Dinosaurs

Extended Afternoon 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, and Large Motor activities and Gardening activities with Ms. McMichael. 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.

January’s books were chosen to enhance our discovery and to contribute to the fun of learning about dinosaurs. We met a glistening dinosaur that sparkled, a teacher who prepared for a dinosaur to come to her classroom, a dinosaur learning his manners and a fancy hat wearing dinosaur who some thought was extinct! These fun stories helped to continue conversations and learning together about a new topic for our friends.

Dazzle the Dinosaur by Marcus Pfister

A shiny egg accidentally ends up in the nest of a mother Maiasaurus. Out of the egg comes Dazzle, an imaginary dinosaur with a fan of reflecting spines running along his back and down his tail. Dazzle and his sister, Maia, travel beyond the safety of their woods to try to reclaim their family cave from a dangerous Dragonsaurus (an imaginary dinosaur). Dazzle's shiny spines reflect the sunlight and frighten the Dragonsaurus so much that he runs away. The Maiasauras family moves back to their cave and is finally protected by the beautiful valley and surrounding mountains. During the week, we baked bread dough dinosaur eggs, played a dino memory game, ran our fingers through “goop” and marched dinosaurs through it. We also made fossils, foil dinosaur spikes, and played dinosaur bingo.
Mrs. Toggle’s Dinosaur by John Burningham

This week's focus book is Mrs. Toggle's Dinosaur by Robin Pulver. Mrs. Toggle hears that she has a new student starting in her class, and that the student is a dinosaur! As Mrs. Toggle worries about what to do, the children are happily imagining life with a dinosaur in their classroom. The class talks with the custodian to get a large chair and desk; visits the library to learn about dinosaurs; and checks with the kitchen to arrange for extra food. When the principal brings the new student, she is a girl named Dina Sawyer, not a dinosaur!! For our activities, we dictated a story and drew an accompanying picture. We measured the length of dinosaurs in our hallway, created plaster dinosaur fossils, glued pasta on foil to create dinosaur skeletons, and we made herbivore pizza!

How Do Dinosaur's Eat Their Food? by Jane Yolen and Mark Teague.

This story begins with a series of dinosaurs who have bad manners at the dinner table, and ends with the same dinosaurs exhibiting good manners. We enjoyed many interesting activities to go along with this book, such as: practicing the differentiating skills to tell between the dinosaurs that are herbivores and those that are carnivores. We even discovered that humans are a combination of both called omnivores. We also worked as a team over the week to put together a large dinosaur floor puzzle. Paper mache was a new art technique that we used over the course of two weeks to create our own dinosaurs. This particular story depicts the dinosaurs eating various foods including cereal. Of course, we collected cereal in baggies to eat as our snack one evening.

Edwina - The Dinosaur Who Didn't Know She Was Extinct by Mo Willems

Everyone in town knows and loves Edwina. She plays with them and bakes them chocolate chip cookies! Reginald Von Hoobie-Doobie, however, knows that dinosaurs are extinct and wants to prove it. He tries everything, but he thinks no one is listening to him. Edwina is willing to listen. Reginald convinces her that she is extinct, but ... she doesn’t care!! And in the end, Reginald doesn't care either and they all enjoy chocolate chip cookies together! We created “Ewina hats” using paper plates, shiny confetti, sticky foam pieces, and flowing ribbons. In the kitchen, we enjoyed a special treat - the kind that Edwina enjoys - chocolate chip cookies! Using many varying techniques and media, Apatosaurus collages were a creative masterpiece. The end of our week included a fun snack: food colored dinosaur pancakes. We learned so much about dinosaurs this month. We are excited for our whole school unit in February: Pittsburgh!
Have you heard of a Goop-a-saurus?

A sweet treat for a sweet friend!

Concentration is required for building…

Purple dinosaurs exist in the Children’s School!

Plaster of Paris provides a perfect spot to create dinosaur fossils.

Paleontologists use tools like hammers and brushes to uncover dinosaur bones.

Colored dinosaur eggs were a tasty bread snack.

We use lots of different cooking and decorating techniques in the kitchen.

Our small group has become so close… it’s like we are family!
Scooter buddies!

A few balloons, some tape, and an imagination... PRESTO! Dinosaurs!

Rolling oranges makes juicing them go much more smoothly.

Some tricks of the trade - ice cream scoopers measure just the right amount!

Paper mache dinosaurs were a two week project!

The sand table is a great place to do some exploring!

We work together in the kitchen!