January was a jubilant month in the Green Room! After returning to school from winter break, we started our new theme of *Children Around The World*. Where in the world were you born? The children already knew much about the world and how important it is to them through the children’s familiarity with their families and the previous themes this year. We began the theme by looking at a globe and each child’s important place in it. Next we looked at the locations of many different countries and different people. We learned that we belong together by reading the book *Same, Same, Different*, written and illustrated by Jenny Sue Kostecki. The focus of the theme was for all of us to come together and learn about the cultures and heritages of children around the world. We learned a lot at circle time and activity time through conversations. We began the theme talking about and looking at books of how all children around the world are part of families—big and small, loving and caring for one another. This look at children and families all around the world helped our friends to think about the families they belong to, as it gave them a glimpse into the rich variety of cultures. We help our families and school friends with chores and enjoy playing together. The children of the world like to spend time with their families and friends. With a world map, globe and books, we learned about the children. Some of the questions we asked were: What kind of home do the children live in? How do the children get to school? What, if any, high-tech tools do the children have? What kind of work are children expected to do to help the family? How do the geography and seasons affect the children? What foods do the children eat? It makes a difference if you live in a river town, a rain forest, a Tibetan plateau or a Bangladesh rice farm. The children related what we learned to the experiences in their own lives.
Children Around The World

Houses Around The World
We found out what life is like in different locations. The children were curious about their peers around the world. It was fascinating to look at homes around the world and then talk about the similarities and differences. Our favorite book was *Houses and Homes (Around The World Series)* by Anne Morris. Some houses are made of wood or stone; others from mud, straw, or blocks of snow. In the Green Room we used Lincoln Logs, small stone bricks, large blocks, and wood to make unique houses. Connects were used to make an igloo. We used large pieces of fabric to make a tent and wood working materials to build houses.

Food Around The World
Our students gained an understanding and appreciation of different world cultures as they learned the similarities and differences of foods eaten around the world. The Green Room friends learned that everyone eats bread, everyone eats soup and everyone eats rice or pasta. A form of pancakes is a food found all around the world. How do people eat? How and when do they use utensils? In our kitchen, we tasted Nori (dried seaweed) and made vegetable rolls with sushi rice, sesame seeds, cucumbers, carrots and avocados. Next, again we used avocados, limes and salsa to make Guacamole with masa (corn) chips. Where ever you are, it is important to have good manners!

Music Around The World
Mrs. Hraber began our music classes with a travel map and placed a passport stamp on each country from where she taught or played us a song. One of our favorites was *Tingalayo*, a Caribbean children’s song about a peddler’s donkey. The children also had opportunities to listen to and play a variety of instruments such as a beaded Shekere (made from a gourd), a Gong, and a Bodran. In the Discovery Area, our friends made Guiros, a Latin American percussion instrument. We enjoyed the musical journeys Mrs. Harber shared!
Children Around The World

Korea

We welcomed Mrs. Sung Mi Kim from Duksung Women’s University to the Green Room for two weeks. While she was with us, Mrs. Kim brought us wonderful activities that children in South Korea enjoy. Mrs. Kim introduced herself to our friends wearing her traditional wedding dress. She brought pendants made from wood in the image of Korean boys and girls to decorate. Games called Ticket Stroke Play and Gong-ginol-i were fun and created laughter. We were introduced to Hangi (Korean paper) and Sumughwa painting. We listened to a Korean Fairy Tale titled Kongui and Potaui. Everyone had their name written in Korean!

Russian New Year

New Year is a family holiday and celebration that takes place with close relatives and rituals. The Russian New Year is celebrated in January and is the most important holiday. Marina (PM), her mom, and sister Katya treated us by singing and dancing the folktale of Grandfather Frost. The tradition is to dress up in winter costumes such as a forest animal or a snow queen. Marina wore a bunny costume, and her sister a fox. Marina’s mom dressed as the snow queen and narrated the story. After the performance, we danced in a circle around a traditional winter evergreen tree decorated with lights! Marina’s family shared photographs of her father dressed in costumes when he was five.

Malawi

Dr. Carver has made several trips to Malawi in Africa. We welcomed her to teach us about the children in Malawi. Dr. Carver explained to us about the economic circumstances. She helped us understand how the children live, work and play by sharing her photographs. She brought unique materials for the children to explore, such as a doll, money and decorations. A toy she brought is a truck called a Galimoto. It is a toy truck made of wires, old tin can lids and bamboo sticks. We read a wonderful story about a boy that makes a Galimoto, the book Galimoto, by Karen Lynn Williams.
Children Around The World

Dramatic Play - Home, Airport, Train Station, and Post Office

During the first week of the Children Around The World theme, the friends pretended being families. Taking care of babies and cooking meals for each other was our focus. Next the center was transformed into an airport. The children received a passport where they wrote their name, age and USA. The friends were able to glue flags from many countries in their passport. The final week we transformed the center into a post office. The friends enjoyed seeing postcards from major cities. They wrote a name on the card to direct it and to sign it. After the writing and gluing a postage stamp to the card, it was delivered by a carrier.

Play and Games Around The World

Everyone everywhere likes to play! During the last week of our Children Around The World Theme, we read Play by Ann Morris and Come Out and Play by Maya Ajmera and John Ivanko. In the Green Room we learned fun new games from Inuit Alaska, to South Korea, to Australia. The friends listed their favorite games and what they like to play. Other games we played were marbles, Snakes and Ladders, and I Spy. For children all over the world, to play means running and jumping and spinning, playing with dolls, tossing a ball and splashing! It means creating new games or new worlds, no matter where children live.
Friends In The Green Room

Evelyn played by arranging blocks and wood people figures.

Ava had her hand traced by Mrs. Wendolowski to add to our bulletin board flower which combined all the friends’ hands.

Parker described his traditional Sherwani (jacket), Kurta (shirt), Churidar (pants) and shoes that he wears in India. Max was the model.

Ksenia and Eugene used a variety of materials to decorate an imaginary house.

Isaac enjoyed playing a drum during music class.

Ben and Atticus drew still life apples with colored pencils after reading the book *How To Make An Apple Pie and See The World*, by Marjorie Priceman.

Evan was happy playing the accordion which originated in Europe.

Malena pretended to be a mail carrier.

Javi used the Egyptian architecture blocks to practice balance and learning about building around the world.

Owen learned how to play Korean Gonggi.
Max, Ben and Eugene enjoyed making music with instruments from around the world.

Ben and Grace used pipe cleaners to redesign a Galimoto of their own style.

The afternoon friends learned about traveling around the world in the Dramatic Play Center.

Leeza and Owen worked at ordering Russian Maruskia nesting dolls.

Robin, Betsy, and Cash rolled dough to make a pretend apple pie after reading, *How To Make An Apple Pie and See The World*.

Isaac, Javi and Eugene took turns playing with Dr. Carver’s Galimoto.

Our friends were thrilled to get outside on snowy days!
Friends In The Green Room

Eugene and Grace built houses with Lincoln Logs.

Betsy and Kendal tasted and smelled a variety of spices from around the world such as cloves, cinnamon and cardamon.

The Green Room Traffic Controllers were hard at work in our airport.

Lin Zhu, a volunteer from China and a Master’s student at the University of Pittsburgh, wrote our names in Mandarin.

Robin drew a snowman and then made frost with an Epson Salt and water wash.

Ella Jenkin’s CD, *Multi Cultural Children’s Songs*, was the inspiration for playing instruments to make a pretty sounds.

Sean was inspired by Japanese brush painting on a Sumi E Board.
Izhak checked the avocado pits to see if they have grown roots. We are still waiting!

Kaya wrote her name and vital information for a passport to travel.

Leeza, Deborah and Malena learned how to play Korean Ddakji.

Leeza and Evelyn showed friendly competition playing the Inuit Tugging Game.

Betsy played with Eskimos, sleighs, dogs and igloos to learn about life in Alaska.

Cash sorted a variety of objects after reading the book My Rows and Piles of Coins by Tololwas Mollel. It is a book about a Tanzanian boy that saves and sorts enough coins to buy a bicycle.
Thank You Friends For Teaching Us About Children Around The World!

Sarah Davies (Tomer AM) read a story to celebrate Tomer’s birthday.

Soonjae Lee (Eugene AM) read to celebrate Eugene’s birthday.

Kyle Smith (Kendal PM) celebrated Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday reading to the afternoon class.

Dr. Carver taught us about how the children in Malawi live and play.

Olena Tumanova (Marina PM) acted out a folktale of the Russian New Year, while telling us about family traditions.

Rachel Todaro (Max AM) taught a Yoga class to Mrs. Opferman’s class.

Mrs. Kim introduced herself wearing her traditional wedding dress.
Daniela and Bo Bednar, and Aimee Bednar (Andrew PM) taught us about Czech Folk Customs and Traditions. With the arrival of spring and the new agricultural year, eggs (Kraslice) are decorated and hung from everywhere in homes and gardens.

We painted wooden eggs and decorated them with stickers to make individual Kraslice.

Many of the friends manipulated natural earth clay to make a domino or other personal game pieces.

What American words are different in England? A bonnet is a hood, a wardrobe is a closet, mum is mom, and a cooker is a stove. Many thanks to Michael and Carol Jennings (Andrew PM) for telling us.

Grace shared and demonstrated toys she received as a gift from Mexico.

Sean learned to play the Inuit bone and stick game.

Max used a Japanese brush pen while looking at a Japanese character chart.