Dive into our Ocean Newsletter to see what the friends have been learning in the Green Room.

During the month of April, the Green Room Friends have been learning about the ocean. We began our ocean discovery by talking about Earth being the only planet in our solar system with liquid water. That water accounts for about 71% of the Earth’s surface. That water is home to a wide variety of plants and animals that live in the ocean. We spent the next two weeks taking a closer look at the inhabitants of the ocean.

During Circle time, friends had an opportunity to investigate a variety of shells, sponges, sea horses and puffer fish specimens. Some of our favorite books were: “First Big Book of the Ocean” by Catherine Hughes, “Starfish” by Connie and Peter Roop, “Whales and Dolphins” by J.I. Anderson, “The Fish that Could Wish” by Josh Bush and Korky Paul, and “All About the Ocean” by Alison Howard.

During the Ocean Unit, the dramatic play center was transformed into the ocean. The friends took turns in the rocking boat. We went fishing for the alphabet with magnetic fishing poles and magnetic letters. We used oars to help steer the boat in the right direction.
Ocean Activities

Ocean Maps
The friends used color pencils to differentiate between water and land on their very own ocean maps. Friends also took the time to label their maps with the names of the Oceans. This gave the friends an idea where each of the oceans are geographically.

Tasting Fish
Yum! The friends spent some time in the kitchen during the Ocean Unit. The friends dissected, and explored the insides of a fish. They each had a chance to taste the smoked fish and many were surprised that they liked it. The friends worked together to add the smoked fish to cream cheese to make a delicious spread.

Blubber Experiment
The friends were asked to start our blubber activity by plunging their hand into ice-cold water. Then the friends learned that many sea animals that live in the Arctic Ocean have to swim, eat and sleep in water of this temperature. These animals have adapted to the cold and have something that we don’t have called blubber. Then the friends worked together to make a “blubber glove.” We added 4 big scoops of Crisco to a large plastic bag, then we put another bag inside to protect our hands from getting messy. Then the friends put their hands inside the “blubber glove” and then put their hands in the water again. This time, they noticed that the water wasn’t nearly as cold. They made the connection that whales, elephant seals and many other marine animals have this layer of fat, or blubber, to keep their bodies warm.

Sand Art
One of the friends’ favorite art activities during the Ocean Unit was making sand art. Each friend had a small cardboard rectangle and used glue from a glue bottle to make a design on their cardboard. Then they choose from a variety of sand colors to sprinkle over their glue. The friends then dumped the excess sand off of their cardboard to reveal a lovely design. Many of the friends asked to participate in this activity over and over again.
Ocean Activities

**Shark**
Coming into the Ocean Unit, many of the friends had a great interest and curiosity about sharks. The friends were eager to help us make our very own Great White. We painted 2 large pre-cut shark shapes. Then the friends worked to stuff and staple the shark together. Then the friends added layers of sharp, shark teeth. Now the shark hangs in the discovery area for all to see and enjoy.

**Submarine**
Friends worked together to paint two large boxes that were taped together and made to look like a submarine. The friends used yellow paint and listened to the famous Beatles’ song “Yellow Submarine” as they worked cooperatively to cover each part of the box. The friends also enjoyed playing inside the submarine. They looked out of the submarine’s portholes to see seahorses, jellyfish and of course sharks!

**Boats**
The woodworking center was a popular destination for activity time during the Ocean Unit. The friends made boats using a block of wood and a wooden stick. The friends began this project by drilling a small hole in their block of wood. Then the friends added wood glue to that hole and inserted the wooden stick which acted as the boat’s mast. The friends then decorated a triangle shaped paper and added it to the mast to act as the sail. When the friends were finished constructing their boats, they tested them in a tub of water to see if they would float. They did!

**Ocean Stories**
The friends dictated stories about the ocean and the creatures that live in it to their teachers. Then the friends illustrated their story. Friends shared stories about sharks, starfish and even invented new sea creatures.
Our Favorite Photos
From the Ocean Unit

Basil, Natalie and Charlie are recording their guessing jar guess.

Arnav, Muriel and Addie are coloring their maps.

Ben, Lorelei and James are working in their number books.

The friends are playing Go Fish.

Ilan, Eric, Arnav, James, Felicity and Elena are playing Sink or Float.

Lynn and Lena are predicting which items will sink and which will float.

Julia, Sam, Jane, Sally and Joya are working in number books.

Lynn, Yasmin and Julia are doing sand art.

Simone and Minwoo are playing at the water table with ocean animals.
Our Favorite Photos
From the Ocean Unit

Milo and Rhiannon are playing the living/nonliving comparison game.

Lynn and Lola are deciding which items are living and which are not.

Felicity and Elena are exploring the variety of shells.

Vivian, Lola and Tayshawn are working in their number books.

Charlie and James are adding stickers to their number books.

Eric and Joya are making boats in the woodworking center.

Sam, Eric and Charlie are enjoying some outdoor play.

Lola and Yasmin are taking a turn in the buggies.

Muriel and Gwynnie pose in the buggies.
Irv Kauffman, a longtime member of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, visited the friends and brought along some of his favorite instruments. Mr. Kauffman brought an acoustic guitar, a banjo, a mandolin and a cello. The friends liked hearing the variety of instruments and the beautiful music they each made.

This month the Librarian, Miss Debbie, shared stories about ocean animals. We also did the seal hokey pokey!

Muriel’s Mom joined the friends to celebrate her birthday in the month of April. She shared a special story and enjoyed a frozen yogurt treat with the friends.