Beginning the school year was a very exciting time for the teachers and students in the Green Room. It was a busy month of meeting familiar and new peers for the children and the teachers. Our main focus during our first month of school together was to become comfortable with new spaces, new teachers, new routines, new rules and new transitions. This time acclimatizing helped provide our friends with the security of knowing what to expect every day.

Our Favorite Theme

Circle time is a great time to hear stories that help friends learn more about our theme. This month, our favorite books were:

- **All Kinds of Families**, by MaryAnn Hoberman
- **The Story of My Feelings**, by Laurie Berkner
- **This Little Piggy’s Book of Manners**, by Kathryn Madeline Allen
- **Shades of People**, by Shelley Rotner
- **Friends**, by Rob Lewis
- **Big Al**, by Andrew Clements

Mango Monkey Says…

You may have heard your child talk about “Mango Monkey” and his friends, “Andy The Alligator”, “Shy Squirrel,” “Sal Snake,” and “Cool Confident Cat.” They are all puppets we have begun to use at circle time. Mango Monkey helps to teach young children that we are all friends at school and we can learn to play and work together. The teachers began with talking about and using pictures of how we can be kind to one another at school. We talked about three Friendship Rules; 1. **Use kind words such as: Please, Hello, Thank You.** 2. **Keep your hands and feet in your own space.** 3. **Everyone can be a kind friend and play.** The teachers asked the children in their circle groups, “What do you think a friend is?” All the children had thoughtful ideas to contribute to the discussion. The Green Room teachers will continue this theme throughout the year, using the different puppets in scenarios to help the children learn how to respond effectively in social situations.
All About the Green Room

During the first week of school, the children had the opportunity to discover the different centers in the Green Room. The **DRAMATIC PLAY CENTER** was popular for housekeeping, taking care of baby dolls and birthday parties. The **DISCOVERY AREA** is where we go to explore water, sand, light and magnets. These tables create opportunities for problem solving, cooperation and collaboration. The children have also been painting at the easel and exploring various art materials on the tables. Puzzles, sorting by colors or shapes and pegs are favorites in the **MATH CENTER** and on the tables. At the **SCIENCE CENTER**, the children have compared a variety of sea shells, rocks and feathers with magnifying glasses. They have used mirrors with paper, pencils and crayons for sketching themselves. The children have enjoyed learning group games such as *Strawberries in a Basket*, *Candyland*, *Green Room Friends Bingo*, *a Green Room Scavenger Hunt*, *High Ho Cheerio* and *Snail’s Pace Race*. The **LIBRARY CENTER** is where we go to enjoy a story. All of these centers are for the children to experience joy, creativity and curiosity.

All About Me

During the second week, we talked about one of the ways that we learn about each other is by exploring our faces to think about what all the different parts look like. We read *All About Faces*, by La Zoo, and explored our faces with mirrors. Each friend worked on a multi-step personal project. The first step was for each child to identify the first letter of their name and then use golf balls to roll paint colors on it. For the second step, the children looked in a mirror and sketched the shape of their face with a pencil, followed by choosing a paint color to match their skin, after reading the book, *The Color of Us*, by Karen Katz. The next week when the paint was dry, we picked the colors for our hair, our eyebrows and eyelashes, our eyes and our lips. It was hard to paint the details and to keep the colors from mixing together. Finally, our portraits were done! Everyone then had an opportunity to tell what they liked best about school. The project will be displayed for everyone to see at our **OPEN HOUSE** on October 11th.
All About Families

The *family collage* pages began at home. Our friends worked on this project with their family by selecting photographs to include in their project. The children were proud to share their collages with their peers at circle time. These activities were beginning practice for public speaking! The collages will remain in a binder for everyone to review until the end of school.

All About My Community

During the fourth week, our focus was how a *community* is a group of people living or working together in the same area. We talked about how people in the same communities might go to the same schools, shop in the same stores and do the same things. They also help each other and solve problems together. During Circle time, we looked at a globe and a map of Pittsburgh to see where we live and are part of a community. We also learned about our Green Room community by playing the *Green Room Friends Bingo*. The children identified pictures of each other, and the staff when a picture was shown and their name called. All of the children have rotating *classroom jobs* such as the snack helper, pet helper and mat passer that help them become involved in our Green Room community to develop greater *self-esteem and responsibility*. 
Make Shop Experiences

The Make Shop is a space for hands on building and tinkering. Here the children can play with ideas, making things, and experiment with tools, techniques and materials. They investigate how things are used and learn new processes and skills. The Wood Working Center is part of The Make Shop. Using LEGO bricks and putty was the perfect opportunity in September for building fine motor skills, cooperative play, creativity and having a sense of accomplishment by solving problems. The children also had a flannel board, gears, and 3-D magnets to open up a new world of opportunities.

Music Experiences

Mrs. Lauren Hraber (pronounced like “Harbor”) comes to the Children’s School every other Thursday. This month’s music and movement concentration is learning how to keep a beat. The children were introduced to Pete the Metronome, a musical tool, and learned how to tap a beat by clapping, beating a drum, marching and jumping. We also participated in a clapping song and singing our names. The children chose shaking instruments such as bells, maracas and shaky eggs while singing songs with motions. We love music days with Mrs. Hraber!

Center Spotlight:
The Dramatic Play Center

Dramatic play allows children to practice new situations or events. The Green Room friends are able to express themselves, be creative, develop their imaginations, and try new tools as they play. Dramatic play can also be used to introduce new concepts and reinforce others. It is a great way to build cooperation and communication between children while extending and building language arts, math, reading, writing, social skills, fine motor and gross motor skills. In September, the friends planned birthday parties, took care of baby dolls by feeding and bathing them, and
Debbie Priore from the Carnegie Library in Oakland visited us. At circle time, Ms. Debbie read fun books to complement our I'm In School theme. She also engaged the children by teaching us a Hello song in different languages. The children ended their time with Ms.

Ruthie, Lucy, chopped apples to feed our classroom worms.

Arianna, and Branden

Lillian observed the worms and watched how they move.

Sam dug for worms in the bin that is their home at school.
Our Month in Photos

Cecilia enjoyed playing outside with baby dolls.

Ann made make-believe ice cream cones in the sandbox.

Emeline, Jayden, and Roni used shovels to make a mulch pile.

Oliver and Isaac used Bristle Blocks and people figures.

Ruth worked at mixing ingredients to make slime.

Cheryl participated using Bristle Blocks with people and animal figures to build a house.

James had his body traced from his head to his toes.

Holden and Jayden experimented at the light with magna tiles.

Arianna painted with a golf ball and her favorite colors to design the initial letter in her name.
Tigerlily enjoyed her tricycle ride on the playground.

At the easel, Raj used crayons to draw a picture of himself.

The train table was a popular place to play in the Green Room.

Sloan and Lillian used loose parts and blocks to build with their imaginations.

Holden counted the people in his family and drew their eyes, ears, mouth, nose and clothes before placing them in a house.

Zoe, Wilder, Roni and Cecilia had fun mixing colors while finger painting.

Zoe spent time observing our classroom frog and fish.

Sloan, Joaquin, Lucy, and Lillian designed nature collages with acorns, twigs and leaves.

Tigerlily enjoyed her tricycle ride on the playground.

Holden counted the people in his family and drew their eyes, ears, mouth, nose and clothes before placing them in a house.

Maggie searched for Lego letter tiles to spell her name.