

# The Sunshine Room Newsletter

May



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## What's Been Happening

We kicked off the beginning of the month with Cinco de Mayo. Ms. Lourdes was kind enough to bring the Sunshine Roomers some traditional Mexican clothing (Matthew G. and Allie had the honor of wearing it) and music, too! Everyone had fun dancing.

There was also much focus on Mother's Day. What do mothers do for us? The children certainly recognize the countless things that mothers do, as evidenced in the beautiful books they created.

We continued the Peacemakers program, emphasizing seeing beyond people's looks and recognizing that we are all the same on the inside. The children were very opinionated on the subject and, based on how they play together, we have learned they do not discriminate!



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## Language Arts

As we approach the end of the school year, we have been doing a lot of review to make sure we have retained all of the information taught this year. For the kindergartners, a lot of emphasis has been placed on vowels and connecting sounds, especially as we continue to do more and more writing. We have also been connecting what we learned in science to language arts by reading books related to gardening and plants and writing about what we've learned.

The kindergartners have begun learning about poems and writing their own acrostic poems. An acrostic poem is when you use the letters of your name or of a word that you choose to begin a phrase or stanza. They have had a lot of fun doing this and finding different ways to describe themselves in their acrostic name poems. They will continue to practice writing acrostic poems with words of their choice. They will also listen to more poetry to get an idea of what a poem can sound and look like. They have learned that not all poems rhyme and have heard poems that rhyme, some that don't, poetry that tells a story, silly poems that make you laugh and poetry that describes something.



The Jellyfish have continued reviewing the letters of the alphabet and their sounds using Zoo-phonics. They continue to surprise me with some of the words that they come up with for each letter. These kids really have an extensive vocabulary!



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## Announcements



**End of Year Show**  
**Friday, June 24, 2011**  
**4:00 p.m.**

The children will sing songs, perform dances, and present plays. Then the teachers will finalize the year with a special ceremony.



**Open House &**  
**Family Day**

**Sunday June 12**

**10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.**

*Save the date!*



Happy Birthday!

**Oscar**  
**Brayden**

*Please return  
all library  
books. Thank  
you!*

Art



In the beginning of May we learned about Cinco de Mayo, and why it is celebrated. For this holiday the children created either a maraca or a sombrero using paper towel tubes and cardboard, and decorated them with a variety of materials.

The children used their great imagination in free painting. They had so much fun being able to paint whatever silly thing came to their mind. It was great to see what great ideas they had!

For Family Day, the children painted their name banners with bright watercolors. This was an outdoors activity, something they really enjoyed. While the children waited to do their work, they made wonderful chalk drawings on the blacktop.

This month the children created new self-portraits without using a mirror. The came out very different from the ones they had made with a mirror. We can't wait to show them side by side on Family Day. It will be a treat to see how their fine motor skills and eye for art have changed over the last few months!

For the final project of the year, the children had a choice between a butterfly garden, a dinosaur scene, or life under the sea. They really loved being able to choose what they wanted to create! After painting the creatures, they designed their own backgrounds as a group. They did such an awesome job working together!

Other May art activities included making gak together and arranging beads in shape trays. This was a great activity to develop their fine motor skills!



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Math

## Drama



The last section of our drama curriculum is putting together three plays for our final show. During this time, the teacher read different stories to the children and the children chose which ones they wanted to dramatize. They picked out their parts and started to get a feel for their play. Since the children are now quite familiar with what it entails to produce a play, they started asking what they should wear and listing the props needed. There were things to resolve, such as how to portray a helicopter falling. The teacher wanted to leave that part out but the children came up with creative ways to stage it, insisting that it was important enough to be included.

The children learned their starting positions, when to enter, when to say their lines and what their lines are. Now they are rehearsing, rehearsing and rehearsing. The more they practice, the better they get and little by little the plays are coming together.

This month the Sunshine Roomers learned about data and graphing. Using manipulatives, all of the children learned how to determine if they have more/less of a certain object. For example, the children were given a handful of pennies and nickels and then sorted the coins into rows, and by sight alone determined which they had more/less of. After learning to label data in terms of “more” and less,” the children were taught how to write tallies. They were quick to pick up the concept and transferred their new knowledge into survey taking, where they asked their friends to answer a variety of questions, such as: Do you have a baby brother? Which do you like better, Legos or puzzles? The children even helped Ms. Randi pick a name for her new puppy she will get this summer: the choices were Gus and Henry, and the majority chose Gus! Thanks for your help, Sunshine Roomers!

Next the children learned about chance and probability, which they had a lot of fun with. Using a bag of a variety of beads (with unequal amounts of each color), the children insisted that the more you have of a certain color, the more likely you are to draw it from the bag (with eyes closed). They tested their hypothesis and kept records on a tally chart and discovered they were in fact correct! But how about when you have only two chances: heads or tails? The children flipped coins as a group and in pairs and learned that it is truly unpredictable.

After the week off, the children started a new unit on addition. So far, they have experimented with addition stories, pretending to be a variety of animals. For example, the Speedy Dolphins pretended their work table was the ocean and they were a dolphin family that got split apart and lost. One by one, or in pairs or small groups, the dolphins returned to their family members in the “ocean” – we added together the ever-expanding family as we went along! All of the children did the same using counting bears and working in pairs. We will continue with addition in the month of June.

## Upcoming Events

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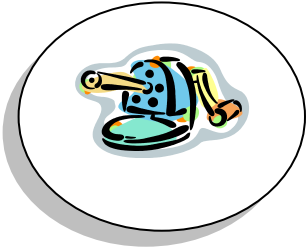
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## Handwriting



We have continued to work on our handwriting books this month by completing worksheets containing gardening words (to connect to Ms. Kristin's science lessons), sea creature words, and insects. A display of many of the children's work has also been created in the classroom and contains worksheets connected to science: gardening, plants, and springtime.

After completing their worksheets, the kindergartners continue to review upper and lowercase letters in their workbooks and all the students try their hand at writing vowels and a variety of short words on the slate.

## Science



The Sunshine Roomers just finished their "plants and gardening" unit. While we are anxiously awaiting and tending to our vegetables and flowers in our gardens, we have wrapped up our learning about plants. The children continued to learn and review where plants come from, the seed cycle and the parts of a plant. They observed plants outside and grew some of their own (and are continuing to observe some plants grow). We were astonished to see how much our lima beans sprouted!

Brainpop, an educational website used by many teachers and school districts, provided us with wonderful videos containing information about the seed cycle and the parts of a plant. We also observed how plants drink by placing stalks of celery into water with food coloring. It was a lot of fun to watch our green celery turn shades of the reds and blues we added to their drinking water.

We cut open lima beans and used a microscope that we could connect to the television to take a look inside a seed. We also were able to connect to health when looking at our own skin on our hands with the microscope. Even after washing our hands we were able to find tiny specs of dirt under the lens, EW!

As we wait with high hopes for our vegetables to grow, we will continue our science explorations and move onto the great big animals that used to roam our earth.... The DINOSAURS! Everyone (especially the boys) is very excited about this next unit.

