



College of San Mateo

Mary Meta Lazarus Child Development

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Small Prints

Drama Amuses, Encourages

and Inspires

Young children delight in pretending to be someone else and in playing make believe with their peers, teachers and family members. Drama Involves a "living through" quality that engages the whole child.

This year, to support and extend our focus on the visual & performing arts and strengthen our sense of community,

families wanted children to experience the tremendous appeal of a live theatre performance. Our weekend trip to see "Elephant & Piggies" in a play at Freight & Salvage Theatre was a resounding success! Bringing literacy to life by connecting drama to children's books was thrilling. Children saw first-hand the value of acting out their favorite stories using props, costumes and staging and they experienced the integration of music, dance and drama. Numerous research studies have shown that drama in the classroom promotes story comprehension, expressive language skills and reading-readiness. In addition, drama and pretend play strengthen children's skills in attention, reasoning, memory and social and emotional understanding.

The amazing level of family and staff engagement in center-wide events, like our trip to the theatre, speaks volumes about our shared commitment to encouraging children's imaginative responses and creative expressions and sweetening their learning with the taste of new experiences and lively adventures.

Healthy Eats, Active Feet: Our Comprehensive Health and Nutrition Program funded by Sequoia Healthcare District's Healthy Schools Initiative

We all want children to grow up healthy and strong and we know habits are developed early in life. One of our program's nutrition goals is to help children become water wise. Water is the original health drink and the "dry" truth is that most children and adults do not drink enough water. A large percentage of a child's added sugar intake comes from fruit drinks and sodas so serving water teaches a child to make healthy drink choices early in life. As part of our nutrition curriculum, children are

learning about the many health benefits of staying hydrated. Children explore how plain water can drown a cold, keep digestion regular, contribute to a healthier brain and help them grow. In the classrooms and outdoors on the playground, staff sets up "Hydration Stations". Children delight in choosing which fresh vegetables or fruits to add to the water in our beverage dispensers (cucumber, lemon, orange, pineapple or berries).

They can operate the spout themselves, fill their own cup and drinking water becomes easily accessible throughout the day. To reinforce children's learning at home, families can enjoy reading aloud the series of Potter the Otter books with their children. Parents can find "**Potter the Otter, A Tale About Water**" and other Potter the Otter storybooks on-line at <http://first5california.com/videos-downloads.aspx?>

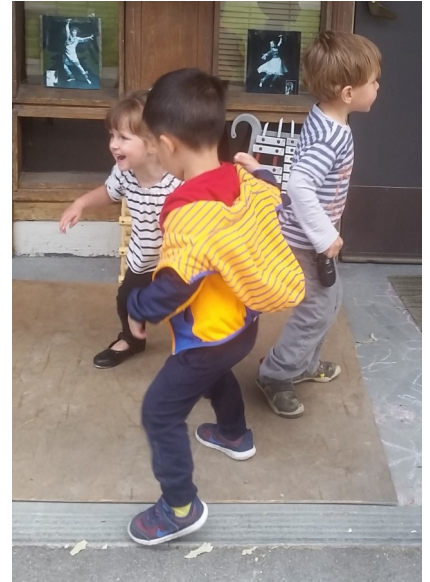


Becoming Water Wise at Our "Hydration Station"

Room A

Let it be a dance we do, may I have this dance with you?! The teachers approached the CSM dance department for a dance collaboration with their students. Brianni Williams joined our classroom to teach hip hop movements and jazz steps. Our dance parties have been enthusiastically embraced by the class and the children have looked forward to her expertise and caring nature.

We have also explored different tempos, beats, and the melody of music. The class was introduced to scores of music that depicted different emotional responses including joy, anger, sadness, fear, and confusion. The children responded to verbal cues, evoking moods through movement.



Room A Family Engagement



Krys Bobrowski demonstrated the amazing resonance of the boa kelp, an instrument that she made.



Papa Lonnie, our garden expert, showed the children how to till the soil for our garden.

Center Kindergarten Project

“The transition into kindergarten is an important time in children’s lives and it influences their later school careers. “Children’s early schooling can be considered a critical period that sets the trajectory for their future school adjustment.” (Belsky & McKinnon, 1994; Pianta & Walsh, 1996)

We believe that planning and preparing for transitions by everyone needs to start early. There are differences between preschool and kindergarten that pose challenges for the children. We will be reviewing books about kindergarten, having the children visit the “big school”, listening to our kindergarten panel of experts (alumni who graduated last year), and discussing the similarities and differences between preschool and kindergarten.





Elizabeth and Tiffani writing and illustrating their own "kitty" books. They use the creation of books to highlight their love for kitties. If you need to know anything about kitties, ask Elizabeth!

Room B

The writers have emerged in our classroom! With the initial impetus of a classmate's homemade comic book and another child's sharing of his "magazine", the classroom interest began to spread. Knowledge of a story's beginning, middle, and end, author and illustrator recognition, and punctuation marks (thanks to Mo Willems) was embedded in their everyday conversations. Not only did they start writing and illustrating their own books, they wanted to read them to their classmates.

Next, a classroom specialty library was developed in response to the ongoing work with their books. The books traveled back and forth from home to school and to their cubbies. A home of their own was needed so the teachers constructed a unique children's library where the individual books were neatly displayed.

Room B Family Engagement

Bic, Ryder's mother, showed the children how to maintain healthy teeth.



Anthony Petrini, who loves to share his life experiences with those around him, sparks interest with a group of children at the easel.

A Teacher tells the children that it is the last call for breakfast and Sienna responds, "I already ate my protein!"

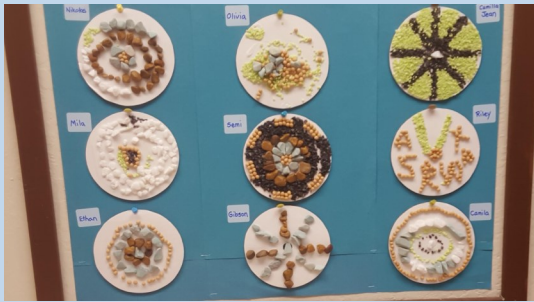
Visual and Performing Arts Home Activity

Here's something to try at home! Have your child explore the expressive potential of the body by using movement to act out a story. A fun book to use that you can get from your local library is "Where the Wild Things Are" by Maurice Sendak.

1. Start by reading a short book. Talk about how the words and pictures tell a story. Ask your child to think about what a particular picture is telling them. If they couldn't talk, how might they tell the story?
2. Model how you can use movement to act out part of a story.
3. Explain that whole stories can be acted out. Have your child stand and act out a story that you have chosen. Go through the book page by page, reading the page, showing the picture, and having your child act it out. Repeat from start to finish.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Children's Art Work

April 10th—Family Trip to see Elephant and Piggies in a Play

April 18th/20th— Lock Down Drill & Practice Fire Drill

April 14th— Crossing the Bridge Class Photo 10:30 am

April 29th—Bic, Ryder's Mom, Resident Dentist Presentation

April-May— Family/Teacher Conferences

May 9th—Desired Results Parent Surveys Due

May 13th—Crossing the Bridge Ceremony 3:30 pm

May 19th—Teacher Appreciation Luncheon 2 pm

June 13th—Summer Session Begins

June 25th—Karen's Retirement Celebration 2 pm



Our Stupendous Bus Trip to the Children's Theatre



Organic Veggies & Fruit for our Family Picnic After the Children's Play

Check-Out the New Additions to Our Family



Three Chickens: Tiger Lily, Fionna, and Merida in Rm A



Four Fish: Bubbles, Fidgety, Otto and Zippy in Rm B