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April Buzz from the Bumblebees

We have been watching tiny caterpillars grow and form into a pupa, also known as a chrysalis. The class is patiently awaiting the arrival of butterflies once they emerge. We also have ladybug larva that have made it to their pupa stage and soon they will become adult ladybugs. We have been studying lifecycles and the children are familiar with the different stages, so familiar in fact that they found a tiny set of ladybug eggs on a small leaf around the base of one of our trees in the play yard! This was very exciting to all of us!

We celebrated Earth day with a large project of handprints that formed the shape of our world. We talked about ways we could help our planet and many of the children already had some great ideas. Conserving water, recycling, planting trees and vegetables, even helping others.

Our annual Mother's Day Tea will be on Wednesday May 8th from 9am to 10. The class is busy making gifts for their moms and we are planning to bake some goodies to share. RSVP so we make enough! If you are unable to come, please consider having another family member come in your place to visit with your kiddo, thank you!

Here are some of the lessons your children have been working on, enjoy the pictures! Speaking of pictures, I will be starting to put together our year-end photo albums. There is a cost to make them, so I will only be ordering enough for those that purchase one. They will be ready to pick up the last week of school. Contact me for more information and let Donna know if you'd like to order one.



Leia and **Kylee** have been practicing their sounds together. They use sandpaper letters and trace with their fingers which helps with muscle memory later needed for writing. They also learn the sound each letter makes and places the corresponding beginning-sound picture card next to the letter.



Hank and **Ava** have been working with the puzzle maps and they are learning the names and locations of the United States. They take one state out a time, trace it onto paper and then pin-prink it out. Soon, they will each have their own map to take home.



These eggs for Easter were so fun! I wrote a few three-letter words on six plastic eggs. The beginning sound was on one end of the egg while the next two letters were on the other side. The point was to turn the egg and make new words, not open them. It is challenging to turn an egg and not open it, especially when you're use to opening eggs and finding a prize. The look on **Sylvanna's** face when she read the word "win" was prize enough for her!



Earth Day Project 2019



Emma loves messy art! The children were practicing making handprints for our Earth Day craft. Squishing paint between your fingers and rubbing them across a lightly grooved tray helps to strengthen hand muscles and build up those fine motor skills.



Mackenzie realized she could read some of the magnets on our fridge. One side has a letter and a picture while the other side has the picture word spelled out. While some picture words are hard to sound out for a beginning reader (such as key), the children are able to identify the picture, name it, notice the beginning letter and sound, and figure out on their own what it says and then we help fill in the gaps.



Julian and **Jean** have been working with the hundred board. While this is not a new lesson to them, this is the first time they have done the lesson relying completely on each other. If they grab the wrong box of numbers and set it up, they realize on their own, through the self-correcting materials, that something doesn't look like. Then they get to decide what to do next, hence the missing row!



Joshua is using the cylinder blocks. There are four sets, each identifying different grading criterion: constant height and increasing diameter, both height and diameter increase, decreasing height with increasing diameter, and finally constant diameter with increasing height. The first few lessons are using the blocks individually. Since Joshua has mastered that, the next step is using all of the blocks together.



Richard and a friend completed the decanomial square. Normally this work is reserved for 4 ½ -6-year-olds but Richard shows such calm, careful, controlled movements that he was ready to try it with an older friend. They were so excited to complete this lesson together. The main purpose of the activity is to help children learn how to discriminate size, shape and color. It is also preparation for math by introducing squaring.



Harvi and **Nora** are using the yoga cards. They get their own rug and place the cards on an easel between them. The cards each show a position on the front of and an explanation of why, and how to do the pose, on the back. We use yoga to teach stretching, balance, body control and even calmness when little bodies need a break from over-stimulation. You can do this at home too!



Owen is really interested in reading! He still needs to memorize a few more sounds in order to read more word but ↓



Violet is practicing long vowels with object box #2. She is learning that with long vowels, you say the name of the letter, and then there's that tricky silent "e"! With the object box, ↓

he found that he can sound out words in our first set of “Bob books”. Each page has between one and four words. The words are all two or three letters that are repeated throughout the story.

the children read labels and match them to their corresponding object. They also love to simply play with the objects, sometimes thought of as a “prize” for after completing the work.



Here is a photo of the ladybug eggs our kids found on the playground! I love that they were able to apply the information that they learned in the classroom, outside in the world.



This little one does not like to get messy. Getting messy and creating things with the hands is so critical for development. **Findlay** actually asked for this work! It was her desire to make more handprints following our Earth project that led me to put this out. In Montessori, we are all about following the child and meeting their individual needs. When we pay close attention to what the children tell us through their activities, we can invent “new” projects that not only help the one child, but all of them.



Abbie loves puzzles. This photo was from the first time she was able to get the pants and shirt of the bunny in their right places. She has taken this work out quite a few times but always needed a little help getting the pieces to fit correctly. Hand-eye coordination and visual discrimination are important concepts to learn and the pleasure a child gets when they grasp it is amazing, just look at that smile!