During the month of October, there was an emphasis on games throughout our school day to enrich learning. The friends were introduced to some brand new games. They also played some familiar games with new friends which offers a new experience.

Games offer children the opportunity to build cognitive skills, social skills and fine and gross motor skills in a way that makes them feel excited, comfortable and motivated. Each game that we have played over the last month has been selected intentionally to build the friends’ confidence and skill. Even though the games unit has come to an end, we will continue to play games throughout the school year by incorporating them into each theme.

**Building Cognitive Skills with Games**

Alphabet Bingo and the Alphabet Chart Pocket game were two games played several times throughout this unit. Aside from letter recognition, the Alphabet Chart Pocket game also challenged the friends to link beginning letter sounds to their letter. Number Bingo and Uno were games often played to reinforce number recognition. Memory tray games and memory match games were played to encourage children to use their memories to figure out what item was missing from the tray or find that missing match. New science concepts were introduced through games, like the ideas of sink and float. Although the idea of density may be difficult to comprehend at this age, offering children these exploratory experiences can build the basis for understanding these deeper concepts later.

**Building Social Skills with Games**

When you consider a simple game like Candy Land, you may ask, aside from color recognition, what can be learned? Candy Land is a great social skills builder because it teaches children to take turns, share space and accept disappointment if they have to go back to peppermint forest or if they are not the winner. During this unit, we have been talking a lot about being a good sport. With games, children can learn to deal with the disappointment of losing or tell their friends, “good game,” if they are the winner.

**Building Motor Skills with Games**

At this age, building fine motor skills through games can help improve a child's writing and drawing. Gongi (Korean Jacks), Prickly Pile Up and and Zimbos are all games that we have played to help build the muscles in children’s hands and fingers. To help develop gross motor skills, the friends played a variety of group games, like Duck Duck Goose, Hot Potato, Cinderella’s Lost Slipper and Bean Bag Balance.
Here is a closer look at some of our favorite games that we have been playing in the Green Room.

**Orchard**

Naveen, Lizzy and Maggie are taking turns rolling the dice and collecting fruits in their basket while playing Orchard with Mrs. Myers.

**Make your Own Memory Match**

Dany and Agatha are gluing their friends’ pictures onto colorful backing cards to make their own Memory Match game to play at home.

**Sink and Float**

Benjamin, Nana, Amelie, Naveen, Ari, Chase and Collin are selecting items and predicting whether they will sink or float.

**Snail’s Pace Race**

Greta, David, Nana, Savanna and Alexander are taking turns rolling a colorful die to see which color snail will move forward and win the race.

**Zimbos**

Lexi and Seojin Stella are carefully stacking the Zimbos in numerical order.

**Gongi (Korean Jacks)**

Greta is collecting the Korean Jacks with the pointer finger, “elephant” grip.

**Trouble**

Hugo, Sammy, Henry and Shaylee are taking turns moving their colored pieces around the game board.

**Mouse Trap**

Collin, Ari, Alexander, Nera and Lizzy are trying to catch the mouse in their circle.
Outdoor Games

After playing games inside during activity time and circle time, the friends continued to play games outside. In gym, the friends have learned the game, One on One Kickball. Each gym class was divided into two teams, the fielding team and the kicking team. The kicking team would kick the beach ball and run the bases. The fielding team would get the ball and try to run it back to home plate before the kicker gets there. The friends also played outdoor games during our carnival special Friday. Ring toss, Pin the Bill on the Duck and mini golf were available for all of the friends to try.

Computer Games

On several days during the Games Unit, the computers have been open and available for friends to become familiar with the mouse and keyboard. One resource used often was the website www.poissonrouge.com. This website has a variety of games for the friends to play to help build math and language arts skills. It also has music and art games that the friends often chose.

Circle Time

Circle time has been the perfect setting to introduce brand new games and play cooperative group games, like Doggy Doggy Where’s Your Bone? Memory Tray, Hot Potato and Cinderella’s Lost Slipper. Many stories were read during circle to reinforce our main ideas of the Games Unit, like cooperating with teammates, learning to be a good sport, and following directions. These stories included, “Follow the Leader” by William Steig, “Sportsmanship” by Lucia Roatma, “Tessa Tiger’s Temper Tantram” by Barbara de Rubertis, “Our Global Community Games” by Lisa Easterling and “Ten in the Meadow” by John Butler.
Special Visitors and Birthday Celebrations

During our Games Unit, we had many special community visitors and birthdays to celebrate. The librarian from the Carnegie Library shared some fall themed stories. Becky Turner, from Turner Dairy, shared her insights with the friends about life on a dairy farm. Collin’s grandparents visited to share a story with Collin’s circle time friends. Benjamin, Alice, Emmet, Xander and Sam all celebrated their birthdays by having their family members come to spend some special time with them in school. Thank you to all those who helped make our school days special!
The friends really enjoyed playing games this month, but we also did a variety of other activities. Some of our favorites included cutting practice, graphing our apple preferences, looking at new books with friends, sending messages with the Message from Me technology and playing with castles and blocks on the Green Room Rug. In the discovery area, the friends experienced golf ball painting, leaf collaging, vehicle painting and floam creations. The friends also worked together to create a beautiful fall themed nature collage using items that they collected at home with their families.