Four focus books were selected for the Extended Afternoon’s study of recycling. Through a mixture of fiction and non-fiction, the story lines and content led to exploration of how to care for our Planet Earth. The concepts studied included what children specifically can do to help the Earth, the processes of recycling aluminum and plastic, and what a good relationship with the Earth looks like.

In the book “Michael Recycle” by Ellie Bethel, the town of Abberdoo-Rimey is overrun with garbage until Michael Recycle swoops in and teaches the townspeople how to reduce their waste by recycling. Throughout the week the children joined the Michael Recycle Team as they participated in activities that brought this book to life! We glued and glittered name rhymes, identified recycling and compost containers throughout the school, learned to play a Recycling and Sorting card game, created the recycle symbol using recycled materials and prepared several different fruits to put into the dehydrator during cooking time.

Frank Asch, the author/illustrator of “The Earth and I”, beautifully and simply describes a healthy relationship between the earth and a child. The soft, watercolor-like illustrations further enhance the page by page depictions of nature as children and adults alike might experience it interactively. The first and last lines of the story reads, "The Earth and I are friends." The children learned tangibly in many ways this week: painting with watercolors on leaf shapes using eye droppers, painting rainbows with large brushes on the easels, using the parachute, dancing with ribbons, and lots of good music, and making pumpkin bread and pancakes - yum!

“The Adventures of an Aluminum Can” by Alison Inches is a story about recycling. It takes the readers through the process of creating aluminum from little pieces of alumina trapped in rock far underground, to using an aluminum can to store fruit, to melting and recasting the can into a brand new aluminum baseball bat. We used large plastic bowling balls to bowl over stacks of tin cans, and learned some great recycling songs! Ms. McMichael made cheese, turkey or ham quesadillas using whole wheat tortillas.

The second in a series of stories about recycling, “The Adventures of a Plastic Bottle” by Alison Inches, takes the readers and listeners along on the travels of a plastic water bottle from its beginning as crude oil under the ocean to becoming a toy made from the recycled plastic of the bottle. Along the way, the bottle gets created, filled with water, emptied into a thirsty boy, used as a flower vase, and then finally recycled, shredded, melted, extruded and formed into new things! We used recycled plastic bottles for a variety of activities such as: filling bottles with rice and beads to make shakers; hunting for recyclable material hidden in the school; playing a catch game with recycled milk jugs, and exploring Floam. We made delicious roasted applesauce, too!

Mrs. Loomis and Miss McMichael
We love to use various tools to create art. We discovered that plastic bottles and tin cans were great for rolling and making prints with paint!

While out for a fall walk, we stopped to take a spin on this movable bench. It was so much fun!

It was a special treat to have our own personal concert from one of our student employees, Grace!

Perhaps we have a future architect in our midst...

Measuring, pouring, baking... math and science can be found all over the kitchen!

Anything is possible at the Children’s School!

Creativity flows naturally from the tips of our markers...

If you add some music to the atmosphere, movement is the result!

Never a dull moment... Ribbon dancing is great from any angle!

Caught in the act of dropping water onto leaves covered in water-based color...

We aren’t camera-shy around here!