

Specialists' Newsletter

KINDERGARTEN

September/October 2010

ART



Kindergartners began the year with an exploration of **lines**, the first of seven **Elements of Art**. They learned that there are six types of line families; **horizontals, verticals, diagonals, curvy, ziz-zags** and **dotted**. Next, we examined the works of **Piet Mondrian**. After a discussion of Mondrian's use of horizontal and vertical lines, as well as **geometric shapes** and **primary colors**, students created their own geometric compositions using rulers, markers, and acrylic paint. Next, students will paint in **Joan Miro's** style, practicing their **curvy lines** and **organic shapes** as well as experimenting with **secondary color** mixing.

MUSIC



It has been a delightful start of the year meeting your daughters! I hope you had a chance to read through the music curriculum documents that were sent to you in conjunction with Curriculum Night and the Kindergarten Specialist Morning. They contain an overview of the music program at Burke's along with grade level specifics, including this year's performance dates for your daughter. Please mark these dates in your calendars now (this information is also available on the website).

The first week of school, all the kindergarten girls were officially welcomed into the Burke's family at an All-School Welcoming Assembly in the Burke's gym. The 1st-8th graders quietly sang "Sansa Kroma" as the kindergarteners entered the assembly space. Following up in the music room the girls heard the song's story about a baby eagle and the message about being part of a community where all take care of each other.

In the music room the girls met Timothy the Music Mouse and heard a story about how he 'grew' his ears. Timothy is a puppet used to teach music skills such as listening and singing voices, to introduce activities and songs and to build personal connections. At the Lower School Picnic the girls were excited to 'teach' you the Dutch folk dance "Boanopstekker" (known to Burke's girls as "The Hello Dance"), demonstrating circle making, 'forward' and 'other direction' and steady beat skills.

The girls have been exploring the many percussion instruments in the music room, learning how to care for and play them and beginning to classify instruments by how the sound is produced. In a much loved game "The Giant's Instruments," the girls 'borrow' instruments from the skin/drum, wood and metal shelves, play them for their classmates and return them to their 'home' on the shelf before the giant 'wakes up' each morning. Next we will begin to learn Halloween songs and dances as the girls continue to explore the vocal timbres of speaking, calling, whispering and singing voice.

Kindergarten is a wonderful time of musical exploration, building readiness for the years to come. I look forward to learning more about your daughter in music. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments as the year progresses.

**** One last note: Please help your daughter learn to tie her shoes if this is still an area of difficulty for her. With so much movement during music, untied shoes are a leading safety issue as well as a cause of lost time from group activities.**

Thanks, Ms. Mandelstein
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PE



Kindergarten girls bring great enthusiasm and energy to physical education. They move using control, without bumping others or falling down, and quickly freezing so they're ready for new directions. Listening, following directions and keeping our "own space" are important beginning concepts. Games like Shipwreck reinforce these skills. We alternate locomotor movements with non-locomotor skills and strength and flexibility challenges.

Birdcatcher is a game where dodging while running is practiced. Lifting one foot then the other while in a push-up or plank position requires strength and concentration. We practice striking, throwing and catching skills with beach balls, beanbags and soft balls. The girls have also been introduced to Four Square and are watching this recess game with great interest. Some have ventured in to play with the older girls.

SCIENCE



We have welcomed the kindergarten class to science by studying a scientist's most important tools for learning about the world: her five senses. After an initial exploration of the lab, where the girls got to see, touch, hear, and smell various objects (including the intriguing stuffed seagull and robin), we focused on one sense each week. First we learned about some of the parts of the eye, experimented with the effect of light on our pupils, and graphed the different colors of irises

in the class. We next investigated sound, experimenting a number of ways with feeling and seeing vibrations. The following week, we identified mystery smells and decided which we did or didn't like. We had a similar exploration with touch as the kindergarteners attempted to identify objects by touch alone. Our senses study culminated in a "senses walk" off-campus to Land's End Park, where we observed the Golden Gate Bridge and the ocean view with all our senses except taste. Look for your kindergartener's Senses Book with all her work in her backpack when we finish the unit! Next we will embark on a study of animal homes. I enjoyed meeting many of you on the kindergarten parent specialist tour and hope to meet the rest of you soon.

TECHNOLOGY



tool, to draw portraits, type words, and record their own voices.

The kindergarteners learn about three parts of a computer—Input, Output, CPU—and how these parts relate to themselves. Output is their facial expression, voice, and gesture. Input is their senses. Central Processing Unit (CPU) is their brain. In addition, the girls are learning to open, use, and quit applications and documents. They are using online art and music applications to practice mouse skills such as pointing, clicking, and double-clicking. They are learning to use KidPix, a multimedia design

LIBRARY



Welcome!

Library

KINDERGARTEN
SEPTEMBER/
OCTOBER 2010



Reading, Researching, Relaxing. Browsing and Borrowing. Sharing and Caring.

Welcome! Kindergartners are off to a wonderful start in Library. After a “get-to-know-you week” in the classroom with familiar books like **BROWN BEAR, BROWN BEAR** and **POLAR BEAR, POLAR BEAR**, both by Bill Martin, the girls comfortably moved into the Library where we began with two important questions: What is a library? What is research? The girls generated insightful answers, and we checked out those answers in several books (**THE INSIDE OUTSIDE BOOK OF LIBRARIES** by Julie Cummins and **MAISY GOES TO THE LIBRARY** by Lucy Cousins). In conjunction with Science, we then focused on the senses. We read a folktale (**SEVEN BLIND MICE**) and several nonfiction books including **SENSE SUSPENSE** by Bruce McMillan. We

embarked on the research process, gathering information from books and through experience. Most recently we focused on individual identity through an exploration of names. We shared **CHRYSANTHEMUM** by Kevin Henkes, **MOMMY DOESN'T KNOW MY NAME** by Suzanne Williams, and **RUMPELSTILTSKIN** by Paul Zelinsky. We have discussed literary elements (characterization), parts of a book (cover, endpapers and title page), elements of a book (title), and genres (folktales). In addition, we have extended experience research process by collecting and analyzing data. The girls are now very comfortable with “browsing and borrowing.” And we are having great fun with “reading, researching, and relaxing”—our library mantra. A word of

explanation: The books coming home from the Library are not intended for independent reading. Instead, the books are intended for independent browsing (most are generously illustrated) and/or for reading aloud by a grown-up at home.

Questions:

- What is a Library?
- What is research?
- What is a name?
- What is a title?
- What is a folktale?
- What is a character?
- What is an author?
- What is an illustrator?

21st Century Learning

Process Information.

Use information for good purpose.

Appreciate social context of learning—sharing, collaboration and ethical behavior..

Pursue personal and aesthetic interests.



2010

For your information: Lower School students may have out up to 4 books at a time. (If a girl has 4 books out, we will ask her to return something before checking out another book). Kindergartners may borrow 1 book during each library class period. A book is due 3 weeks from the borrowing date, but it may be returned any time before that. A date due slip is located either at the front or back of each book. You are, of course, invited to use the Library as well. You have a card on file, and you may borrow as many books as you like. It's best to come before school or at the end of the school day on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 3:10 and 4:00. Should you have any questions or requests, please call me at 751-0177, ext. 311 or e-mail me at susan.f@kdb.org.