Folktales and Fables

We began the month with the traditional folktale, The Tortoise and The Hare. Even though the hare is faster than the tortoise, in a race, the tortoise wins by being slow and steady rather than speedy and distracted. There are many versions of this tale that we shared with the children, but the result of the race, and the lesson, are the same. Activities included playing The Snail’s Pace Race Game, practicing being slow and steady while carrying a hard boiled egg on a wooden spoon in a relay race, baking delicious Granola Bars and exploring a real turtle skeleton.

The Lion and The Mouse is another traditional Fable attributed to Aesop about a mouse that offers to help a lion in the future if the lion will release her instead of eating her. The lion lets the mouse go. Later, the lion is trapped in a hunter’s net. The mouse hears his fear-filled roar and rushes to chew away the net and free the lion. The lion now knows that "even the littlest mouse can help the biggest lion." The moral of the tale is to always help others. Activities included a very special visit by a real mouse named Sicily. The children learned about real mouse behavior and observed Sicily run through a maze that they built out of the large wood blocks. Thank you to Mr. Salinetro and his sister for loaning Sicily to us for the day! We also played the Big/Little Opposite Game and the Mousetrap Game, created mouse ear and lion ear headbands and manes and paws to wear while we enacted the story, and did some cheese tasting in the kitchen.
The third focus book was the retelling of a classic Philippine fable, *Rockabye Crocodile*, by Jose Aruego and Ariane Dewey. Amabel and Nettie are two elderly boars that live next door to each other in the jungle. Amabel is as kind and cheerful as Nettie is selfish and mean. When kind Amabel goes in search of food, the bamboo tree sways to her humming and drops fish in her basket. And when she takes care of the crocodile’s baby, the crocodile supplies her with eels and crabs. But the next morning when Nettie demands the same, it is not fish she finds in her basket, but bats, spiders and rats! Activities included finger painting crocodile shapes, making crocodiles out of arm prints and tiny cut paper for teeth, creating boar puppets, looking at pictures of real crocodiles and alligators, making comparisons between the two, and drawing them. All of the children were busy in the kitchen baking and wrapping winter treat bread for their families.

Thanks to all for attending our Open House events at the beginning of the month. Have a safe and healthy Winter Break. Enjoy the time with your family!

*Mrs. Bird, Mrs. Flynn, Miss Furman, Miss McMichael, Mrs. Opferman, and Mr. Salinetro*
Extended Morning Open House 2010