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 daily Cooking Projects and Music with Mrs. Loomis and Miss McMichael teaching Art and Large Motor Activities.

The book *Franklin Goes to School* by Paulette Borgeois captures a turtle called Franklin, 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: nature rubbings with leaves and flowers, nature collages, pressing and drying flowers, and taking a nature walk on campus to learn about our school community.

In *Brave Bear* by Kathy Mallet, 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 afraid, the bear bravely climbs the tree and returns the baby bird safely to its nest. The children played Teddy Bear Bingo, painted pictures using sponge cut-out shapes creating their own brave bear pictures, fingered painted, and created paintings by rolling golf balls through bright paint colors. Friends measured ingredients and used the big blender to make an Orange Julius drink in the kitchen. We sang “Going on a Bear Hunt” along with reading several more bear stories.

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 the story were going on a walk on the CMU campus to try out the hammocks. The friends challenged themselves to lay in them without falling out. They also colored cut out sloths and placed them in cloth hammocks.
The friends watched a short video about sloths and learned that sloths take a large part of the week sleeping and eating in trees. After seven days they climb down from the tree to use the bathroom and then its back up the tree for another week of eating and sleeping.

Our last focus book this month was *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 exploring real cactus plants in our gardening class and learning about these plants. We learned that they need very little water and lots of light in order to grow indoors at school. Howling like real coyotes and dancing to fun music with Mrs. Loomis was also included. We prepared Cucumber Dip to enjoy with fresh vegetables and made Trail Mix. In Art we printed with left over veggies and fruit from the kitchen.
Wood working teaches fine motor skills

Barn building at the light table

Painting with sheep’s tail takes skill