



News You Can Use

January 10, 2020

Welcome back and Happy New Year!!!

Large Group:

On Tuesday and Thursday we sang our new winter songs. These songs focus on winter vocabulary words, specifically the winter clothes that we need to put on to go outside in the cold weather. Then the children followed directions and put winter clothes on the boy/girl dolls. This activity focused on the following winter clothing words: boots, mittens, scarf, hat, pants, and jacket. Finally the children helped sort a basket of clothes. In a basket mittens, hats, and scarves were all mixed together. The children picked an item out of the basket and then sorted it into the appropriate bin marked by a photo symbol for hat, scarf, or mitten.

On Wednesday and Friday we continued to work on greeting our teachers and peers. We sang several songs both favorites and new ones related to winter. We also worked on identifying winter vocabulary words: boots, jacket, mittens, hat, scarf and pants. I was very pleased at how well the children got back into the school routine.

Music and Movement:

On Tuesday and Thursday the children enjoyed bouncing a snowman on the parachute. We practiced the following concepts: shake, stop, go, fast, slow, up, and down. Then the children took turns rolling a movement cube. We had fun waddling like a penguin, standing like a snowman, skating, and falling like snowflakes.

On Wednesday and Friday Ms. Dawn set up an obstacle course for the classroom. This is always one of their favorite activities. The children walked up stairs and jumped onto a large foam mat, jumped on a trampoline while counting and crawled through a large tunnel. This activity is also good for the children to practice waiting for his/her turn.

Literacy:

This week we read an interactive book called "A Cold and Snowy Day" by Beth Blackstone. The children helped the little boy in the story get ready to go outside and play. This book focused on the following winter vocabulary words: hat, mittens, boots, jacket, scarf, shovel, snowball, and hot chocolate. While reading the story, the children responded to "wh" and yes/no questions and followed 1 step directions.

Small Groups:

Cassi Small Group 1: In this group we colored snowflakes with watercolor and shaving cream. Children were excited to see the foamy cream change colors and then used their fingers to paint the snowflakes. This activity helped the children with sensory issues become more comfortable with different textures.

Cassi Small Group 2: In this group we started our winter hat project. Children were given a hat and asked to decorate it using glue and colored tissue paper. Children used either their own words or their talkers to request specific colors.

OT Small Group1: This week some of the students worked on scissor skills and fine motor strengthening using play doh. We continue to focus on opening and shutting the scissors, keeping our thumbs up, and incorporating our other hand to hold what we are cutting. We worked on making snakes and balls with play doh to increase the small muscles of our hands.

OT Small Group 2: This week we worked on painting mittens. Students did great and tolerated being in small group at the table better and with more focus. Some students used a large handled paintbrush, others a sponge brush, and others an adaptive paint brush. I was impressed with their tolerance to the art project this week.

Speech Small Group: This week the children created name snowman. Using snowballs with the letters of their name, the children stacked the snowballs from top to bottom to create a name snowman. Then they decorated the snowman's head with sticker eyes, a carrot nose, and black top hat. This activity worked on letter identification, following directions, and expressive language skills to make comments, ask questions, and make requests.

Choice Time Activities:

Dramatic play: We are using our imagination as we play dress-up with winter clothing. In this area we have a large bin of winter clothes. Children are practicing putting on and taking off coats, snow pants and boots. They are having a great time in this area.

Blocks and Cars: This week the children have been given the choice to play in the block area. They can choose between large cardboard blocks, wooden blocks and the mid-size Legos. When given time to explore the children are creating some very interesting and elaborate creations.

Feeling Table: This week we added water and ice in the feeling table. I asked the children if they thought ice would sink or float. We graphed their guesses and then went to the table. We found that if we didn't have enough water in the table the ice sank, but when we added more water the ice did float.

Art: This week I drew snowflakes on large white paper. Children were given a variety of stickers and asked to put the stickers on the lines. Once the lines were filled we cut them out and displayed them in our room. This is a great activity for developing fine motor skills. This is something you could do at home as well. Children typically enjoy adding stickers to just about anything.

We also began making winter hats. Children were given a template and asked to cut a curve line. Adult assistance was given as necessary. We will finish decorating them next week.

On Friday we had an in class snowball fight with white pom poms. The children had so much fun with this activity. I think we have a few future AllStar pros.

Important Dates:

No school on Friday January 17th

Please take 5 minutes to complete the annual 5Essentials Survey at <https://.5-essentials.org/Illinois/>

Your input is very important!!

Your Team:

Cassi Williston, Classroom Teacher
Cassi.Williston@cusd200.org

Nicole MacKinnon, Classroom Speech Language Pathologist
Nicole.MacKinnon@cusd200.org

Dawn Kraus, Classroom Occupational Therapist
dawn.kraus@cusd200.org

Susan Simnick, Classroom Physical Therapist
Susan.Simnick@cusd200.org

Janice Jacklich, Teaching Assistant
Denise Cullen , Teaching Assistant

