Important Notes
- November’s theme: Native Americans of the Plains
- Parent Teacher Conferences:
  November 15th (afternoon only)
  November 22nd (all day-No School)
- Thanksgiving Vacation:
  November 27th-29th
- Please remember to send a change of cold weather appropriate clothes.

Elements of Art
*A focus on color, line, shape and texture*

We began our study on the Elements of Art by taking a walk outside, using our observational skills, to draw the city skyline of Pittsburgh. Observational Drawing is the ability to draw and paint from life, creating an image not taken from either a photograph or the artist’s imagination, but from real life observation. This initial activity helped set the foundation for our unit, inspiring the creative juices to begin flowing, as we delved into the world of how art is created. We explored lines, colors, shapes and texture, beginning with drawing, cutting, and painting straight, curvy and zigzag lines. We worked with colors of the rainbow in different mediums, manipulating and mixing them to make interesting combinations. We graphed, stamped and contrasted shapes. We used descriptive language to compare and contrast a variety of textures. Throughout the month of October, we learned by means of hands on experiences, making personal connections, reflecting upon stories, and immersing ourselves into the world of art, by truly becoming a classroom of artists.
A LINE IS A DOT THAT WENT FOR A WALK

The elements of art serve as building blocks. A person cannot create art without utilizing some of them. Line is essential as a concept to depicting objects and symbols and defining shapes. To introduce the concept of line, we read the book, “Lines” by Philip Yenawine. The friends learned that “A line is a dot that went for a walk.” A line can be straight, swirly, wavy, jagged, dotted, dashed, zigzag, diagonal, vertical or horizontal. We explored the many ways lines can be used in art, to create shapes, show movement or represent texture. Students used popsicles sticks to build two dimensional designs and shapes, then sketched their design with markers. Sting was also used to represent various types of lines within their artwork.

COMBINING LINE AND COLOR

We added the element of color during our second week of study. Starting with the colors of the rainbow, we sang, danced and painted until we had learned the order by heart. We completed three projects that combined color with line. First, the children used rulers, filling an entire page with line. The spaces were then filled with a rainbow of color. The second project consisted of painting the colors of the rainbow, filling the page with the pattern. Once the paint was dry, we cut the paper into strips using straight and curvy lines. The rainbow was reassembled onto a black background, leaving a small space between each strip. Our third project intrigued the students, as we used old record players to create spin art, mixing the colors of the rainbow.

LOOK AT US NOW!

In just over one month, the kindergartners have progressed greatly in their drawing abilities. Their fine motor skills, awareness of detail, and focus has developed, allowing for more elaborate and accurate drawings. Their representation of forms are clearly recognizable and will gradually become more complex as time continues. Their use of color is developing into more of a realistic representation, rather than a form of expression.
SMASH ART

While exploring the elements of art, the kindergarten class explored the blending of colors. The children used a wide variety of colored clay and their fingers to smash and smush the colors into each other, creating new ones. As students manipulated the clay, they developed their fine motor skills by increasing muscle strength, dexterity and hand-eye coordination.

LOGIC CHALLENGES

Our weekly challenges and classroom manipulatives also incorporated the elements of art. One great resource, Pattern Play by Mindware, introduces matching, symmetry and congruence in a colorful and exciting manner. The children sharpened their spatial skills by replicating the patterns shown on the card and manipulating the blocks into the wooden tray. Another popular game that allows us to flex our logic muscles is Castle Logic by Education Insights. The challenge is to assemble the wooden blocks and towers into one of the castles in the puzzle booklet. This game is designed to stretches a player’s logical thinking skills and develop their spatial reasoning skills while having fun!

KINDERGARTEN LANGUAGE ARTS

In kindergarten we are immersed in the world of printed text. As the students write, they put more effort into their writing as they are allowed to initiate their own ideas. Consequently, their writing becomes meaningful to them. Students explore invented spelling or as we refer to it, “Kindergarten Spelling”. Kindergarten spelling enables the children to use what they know about letters, sounds and spelling patterns to spell the words as well as they can. Spelling is a developmental process in which children acquire certain ideas about spelling as they are exposed to printed language and make connections between the sounds that make up words and the letters used to write the words. In the kindergarten classroom, children use invented spelling with thoughtful attention to letter-sound relationships. Writing in photo journals, on birthday pages and throughout the classroom helps build personal relationships between the teacher and student, builds independence, fosters attention to details, strengthens self confidence and creates a community of learners.
With the fall season upon us, it was a great time to integrate pumpkins into our science and math exploration. Friends had the chance to measure the height, weight and circumference of pumpkins. They also explored the insides, making a pumpkin slime, and counted the seeds.

Students first used unifix cubes to compare and contrast the height of four different pumpkins, recording their data, then ordering the pumpkins from shortest to tallest. Next, the students were given a small pumpkin and balance scale and asked to predict its weight compared to other objects, including a toy car, bottle of water, feather and apple. Students had to determine which objects were lighter or heavier than the pumpkin. To conclude our exploration of measurement, each child was given a spool of string and asked to predict how much would fit around the pumpkin’s middle, the circumference. The students’ predictions were tested and shared with the class, sorted by “Too Little”, “Just Right and “Too Big”.

**DISCOVERY AND EXPLORATION**

The Science/Discovery Area continues to be an active place in the kindergarten classroom! This month we focused our exploration on several experiments with the elements of color and texture and have sparked excitement and interest, wondering which experiments the kindergarten teachers will come up with next! Here are two of our favorites...

**Skittles Experiment**

I wonder... what will happen when rainbow colored Skittles candy is submerged in water?

I think...

- the color will disappear
- the skittles candy will change color.
- the water will change color.

I learned...

- the water causes the candy coating to dissolve, blending the colors together, creating a new color.

**Shrinking Chip Bag Experiment**

I wonder... what will happen when you place a snack size Sun Chip chip bag in the microwave for ten seconds?

I think...

- the bag will get really, really big, like the soap and marshmallow experiment.
- the bag will pop.
- the bag will burn and disappear.

I learned...

A Sun Chip bag contains polymers (a long chain of molecules, which in their natural state is similar to a knotted up string.) When the bag is made, these polymers are heated and stretched out to make the flat chip bag. When you expose the bag to heat, the material is able to release from the stretched state and return to its natural, bunched-up state, but maintain its natural shape.
SHAPE AND TEXTURE

We began our discussion about shapes by making a list of as many shapes as possible that we were familiar to us. The children identified a variety of shapes, counted the sides and angles and recorded if the lines were straight or curvy. We sang and danced to The Shape Song. We repurposed shapes into castles, animals, rocket ships and much more. Students then combined their knowledge of shape and line with texture, how something feels or looks like it feels, by using a sewing machine to create texture art. Throughout the week, friends also enjoyed illustrating different textures, such as smooth, rough and bumpy in their journals.

MUSIC MONDAY

Each Monday after work time, we enjoy Music Mondays, an interactive circle time where friends have a chance to listen to a musical instrument mystery sound, make a guess and learn about a new instrument. Recently, the friends painted drums that we use to learn new beats, songs and rhythms. Keeping time and learning to play along with beats develops listening skills, teaches cooperation, increases memory, and improves concentration and focus.

MRS. WISHY WASHY

“Oh, lovely mud.” said the cow, and she jumped in it. During the last week of our unit, friends eagerly anticipated the arrival of a kindergarten favorite, “Mrs. Wishy Washy.” After reading and rereading the story, the students transformed the dramatic play center into a stage and themselves into actors. Each child had the chance to become Mrs. Wishy Washy, the Cow, the Pig, the Duck or a narrator and bring the written word of Joy Cowley to life on a stage. The class learned valuable lessons on how to use their voice, body and imagination as tools. Students had to concentrate on their role, remember their lines and use cooperation as they worked together, performing for the preschool friends. Be sure to look at the kindergarten website for a recording of each performance.
TECHNOLOGY
In the kindergarten classroom, students use technology on a daily basis. Each morning during circle time, students use the smart board to record the weather and date on the calendar. Our new smart board has also allowed us the opportunity to introduce interactive media into the classroom, such as video clips, google maps, writing, drawing and hands-on math lessons, such as patterning and sorting.

During free choice and activity time, students have the option of navigating the iPad or computer. Students have been eager to explore Kidpix (computer), Bugs+Bubbles and Bugs+Buttons (iPad).

FAMILY OPEN HOUSE
Thank you to all the families who came to our Kindergarten Open House on Wednesday, October 17th! We really enjoyed meeting all the moms, dads, grandparents, brothers and sisters. We hope everyone had a great time exploring our classroom and learning about our daily activities. Families experienced a daily work activity (counted a handful of unifix cubes), played with foam, enjoyed a game of Kindergarten Bingo, created spin art using old record players and so much more! We look forward to meeting with you for conferences in November.