences between baleen and toothed whales and did some experiments to illustrate some amazing features of whales. We used a broom to show how the bristly baleen in some whale's mouths allows water to flow in and out, but keeps their food in. We also used Mentos and Diet Coke to simulate the water spout from a whale's blowhole. And we can tell you now that baleen whales have two blowholes and toothed whales only have one! The baleen whale also has folds on its bottom jaw that allow its mouth to expand and fill with water and fish or krill.
Chicken of the Sea... kind of.

During the month of May, the children in the Blue and Red Rooms learned about many different animals that live in the sea. But in the Kindergarten every May, the friends welcome around 50 chicken eggs that they incubate and hatch. This year, approximately 30 chicks were born and for a week, we watched them grow! Throughout the incubation period, our friends saw the eggs in the incubator and had the amazing experience of candling an egg: shining a bright light through the egg to see the developing embryo moving inside the shell! We are grateful to the Kindergarten for allowing us to invade their classroom whenever we wanted to be part of this wonderful experience.

Painting a starfish for our ocean mural.

Decorating a paper bag puffer fish.

Creating beach scenes in the sand table.

Friends experimenting with seahorses and camouflage.

Practicing our cutting and coloring fish.

Afternoon friends learning about ‘Red Rover’, a space vehicle that will eventually travel to the moon!
A book about life on the ocean floor.

Comparing baleen and toothed whales.

Sorting fish at the light table.

Creating an ocean scene.

Doing puzzles.

‘Red Rover’ space exploration.

Racing boats in the water table.

Magnets attracted many friends.

Elbow... no, shoulder deep in “sea foam”!

One of the few nice days for a walk.

Smashing shells to make our own sand.
Special visitors and events!!

**Kindergarten Guest Readers**

We want to say thank you to Ashley and Talia for coming to the Red Room to read to the morning friends. It was fun to hear the stories they created and see the pictures they drew.

**Teddy Bear Picnic and Hoedown!**

Every year, the three’s celebrate with an end of the year Teddy Bear picnic where the children bring in their favorite plaything and we share a special story and snack. This year was no different and friends brought in their dolls, bears, bunnies and giraffes to show. We also had a great time square-dancing at our whole school hoedown.

**Birthdays, Concerts and Space Rovers!**

We celebrated many birthdays in the last month of school. In the Red Room, we celebrated Perry’s birthday, in the morning Blue Room we celebrated Jacob, Tiernan, Clara, Pax and Madeleine’s birthdays and in the afternoon Blue Room, we celebrated Kiana’s birthday. Kiana’s grandmother also treated the afternoon friends to a piano concert where we sang and danced together and the morning friends heard a quartet of CMU voice majors, organized by our own work study Marissa, sing some familiar songs. And friends had a blast seeing “Red Rover”, a space vehicle designed and built by CMU students which will travel to the moon within the next 5 years!

**Thanks for a wonderful year!**

The three’s team would like to thank everyone for a great year at The Children’s School. It was a joy to watch your children grow as individuals and as friends. We hope everybody has a safe and fun summer!