During the month of October, the Green Room Friends have been busy hearing stories about and doing activities that help them understand what it means to recycle and what impact recycling has on the world we live in.

**Reduce, Reuse and Recycle!**

We began our discussions about recycling asking the question, Where does all the garbage go? During circle time we read the books, “Where Does all the Garbage go?” by Melvin Berger and “Recycle Everyday” by Nancy Elizabeth Wallace. These books explained and showed pictures of landfills that are continually being filled by the waste that we throw out. How can we be part of the solution? Reduce: buy less and be sure to use all that we do buy. Reuse: if you can no longer use something donate it to someone who can use it or think of an alternative use. Recycle: think before you throw things in the trash. Maybe that item can be recycled.

**What Items Can Be Recycled?**

We learned that plastic, aluminum, glass, paper, cardboard and compost can all be recycled. The friends took part in a number of sorting activities to identify items that can be recycled.

**How Can We Recycle?**

After learning the 3 Rs and knowing which items can be recycled, the friends took action in the classroom. We are mindful after snack in sorting our trash. We throw our left over food, paper napkins and cardboard bowls or plates in the green compost bin. Any plastic wrappers or containers go in the blue recycle bin and spoons and cups are put in small colorful bins to be washed in the dishwasher. The friends also did a number of projects in which they reused items and turned them into beautiful artwork or a special creation.

**Saving our Planet**

The main idea for this theme was to get our children thinking about our planet and how we can make it a better place by recycling. During our final week of the Recycling Unit, we focused on other ways we can be mindful in protecting our earth. We read the big book, “Saving our Planet” by Megan Wasp. This book talks about the importance of conserving energy and water. We also read “10 Things I Could do to Help My World” by Melanie Walsh which has simple tips on how we could all try like turning off a light switch when we leave the room or turning the water off when brushing our teeth.
Recycling Activities

Here is a closer look at some of our favorite activities that helped the friends get a better understanding of what it means to recycle.

Recycle Signs

To familiarize ourselves with the recycle symbol, friends had the opportunity to color and decorate recycle signs. They had the option of taking these signs home or adding them to our Reduce, Reuse, Recycle bulletin board in the Green Room. The friends also helped paint the letters in reduce, reuse and recycle to help make our bulletin board colorful.

Reusing

Throughout the month, the friends did a number of activities that involved reusing materials. Plastic otoscope ear pieces were painted and turned into jewelry when the children strung them on colorful rope. Poker chips were glued to foam board to create an AB pattern. Bubble wrap and tape were used to make garbage balls and we designed hats made from newspaper.

Recycle Truck

Friends worked together to turn a cardboard box into a recycling vehicle. They painted each part of the truck green. Once it dried, the truck made its rounds picking up recyclable materials. The truck would bring recyclable materials to our recycling station. Here friends sorted all the items into their correct bin.
Creation Station

The dramatic play center was a busy area during the Recycling Unit. After friends sorted recyclable materials in the recycle station, the dramatic play center was turned into the creation station. Here, the friends used a variety of materials that could have ended up in a landfill if we didn’t get creative and make something special. Friends made airplanes out of small pieces of cardboard, small crowns out of glue bottle caps and artwork using puzzle pieces and paper scraps.

Recycle Sort Game

Recycling was fun for friends when they played the recycle sort game. This game has six colored boxes labeled with either, plastic, paper, cardboard, aluminum, compost or glass. The friends took turns finding picture cards and deciding which recycle bin each item belonged.

Worms

Worms speed up composting and help to create rich soil. During this month the friends enjoyed caring for the worms and creating worm castings so that we can enrich our soil for our garden boxes on the playground. Taking care of our worm friends is something the friends will do all year long.

Helping Hands for Earth

For this activity, the friends traced their hands and were asked to think of a way they can help their earth. The teacher wrote their ideas near their traced hands. Friends came up with some creative ideas like picking up litter, turning off the water when brushing their teeth and making extra stop signs to put up in busy intersections.
Each circle group read the story, “Not a Box” by Antoinette Portis. This story talks about all the possibilities a box can be. Each group took on the challenge of transforming a large, plain, cardboard box into something new and exciting. Take a look at what we came up with!

Mrs. Solomon’s Friends turned their box into a pizza place/ballet studio.

Mrs. Bird’s Friends turned their box into a fire truck.

Mrs. Opferman’s Friends turned their box into a rocket.

Miss Mangan’s Friends turned their box into a castle.
Special Visitors and Birthday Celebrations

Basil’s Mom, visited and read a special story to Mrs. Bird’s circle group.

The librarian, Miss Debbie, shared some of her favorite recycling stories with the friends.

During the month of October we celebrated some birthdays in the Green Room. Broden, Andres and Rocco all tuned 4! Each birthday friend was joined by family members that read a story to their child’s circle group.