

K-K News

February 27, 2009

Dear K-K Families:

This week we began our study of water. The children tested various items from the classroom, as well as fruits, vegetables, and plants to determine which items contained water. They also worked with eyedroppers to test the behavior of water drops on different types of paper (paper towels, magazines, foil, and wax paper), and they had water drop races to determine whether the angle of a ramp affects the speed of the drop, or whether the size of a drop impacts its speed in a race. Through these activities, we continue to work on our process goals of observing, describing, and documenting observations. We are also working on our content goals in water around the behavior of water drops. We will continue with our content goals around surface tension, states of water, and conservation in the weeks ahead.

We love this unit for the opportunities it gives children for hands-on experimentation and observation. It is also a favorite because the materials and content are so simple and accessible. We strongly encourage you to give your children eyedroppers, different types of paper, and time to play, experiment, and demonstrate to you the things that they are learning in class.

In other news...

- We owe a huge debt of gratitude to Betsy Homa, Meghan Murray, Dianna Kanter, and Hope Crosier for volunteering to help with the water unit. Not only did they sign up to help in the

classroom at least once a week for the next month and a half, but they also participated in a parent training session and a planning meeting in the classroom prior to starting their work. We are grateful for the help they are providing us, and for the opportunities to observe and push children's thinking that their presence in the classroom affords us.

- **Send us your garbage!** For the water unit, we have added a few things to our wish list: Please continue to send in clear, 64 ounce juice bottles (washed, with the labels removed). We are also looking for bags of (relatively clean) *dryer lint* and cotton balls.

- In mathematics, the children began a unit on geometry this week. There is a handout from the math program in the home folder today, but we want to add that there are two primary areas of focus in this unit: analysis of shapes, and relationships between shapes. Rather than simply asking children to name/identify shapes, the children are being asked to analyze the critical attributes of different shapes ("What makes a triangle a triangle?") and to see the relationships between the different shapes. More to come in the weeks ahead, but please mark your calendars for **Monday, March 30, 8:45-9:15**, when you will be invited into the classroom to witness some of the work your child has been completing in geometry this year.

- In literacy, the children continue to enjoy daily read-alouds; meet with us regularly to work on decoding skills and independent reading skills; work on word sorting and analysis to support their independent spelling and decoding; and write stories independently in writing workshop.

- Next Thursday, March 5, you are invited to come in to see the work your child has been doing in physical education this year. We will meet you in the gym at 10:30 that morning. On a related note, please be sure that your child has sneakers every Tuesday and Thursday...the children waste precious time waiting for classmates to borrow sneakers from Mrs. Hoffman each week.

- We look forward to sharing your child's work with you at parent conferences. If you have not already come in to sign up for a conference, please do so early next week so that we can finalize the schedule. Thank you!

- Coming home today are a few items worth noting:
 1. Menus for the month of March (As always, Monday is pizza day at Hunnewell.)
 2. Book order forms (Please note that the online order deadline is Friday, March 6. Also note that the "babyish" board books sometimes listed in Firefly can be wonderful independent reading material for early readers. If there is a younger sibling, neighbor, or cousin to whom your child can read, these books make perfect "gifts" for the younger child that the older child can read aloud to him/her!)

That is all for now. Enjoy a wonderful weekend with your children, and keep your fingers crossed that March comes in like a lamb, even though the forecast is sounding more leonine!

Sincerely,

Lynn and Julie

P.S. A pair of red earbuds was found in the classroom this week. Please let us know if they are yours!