



## The Beluga Bunch October 2006

### Matter, Matters to us!

The Belugas are learning about 3 types of matter: solids, liquids and gases. Throughout our study we have done several experiments. We are growing a crystal garden (made of water, salt and food coloring) and observing changes daily in writings and drawings. We also blew up our own balloons to learn how gases take the shape of the object in which it is contained. To top it off, Belugas labeled solids, liquids and gases in the classroom. Jordan even put a gas label on his chest because he fills his lungs with air, and explained it to the class.



While we focusing on matter, the Belugas continue to notice the weather each day and check the temperature while we play on the roof (thermometer is hanging outside). Because the Belugas expressed an interest in clouds, we read a weather book and learned about cumulus, cirrus, and stratus clouds. Ask your child about clouds you see in the sky- you'll be amazed to hear what they know.

### Reading

The Belugas join several classrooms for reading. Everyone is learning so much! Teachers in all of the rooms are noticing the overall strong interest in reading and writing. You can encourage this at home too. Make reading time a part of your everyday routine. Take a trip to the bookstore or library and find a book to read together at home. A few families have asked one particular question about reading. . .what if my child wants to hear the same book over and over? Is that o.k. to allow? YES! While children are developing literacy skills they tend to gravitate towards books with repetition or want to hear books over and over again. If you have read that book so many times that you are now saying it in your sleep, suggest picking 2 books (one you haven't read) for reading time, or you pick 1 and the child picks one. Remember, it's all in the presentation! If you are really excited to share something new or different with your child, they'll be excited to hear about it.



## Writing

Almost all of the Belugas now know to capitalize the 1st word in a sentence and the 1st letter in a name. In addition, they are really getting to practice using ending marks in their writing- some are even using quotation marks! Writer's Workshop has really taken off. Students are writing everyday in a variety of ways. Some days kids write about anything they want (i.e.- weekend activities, silly stories, crystal garden, family trips, etc.) and some days they are given writing prompts. Encourage, don't force writing at home. Whatever the purpose the writing has, don't fret over letter reversals, inventive spelling, missing punctuation or capitalization- at this developmental stage, writing is a process and it will all come together in time.



## One Beluga, Two Beluga

I want to be first! All of the Belugas are using ordinal numbers everyday, especially when lining up. You can practice ordinal numbers at home too. After/during reading a story have your child recall what happened at the beginning, middle and end. When getting ready for school make a list of things to do and label them 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc. Do the same thing when getting ready for bed. This will also help sequence ideas when it comes to writing. Belugas are also learning to read pictographs, fractions, place value and are constantly practicing computation skills.



## Oh the ways We Grow!

The Belugas are growing up. Since the beginning of school the children in the Beluga classroom have continued to grow as individuals and as a group. When some Belugas lost their baby teeth we learned about how those teeth will be replaced with adult teeth and how this is a sign of how we are growing up. The Belugas also measured their feet and their height and come spring time, they will measure themselves again to see how they have grown. Part of growing up is knowing about and being a part of a family. There are all different types of families of all different sizes. In order to explore the different families in our classroom, the Belugas are making his/her own family tree. We are using the pictures you sent in to help us construct our family trees and are very excited to see how they turn out. The pictures have sparked conversations among the students, giving them many opportunities to share stories about their families. Devonni shared how her family grew this year with the addition of her baby sister.

