

May 2009

Dear KM Parents,

Wow! You sure know how to throw a fiesta! It was a perfect day for the children in KM. Everything from the craft to the games to the scavenger hunt to the piñatas to the snack was terrific. Even Mother Nature blessed us with a beautiful day to be outside. I want to thank each and every one of you that helped contribute to making this a memorable event for the children. I heard nothing but happy comments from them. I especially want to thank Linda and Danna once again. You did a fabulous job!!!

This month in language arts, we will be finishing our study of the alphabet with the letters T and J. We will spend a week reviewing the last several letters as well as spend some additional time on the vowel sounds. In addition, we will continue our work with the 27 kindergarten words. In Writer's Workshop, most of the children have published a story and are working on illustrating their published pieces. We will finish our study of Beatrix Potter and begin looking at the poetry of Jack Prelutsky.

In math, we will continue with the unit, "How Many Do You Have?"

I wish you all could have heard the conversation that occurred in our classroom this week related to two addition games we were playing. I was so impressed with the thinking the children shared around how they knew what the role of two dice equaled without counting all the dots by 1's. For example, a child who rolled a 4 and a 5 shared that he knew 5 plus 5 is 10, so 4 plus 5 must be one less. We also had a game called "Double Compare" that involved partners each turning over 2 cards, and the person with the highest total said, "Me." One child shared how he turned over a 4 and a 2 and his partner had a 6 and a 2. He immediately knew his was lower because his 4 was less than his partner's 6. As adults, this may seem rather obvious. However, this is not so obvious for a 5 or 6 year old. Later in the month, we will begin our final math unit, "Sorting and Surveys." This unit focuses on data analysis. The children will be collecting, representing and interpreting information such as the number of noses and eyes in the class. Two important skills they will be working on in this unit

are learning ways to organize the data they collect and showing others in a clear way what they found out. One of the favorite activities in this unit involves taking surveys. The children create a survey question, ask their classmates the question and then represent what they learned. This activity is similar to the "Daily Question" that has been a regular routine in our classroom throughout the year.

We will wrap up our study of Mexico next week and then begin the final science unit on habitats. This unit focuses on looking at different habitats, what lives in those habitats and how they have adapted to their surroundings. We will be creating an aquatic habitat in the classroom, but I am keeping the contents of our habitat secret for now. All along the way, the children will be asked to think about what could live in our habitat and why. The children will learn about living and nonliving things as well as what living things need to survive. The children will be observing the habitat on a regular basis and will record the changes in the habitat as it continues to grow. At the end of the unit, the children will have a wonderful book chronicling the creation of the habitat.

I just want to remind you that we will be doing our planting service project next Tuesday (raindate Thursday). Your child should bring a trowel to school labeled with his/her name if you have one. I have 2 parents who have volunteered to help. If anyone else wants to come, please let me know. It would be from 2:15 to about 2:45. At our next assembly on May 11, we will report back to the school about our service project. I think this is a great way for the children to give back to the Hunnewell community.

Later in the month, I will begin my final assessment for the year. It is amazing to me how far your children have come since September. It's hard to believe that I will soon be writing their final reports and preparing them for first grade. However, I caution you about talking about first grade too soon. I have seen that kindergartners often get anxious at this time of year about leaving the comfort of their current classroom. There will be

plenty of time to talk about the transition in June. It is important now to focus on what is going on in KM and all the fun activities we have left this year.

If you have not returned your child's blanket/beach towel for quiet time, please send it in on Monday.

The first week of 4 stay days has gone extremely well. Let's hope this continues next week.

Sincerely,  
Donna