



November in the Tadpoles Room

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The Gillen Brewer School

The Thanksgiving Feast-A Time for Family, Fun and Food!



The Tadpoles hard at work making a "Welcome" sign for the Thanksgiving Feast.



Sander and Harry enjoy their Thanksgiving meal.

The Tadpoles embraced the spirit of Thanksgiving with a special holiday feast on Tuesday, November 21st. Each family brought a dish that was representative of what their child enjoys to eat on Thanksgiving. We had a wide variety of foods from a turkey breast to pasta with sausage and broccoli. The children tried new foods and ate their familiar favorites. Thanks to all the parents who joined their children in the celebration and brought delicious dishes!

Prior to the feast we discussed the idea of Thanksgiving as a class. We talked about what it

means to say "thank you" for something. We touched on how thanksgiving is a special day to say "thank you" for the things that we love every day of the year.

We also talked about how Thanksgiving is also a time to help others. This year, we collected pennies to help pets with no food and no place to live (ASPCA). We also collected money to send new dogs to be trained to visit classrooms, just like Lily and Mr. G (Delta Society). This year, the children beat that staff in the Penny Harvest. The Tadpoles contributed about 25 pounds of pennies-

hooray! They enjoyed weighing the sack each week and watched the numbers go up. In the end, the sack weighed almost as much as some of the kids!



Julian and his mom enjoy some time together at the feast.



Hannah gives her Mom a big kiss!

Interactive Stories in the Tadpoles' Room



An activity the Tadpoles look forward to each week is "Story with Stephanie". Stephanie uses her special talents to make stories come alive! Using various visuals and props, the children participate in the telling of the story. Recently they enjoyed reading "Mouse Paint", during

which they were able to take turns manipulating small white mice and "painting" them the various colors mentioned in the story. Being part of the story motivates children to listen and also helps them process the information

being read to them. You can make an interactive story at home by creating simple character puppets from paper and popsicle sticks. Your child can act out various portions of the story as you read. This can be a fun way to make familiar stories new!

More fun with Lily and Mr. G!

As we continue our visits with Lily and Mr. G, the Tadpoles have grown quite comfortable with the dogs. In addition to continuing to practice their skills to appropriately ask to pet the animals, the Tadpoles have also been helping to take care of the dogs. A favorite activity was baking dog biscuits and learning how to properly feed the dogs a treat. The Tadpoles also enjoyed brushing the dogs, playing “fetch” using dog toys and walking the dogs around the classroom holding the leash. One of

the exciting things the Tadpoles did last week was to make a winter coat for Lily. Each tadpole covered a snowflake appliqué with glitter and glue, and then stuck on a tag with their name on it. When Lily came, she was given a plain white coat to wear. Each child watched and waited as their snowflake was drawn out of a hat to place with velcro on Lily’s coat until it was fully decorated! The children were proud of what they created for Lily and also had the opportunity to practice

recognizing their own names and the names of their friends in print.



Lily sports her new coat made by the Tadpoles.



Keba walks Mr. G.

Playtime Tips from Stephanie, Speech-Language Pathologist

We can learn so much about how a child plays by taking a step back and letting them lead. Our goal is to give each child a voice in play and allow them to express their own thoughts and ideas. Play time does not always need an adult “director,” your child can sit in the director’s chair, too. We can also adapt a play situation for multiple levels of play through imitation (imitating your child’s actions, sounds, or words), interpreting (making a “guess,” as to

your child’s intentions when you don’t know for sure), and commenting (making comments on your child’s actions, letting him/her know you’re watching). A few more adaptations we can make are:

Put desirable toys out of reach so your child has to communicate to get his/her favorite toy

Use obstructions in play (e.g., create a road block for cars)

Position yourself in front of your child

Use short routines that can be imitated or filled in (e.g., ready, set, go)

Pretend you don’t know what to do and let your child take the lead

Use anticipation (e.g., make the feather get closer and closer before you tickle your child)

Coming December 15: VIP DAY!

Mark your calendars-Friday, December 15th is VIP Day! VIP Day is a day for the children to bring someone special to their classroom. The children will have the opportunity to show their VIP around the class, play during work time and share lunch with them. The festivities will last from 11:00-12:00. We suggest that if possible children bring in someone special other than a par-

ent or grandparent (since there will be a Grandparents Day later in the year). Children have brought a wide variety of guests in the past including family friends, aunts or uncles, babysitters, outside therapists and doormen. Each child is allowed one guest, and that person must be over 12 years of age. On VIP Day we will ask that you pack a typical lunch for your child in addi-

tion to a lunch for the VIP. Your VIP should also wear clothing that allows for them to get on the floor and get messy with your child!

More information, including invitations, will be coming home this week.

Work Time with the Tadpoles



Cooking with the Tadpoles

The Tadpoles continue to cultivate their love of cooking and trying new foods each Wednesday in the classroom. Recent recipes include: Pumpkin chocolate chip cookies, English muffin pizzas and banana bread.

Each recipe has a specific focus. For example, while making the English muffin pizzas, each child had to follow their own individual three-step visual recipes. While making banana bread, the focus was on hand strength.

Children mashed bananas in plastic bags using their fingers and then squeezed the bananas through a cut corner of the bag.



Sander and Tommy add pumpkin to the pumpkin cookies.



Julian follows his recipe and adds sauce.



Harry smashes the bananas in his plastic bag.