Friendship and Community

Extended Morning has a weekly Focus Book that expands on the Preschool theme of the month. The teachers support the stories through related activities that include experiences in each of the Developmental Domains. The story is further enhanced by weekly Cooking Projects with Mrs. Loomis, Large Motor activities with Ms. McMichael, and daily music with Mrs. Bird. A brief description of the focus book is included in each Monday's email, and a list of available activities is a part of each day's email. The newsletter for each theme recaps the books and related activities through text and photographs.

September’s books were chosen to address the children’s experience of coming back to school or starting a new school, the feelings they may have at the beginning of school, and making and appreciating

Leeza and Ksenia practice balancing.

Zahra spends some time getting to know the Green Room.

Roxy, Ava and Elowyn move like sloths.
Franklin Goes to School by Paulette Borgeois

Franklin is a turtle who is worried about going to school for the first time. Franklin's parents help him prepare for the day and encourage him as he makes his way to school. As Franklin experiences the day, he finds many things that he enjoys doing, such as playing with blocks, listening to stories and doing artwork. He meets several new friends and has fun playing with them. When Franklin arrives home, he gives his parents two paintings he made at school, and two big hugs! Activities that supported this story included: Easel Painting with sparkly paint; looking carefully at pictures and small toy turtles to decorate a turtle shell like a spotted turtle, box turtle, or sea turtle, then creating Turtle Stick Puppets; watching a video clip of baby sea turtles leaving their nest in the sand and walking towards the ocean; and exploring the skeleton of a snapping turtle. This week, friends made Apple Cartwheels in the kitchen with Mrs. Loomis, and practiced balancing on plastic “stepping stones” with Ms. McMichael.

Gwendolyn, Saatwik, Matti, and Sahil explore a Snapping Turtle skeleton with Mr. Salinetro.

Dominick uses the apple peeling machine.

Owen measures the honey to add to the Apple Cartwheel filling.
**Brave Bear by Kathy Mallat**

A young bear finds a baby bird who has fallen from its nest. The concerned bear sees that the nest is far out on a branch in a very tall tree. Even though he is scared, the bear bravely climbs the tree and returns the baby bird safely to his nest. The available activities included: playing the Moody Monsters matching and memory game. The children try to match the monsters whose faces express the same feelings (happy, sad, scared, surprised, mad); playing the Feed the Birds Game. Children roll a die and use a clothespin "bird" to pick up the correct number of pipe cleaner "worms" to feed to their babies; practicing fine motor skills with Lacing Bears and by buttoning and zipping the clothing on stuffed bears; matching colors in Teddy Bear Bingo; and drawing different expressions on bear faces. Friends measured ingredients and used the big blender to make an Orange Julius drink in the kitchen with Mrs. Loomis, and sang Going On A Bear Hunt with Mrs. Bird this week.

Javi squeezes the clothespin bird to move worms worms to the bird nests.

Ben balances and twirls a hoop.

Leeza and Zahra play Teddy Bear Bingo.

Jacobo adds ingredients to make Orange Julius.

Parker, Ben and Tomer learn about the parts of the kitchen and the process of cooking.
The Very Sleepy Sloth by Andrew Murray

One day while sloth was fast asleep, the animals in the jungle were wide awake and busy: Cheetah was working on his speed; Elephant on his strength; Kangaroo on her spring; and Monkey on his swing. The animals did not understand why sloth seemed so lazy. Sloth challenged the animals to try each other’s skills, and they did, without success. The sloth then reminded them that, "We are all busy doing what we do best." Sloth is, of course, best at snoozing! The activities that enhanced this story included: using fabric paint brushes and brown and silver paint to create the look of sloth fur on paper cut-outs of sloths; lifting heavy blocks by using a hand cart; playing a balancing block game called Zimbos; counting in the Elephant Links game; viewing a short video of a sloth moving across the ground and imitating it during Animal Races in the Red Room. The children also raced while carrying "weights" (foam blocks) like the Elephant, swinging their arms like the Monkey, running like the Cheetah, and springing like the Kangaroo.

The friends made pretzel dough and shaped it into the first letter of their name in the kitchen, jumped over a jump rope in the red room, and sang the The Goldfish song by Laurie Berkner. Experience The Goldfish song here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uCF3vBuxXS8

Friends do a relay race while carrying "heavy loads" like the elephant in the story.

Ksenia uses silver paint and a mop-like brush to paint fur on a sloth.

Ava uses a fork to make the paint look like Sloth fur.

Some Green Room Extended Morning
Friends observe the sloths they created at circle time.
Two Cool Coyotes by Jillian Lund

Frank the coyote is sad when his friend Angelina moves away, but then he makes a new friend when Larry moves into the den next door. Related activities included: making abstract Sand Art Creations; drawing pictures and writing stories about What I Like To Do With My Friend; looking “cool” by dressing up in sunglasses and bandanas; sketching a real cactus; howling and dancing to fun music; playing the game of "Hop Rocks" (balancing on plastic stepping stones); and making Cucumber Dip to enjoy with vegetables.