

Mrs. Nixon's March Class Notes

Dear Families,

We have had a full week of research, learning about percentage at many levels, converting fractions to decimals, subtracting with borrowing, etc. One of my greatest joys this week has been watching older students giving lessons to the younger ones. Everyone gets a lot out of this academically, but the real beauty is the growth of the care and appreciation they have of each other.

Reading about the elements of the Periodic Table has been a brain-stretch for all of us. We are learning about the structure of elements and just how far away the electrons are from the nucleus. There is an experiment with each chapter we are reading. Today the topic was boron, which leads to an experiment with borax and crystallization. A team of older students is learning to lead the experiment and carry it out with every elementary student.

We have been learning the geography of Ukraine and its adjacent countries, as well as the major rivers of the world. The children work in groups with atlases, helping each other to find the various places and, of course, becoming enchanted as they discover other places with names that pique their interest.

The older students are beginning the study of our government. Some of them remember from previous lessons or their own reading that when our country started out, we had little in place to govern ourselves properly. They imagine what it would be like to go to another state and not be able to spend the currency of their own state. So far, we have learned about the three main jobs and the three branches that take care of our citizens. Feel free to have conversations with them to deepen their understanding. We will continue this work for a couple of weeks.

We have had some beautiful days to play outside. Enjoy the photos Rachel Hess has taken of students in our very special woods, as well as the classroom and reading workshop.

Sincerely,

Mona

Dear Families,

The highlight of our week was our 2nd Annual Talent Show, organized by Grace, Madeline, and Arwen. For the past couple of weeks the children had practiced their skits, instrumental performances, poetry, songs, dance, gymnastics routines, and even a magic trick. These events provide an avenue for the characteristics of the 6-12-year-olds to blossom to their full extent. They love to create collaboratively and help bring out the best in each other. There was lots of encouragement and reminding each other that it is OK to make mistakes - just keep going.

We also had several stunning reports given this week on centipedes, the moon, grasshoppers, and bearded dragons, including a special presentation with Jameson's pet bearded dragon. There are several projects in the works, including research on horses, the work of Monet, the history of money, colonial life, smallpox, yellow fever, and the plague. Other work has included lessons on the types of matter, the Periodic Table of Elements, Pythagorean theorem, as well as the chance to observe eggs in the incubator from Mrs. Hess's farm. An important part of the Montessori elementary curriculum is to keep the exploration of a wide variety of topics going so that children can discover possibilities for how they will contribute to the well-being of our world.

Welcome to our new student, Hartley Woelkers, who joined our class this week. The children have been busy giving her lessons and showing her the ropes. Hartley got right into the swing of things with her first knitting lesson.

Be sure to read our new Middle School publication that was sent to you with your

contract. Our board is dedicated to making the Middle School program financially practical for all our families. If you have questions, please email or call me.

Thursday is our Dress-down Fundraiser for Iryna Settle's mother, who recently arrived in Front Royal from Ukraine. Students may wear blue and yellow, the colors of the Ukrainian flag, and give a donation of any amount to help with basic needs.

Enjoy the photos.

Sincerely,

Mona
