Green Room Newsletter

Outer Space

During the Outer Space theme, the friends have learned so much about the Solar System. The children had so many questions from “How many stars are there” to “What is space?” When we look up at the sky, we see the moon, the sun and vast areas of nothing.

With the start of the Outer Space theme, the friends made new locker tags. Everyone choose two colors and designed a pattern to make a rocket on dark paper (see above). We wrote a letter in each square to spell SPACE. We used rubber themed stampers and cookie cutter stars, circles and swirls with metallic paints to make a rocket to appear like it was blasting off Earth.

At the beginning of winter, we learned how seasons are created on Earth by its tilt forward or away when it is rotating around the sun, and the children enjoyed making fluffy and shimmery snow people to decorate the Gallery Stairs and the Green Room!

Our Favorite Theme Books

• National Geographic Kids, First Big Book of Space, by Catherine D. Hughes
• My Best Pop-up Space Book, by Claire Lloyd and Carolyn Jenner
• Max and the Tag Along Moon, by Floyd Cooper
• I Want to Go To The Moon, words and music by Tom Saunders
• How to Catch a Star, by Oliver Jeffers
• Life On Mars, by Jon Agee

Mango Monkey Says…

Earth is our home and we are its friends. “The Earth and I” by Frank Asch was used to open up a dialogue with the friends about what it means to love the Earth and take care of each other. Because we love the Earth and everything in nature works together, the friends talked about different ways to take care of it. In the classroom and at home we recycle. We also talked about what happens when we do not take good care of our environment. The Earth is not supposed to be full of trash because it hurts the animals and the environment. We learned the Earth is a friend to us with the things we enjoy.
All About the Earth

The first and second week, we recognized that the Earth is the planet we live on. It is a big round object in space that orbits a star. The sun is our star. Earth is always moving. As it orbits the sun, it also spins around like a top. We learned that so far, the Earth is the only planet where people, animals and plants live. By looking at a globe and maps of the Earth we saw that there is more water than land. We used blue paper squares to represent water and green paper squares to represent the land on a large circle to replicate the earth. All the friends finger painted an Earth. During the day it is light outside, and you can see the sun. As Earth spins, the place where you are turns away from the sun. That is when it gets dark outside. When it is summer your part of the Earth is tilted toward the sun. When it is Winter where you live your part of Earth is tilted away from the sun. A strong, invisible force called gravity pulls everything on Earth down. The friends experienced gravity keeping all things around us from floating up into the sky by jumping and dropping feathers, balls and bean bags.

All About the Sun and Moon

LOOKING UP FROM THE EARTH - What do you see when you look up in the sky? We shined a flashlight (representing the sun) on the globe of the earth. The friends learned that the sun is a giant star, the closest to the earth. It is day on the side of the earth where the light shines and night on the other side. It was fun painting a huge sun and hanging it in the ceiling corner in the room. By rotating the earth (a marble) around a paper sun on a pie plate the friends learned how the earth orbits around the sun.

You can often spot Earth’s moon when you look up at the sky at night. The moon is rocky and cold. We made model magic moons by rolling the dough in our hands into a ball and using gray markers to color the moon. Pencils and marbles were used to make the dents in the moon called craters. We looked at pictures to see the phases of the moon. It was fun for us to read that a Crescent moon looks like a banana!
All About Earth’s Other Neighbors

While we were learning about Earth’s neighbors in our solar system at Circle Time, at Activity Time we decorated and designed each planet differently to resemble how scientists believe they appear. We learned planets have different surfaces. Our missions included painting glue and sand on Mercury. Jupiter was painted with play vehicle tires and chalk (and we added a great red spot with paint). Saturn was painted with glitter. For Uranus, we used sponges with lime green water colors. Mars was colored with shiny red Craypas. Venus’ surface was made with a mixture of puffy shaving cream, paint and glitter. Neptune was painted with teal watercolors with textured sponges. Pluto, a dwarf planet, was decorated by using silver daubers. Aluminum foil pieces were glued to make our shiny moon. We then hung our solar system pieces above our heads in our classroom so we could feel like we were in Outer Space. Everyone had an opportunity to create their own planet by using a salad spinner with metallic paint. The friends used their imaginations to name their planet.

All About Exploring Space

BLAST OFF! The friends were full of wonder when the teachers asked the children about what they see when they look up into the sky and see the bright stars and moon. We focused on space travel and space equipment. The children dressed like astronauts and pretended to travel from planet to planet. We learned what astronauts do and how rovers drive on the moon, and we watched videos of rocket lift offs! The friends imagined they were flying off to the moon by creating their own rocket out of recycled cans and magnets. We practiced taking that “one giant step” by pretending to walk on the moon. They learned about the cable used to keep the astronaut attached to the spacecraft. The friends took turns being the Programmers in the control center. Everyone had a blast shooting balloon rockets to our moon! Finally, everyone received an outer space journal to write a story, draw pictures, and use star stickers to create constellations.
Make Shop Experiences

Because the Kindergarten was studying food, the first half of January was a month of learning about shopping and working in a grocery store. Everyone took turns being shoppers, clerks and cashiers. The clerks learned to stock the shelves according to each section of the grocery store. The shoppers chose their items, they had carts and baskets to collect their groceries and were given play money when it was time to check out. Later in the month, the Make Shop was changed to look like outer space with black lights. The children explored glow in the dark materials. The friends played with glow in the dark playdoh and paint, geoboards with glowing yarn, stars, space vehicles and the ceiling filled with stars like the night sky.

Music Experiences
with Mrs. Hraber

In January, we had fun singing songs about winter's snow! Friends built a flannel board snowperson and played drums to keep a beat pretending to be falling snowflakes. A parachute with balls was used to pretend to toss snowballs up in the air. Mrs. Hraber also taught us songs about outer space. We counted down using the sounds of Boom Whackers and blasted off with the sound of Thunder Tubes. We floated into space swaying scarves and did a squishy walk by pretending to walk on moon rocks while stepping on the keys of a floor piano.

Center Spotlight:

The Book Center

The Book Center allows our children to be self-motivated by concentrating on things that interest them intensely. In the Green Room, we change our books according to the theme, the season and individual interests. It allows the friends to freely choose books they find interesting, express themselves and relax. For instance, the friends have enjoyed relooking at the class made Family Collage books over and over throughout the year. They are also studying print and some are learning to read basic sight words. The Book Center also allows children to investigate and discover things that are new to them. It helps them to understand the social world, practice communication skills, and build relationships with classmates. Taking the time to sit and read books is wonderful!
Holden’s (PM) mom joined the friends to help celebrate his birthday.

Isaac’s (AM) mom shared a favorite snack with his friends to celebrate his birthday.

Branden’s (AM) mom and brother read a favorite story to his circle time friends to celebrate his birthday.

Wilder (AM) celebrated his birthday with his parents and sister by reading a book.

Kerry Handron showed us how the Earth orbits the sun.

Ryan Handron demonstrated the history of the earth using a roll of paper towels.
Our Month in Photos