

June 16,2009

Dear Families,

It's been an incredibly busy month. As I am sure you already may know, we have been observing and recording the changes in our Wisconsin Fast Plants. Monday the children harvested their seeds thus completing the full cycle of the life of the plant. Here are some questions to ask your students:

- Can you name the parts of a flower?
- What is the flower's job?
- What is the bee's job?
- What has happened to the pistils since the flowers fell off of our plants?
- Where can you find the pollen?
- What does harvesting mean?
- What does threshing mean?
- What do plants need to live?

We have also learned some interesting information about Japan. We are in the middle of watching an amazing movie about Japan's "National Living Treasures." This is National Geographic production introduces the students to some of Japan's master craftsmen and performers. It is the highest award that can be achieved in the arts. These men and women are asked to pass on their craft to the next generation of Japanese people. So far, we have met a potter, a paper maker and a puppeteer.

We will have our tea ceremony on Wednesday! We will wear kimonos, sip Matcha green tea, and have a special snack. We will use a special bowl, called the Chasen and a special whisk called a Chawan to mix tea.

In Math, we finished the unit called Putting Together and Taking Apart. The students worked very hard adding and subtracting double-digit numbers. We finished working on telling time and we are now working on data collection. We are currently working together to create different types of graphs in response to numerical data questions from a survey the children filled out.

This work focuses on collecting numerical data; representing class data in a variety of ways, creating a representation and developing language to interpret data. They're doing a great job!

In Language Arts, we are reading and responding to Japanese folk tales focusing on elements of a folk tale. So far, we've read and responded to:

The Samurai's Daughter

The Dwarf Giant

The Boy and the Three-Year Nap

The Magic Fan

The Girl Who Loved Caterpillars

We also finished our Gail Gibbons Unit. We spent some time discovering nonfiction text features and their purpose. We later learned how to take facts and put them in their own words. The children did an amazing job with their book jackets. Please stop by our class bulletin board.

In Writer's Workshop we published our "How-to-Books" To write a How-To-book, the student recalls a procedure he or she can do and then lays out the directions for that procedure starting at the beginning and proceeding in a step-by-step and an explicit fashion to the end. The goal for teaching procedural writing is to help kids write with more clarity, sequence, explicit detail, and with the needs of an audience. They're published and ready for your children to share.

We just finished our Haiku poems and will share them with you on Thursday. To end the year, we are now taking an old Writer's Workshop story and revising it to make it better or writing new stories. We've accomplished a lot!

Reminders: Wednesday is Field Day. Please make sure your child comes to school in sneakers. Second graders will be outside from 9:10 - 10:00.

Thursday, June 18<sup>th</sup> is our Year-End Celebration from 9:00 – 9:30. The children will read their poetry, share their Japan and Plant Folders, their How-To-books, and we'll have a special slide show for your enjoyment.

Hope to see you all on Thursday!  
Sincerely,

Louise