

Second Thoughts

May 14, 2010

Dear Parents,

Following the Ocean Animal research projects, we have returned to our regular schedule of academic fare. The activities this week focused on mollusks and tide pool animals. Some children are making close observations of the animals in our salt water tanks. Others are learning to identify shells and comparing their weights. In our reading groups, we have read Robert McCloskey's Maine stories (Blueberries for Sal, One Morning in Maine, and Time of Wonder) set in Blue Hill and Deer Island. The children are using their background ocean knowledge and are studying once again past tense verbs ending in -ed. Also, we have started watching "The Voyage of the Mimi," a scientific expedition to study humpback whales. This older series, featuring a young Ben Affleck, is highly informative to our young oceanographers.

We undertook one final Brant Rock Beach activity, examining the trash we picked up there. A little was biodegradable, but the styrofoam, plastics, and aluminum cans, we agreed, were both unsightly and hazardous to ocean animals. A small committee of children wrote this message: *This is part of the trash we picked up on Brant Rock Beach. The plastic is harmful to turtles who think a bag is a jellyfish. Seals and fish may choke on plastic bottles. We don't like to see trash on the beach either. Please don't throw trash in the ocean or litter on land. Please find a trash can near the beach or take it with you in a trash bag. Remember—Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.*

All the children have been introduced to double-digit addition and subtraction with regrouping, a.k.a carrying and borrowing. They are currently applying these new concepts to determine amounts of money and make change. Some of your children may receive an allowance and others may have piggy-bank savings. This is a good time to give them some practice counting their money as well as helping you on shopping excursions.

Along that line, each child will be permitted to bring \$5.00 to spend in Chinatown on Thursday, May 27th. We hope they will have a degree of independence with their money by that time. Many of you have returned the Chinatown permission slip. Some people remembered to send in \$8.00 for lunch. We are assuming that most everyone will eat Chinese food at the China Pearl restaurant so please send in your child's lunch money at this time. Please let one of us know if your child plans on bringing a lunch. For those of you who have volunteered, we will let you know our plans next week.

Last week, we studied contractions. We found examples in our D.E.A.R books of the following contraction: words with *not*, *have*, *had*, and *is*. Forming contractions is challenging for many children because of the difficulty remembering the letters to omit. We will be studying the contractions with the words: *will*, *are*, and *would* next week. The children need to not only form the contraction but be able to give the two words that make the contraction. There will be another Spelling Quest on contractions next Friday.

It was a pleasure to have many grandparents and "grand friends" with us today. Many of the memoir stories read by second graders were intended for them. The boys and girls also enjoyed sharing a recorder selection in the assembly. Next week Kiki Lansdale, who has previously taught second grade here, will join us as Sachiyo anticipates her maternity leave. Welcome to Kiki and best wishes to Sachiyo as she launches into a new phase of her life!

Sincerely,
Sachiyo and Nancy

Week of May 17th:

Snack: Talia

Share: Evita, Grant, Isabelle, Cody, Cori, Daisy