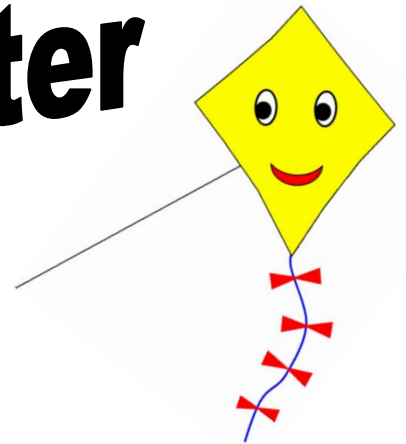


K.I.T.E. Newsletter

2016



Hello K.I.T.E. Families,

The curious minds of your wonderful children have been moving at full speed this week. It was obvious the children had a lot of fun this week with the theme, **Ceremonies and Celebrations**. There has been so much learning going on you would be astonished! Here are some things the groups want to share about the week!

The group **Holi** learned about the holiday Holi, and the many ways it is celebrated. This inspired them to choose *individual* topics that each student would like to celebrate and investigate. Throughout the week, they worked on creating an exhibit focused on their topic, which included research, note taking, writing, and the creation of a variety of visuals. Each exhibit is enhanced by three dimensional pieces that represent some element of the topic. These will be created by using a variety of materials such as: fabric, tiles, recycled materials and craft pieces. The exhibits will showcase the knowledge they have acquired, information they have researched about the topic's history, and new inventions and creations of their own that have been inspired from all of these investigations. Some examples of these projects are: the celebration of the planet Mars and space investigation, which includes models of current technology as well as inspired student inventions; Fine Art painting including its history, traditional techniques and student invented techniques; Important innovations in the area of technology, the history of major companies, and student prototypes for new devices.

In "**Yi Peng**," we are exploring ceremonies and celebrations through research and reflection. With laptops, we are researching and writing about gifts and holidays and adding to a Google slide show. With our T-shirt designs and "transformation" drawings and other related sketches, we are building sculptures that we hope will celebrate the delight that we humans experience with ceremonies. We are inviting other students from other classes to add to these sculptures with drawings or posters of their own. Our other project this week has been to prepare and perform a puppet theater production of the Grimm's fairy tale "The White Snake."

The **Floating Lanterns** have engaged in a wonder-filled journey across the globe. Their trip started in Hawaii where the group learned about the Floating Lantern Festival that takes place every Memorial Day. It commemorates both fallen soldiers and loved ones who have passed away through the lighting and launch of brightly glowing floating lanterns off of the Hawaiian shoreline. The group then traveled across the United States while creating their own ceremonies and celebrations to honor American culture and interests. The group then ventured through Morocco looking at primary source photos from throughout the country. Each student created an inference based on what they saw, and then researched the validity of their inference through providing supporting, or opposing evidence. Finally, students look forward to comparing the terrain in Morocco to the terrain in Iceland on their way home from their global learning trek.

The **Monkey Buffet** began the week discussing the elements of many ceremonies and celebrations: music, food, costume, song, dance, and tradition. On Monday, the children were presented with a variety of objects and given the task to create an instrument using a few of the pieces together. On Tuesday they began a poster about themselves to be added to the "Wall of Fame," celebrating themselves as the famous members of the Monkey Buffet. Wednesday, in honor of our group name, we presented our local animals with a buffet on the school nature trail. This was inspired by the Thai people who offer a buffet to the local monkeys once a year. While on the trail, we searched for animal tracks and left birdseed and breadcrumbs as our buffet offering. We anticipate going back to see if our treats were eaten. Our afternoons have been joyful as we visited several special interest groups, played games, and met new friends.

White Nights students took turns tracing each other in order to create "celebration silhouettes". Inside the silhouettes, children included information and illustrations about favorite holidays and celebrations. Children shared their task sheet with fellow classmates and included those on their silhouettes, as well. We have learned a lot about the White Nights celebration in Russia and created a city scape of St. Petersburg complete with a coastline filled with hand created Scarlett Sail tall ships. (Scarlett Sails is a favorite part of the White Nights celebration marking the end of the school year.) No celebration is complete without music and dancing! Children created instruments from recyclable materials and created original rhythm and movement to share with you on Friday afternoon. We will make ice-cream (a traditional treat enjoyed during White Nights) and even participate in the Toilet Paper Olympics on Thursday! Teamwork and also chances for individual choices have worked well to complete tasks and allow everyone to problem solve, share strategies and thinking, and share final products.

La Tomatina As the week started, after all the information presented by students on the task sheets and sharing activities, students decided they really wanted to learn more about the Baby Jumping, Running of the Bulls, and La Tomatina. We decided it would be fun to transform the classroom into Bunol, Spain, where La Tomatina takes place. We brainstormed exactly what elements of La Tomatina we needed to include in our mini city, including buildings, doors, windows, light posts, traffic lights, streets, signs, bridges, cars/taxis/buses/bikes/scooters, firetrucks, plants/trees, mailboxes, sun, Spanish flag, people..... and of course, tomatoes! We used decision making skills and planning to decide what materials we would use to create our model. We will hold a mini La Tomatina on Friday when parents' arrive.

The **Festima** group worked cooperatively to design our own unique celebration. As we planned our celebration, we discussed rituals and traditions as we referenced common themes, such as light, costumes, masks, decorations, music and dance. With this knowledge and inspiration from the Festima they prepared for their celebration by making lanterns, scepters, robes, salt painting decorations, rock and wire necklaces and creating folktales about their unique celebration. During a trek through the woods to gather materials from the forest floor to use in the celebration, we discussed the importance of respecting the environment and the essentials required to sustain life on our planet to enhance their understanding of the interconnectedness of all living thing.

Rouketeoplemos means "rocket war" in Greek. Inspired by our group name, we have been exploring the exciting world of rocketry. First we learned about the parts of a rocket and the forces (thrust, drag, lift, weight) that cause a rocket to fly. Then we built several different types of rockets, including stomp rockets, balloon rockets, and straw rockets. We explored changing variables like launch angle and weight to see how they impact flight length. We also sampled a few Greek myths like Theseus and the Minotaur, then wrote our own to help us create our own holiday!

The UpHellyAa group learned that this Scotland Fire Festival held in January was a celebration of its Viking heritage. Children constructed a fire festival silhouette from paper. Mythology was a popular interest, so the children read a few Norse myths and compared them to myths they were already familiar with. Using their creative writing skills, the children wrote their own version of a Norse myth and enjoyed sharing their plays, short stories, or comics. Then they created gold coin bracteates of their favorite Norse God. The children learned about runes, the language of the Norse, when they decoded words, wrote their name, and created a rune to celebrate the life of someone special to them. During a study of Viking life, the children learned how to use a Lucet for creating braids/cords and how to play Hnefatafl (an old Viking game similar to chess) and made their own helmet, shield, and game. Lastly, the children used their knowledge about Viking ship design and accepted a design challenge to engineer a Viking longboat that could float.

Fascinating things have been happening in **SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS** in the K.I.T.E. halls as well!!!

Fireworks in a Jar started by creating a banner showcasing specific things about science that we love. We then created fireworks in a jar by exploring density- food coloring was used for the color element and since it has a higher density than oil or water, it sank toward the bottom of the jar. As it combined with the other liquid in the jar, small "explosions" of color could be seen. We explored the topic of states of matter by creating quicksand (which is neither liquid or solid) Children had fun getting their hands "trapped" in the quicksand and then observing how small toys sank over time. Using the power of the sun we will created Solar Ovens and made delicious s'mores. Yum! We will be able to discuss alternative forms of energy and renewable vs. non-renewable energy sources. Rainbow in a tube explored density in another manner by observing how colors layer on top of each other. Children made a sugar solution of varying densities to demonstrate this fascinating concept.

In **Raise the Roof** we are learning concepts about architecture and engineering by building gambrel-roofed barns, truss bridges, and roller coasters with good-ole popsicle sticks. With cool glue guns that are quite safe to use, we start by assembling structures and frames. Rather than trying to work fast, the emphasis is on learning techniques and thinking through challenges. Students then accessorize their barns or bridges with roofs, floors, walls, doors, and so forth.

The students in **Trail Investigation** have been living by the motto “leave no trace”. The trailblazers hike the trail, picking up trash along the way and returned to the playground to make a ‘mindful mandala’ in which students silently take one piece at a time to create a design within a circle celebrating a commitment to Earth. After discussing the concept of shelter, they collected natural materials and create a shelter where everyone could fit inside, which had an accessible entrance/exit and could keep them dry from precipitation. Finally, they created Zentangle (mindful, creative patterns) with sidewalk chalk and did meditative drawing with adult coloring books, enjoying a simple activity outside with others.

Mathercizers used monster feet to measure the length and width of the gym. We expanded our thinking by calculating the perimeter and area of the room. We challenged ourselves to set goals and reach them during our dot-card subitizing race. Subitizing is an essential math skill for this age group. The word comes from the Latin word *subitus*, meaning suddenly. Subitizing is the ability to look at a group of objects and instantly recognize the quantity. Students set their own goals and methods for playing the game more efficiently and cooperatively.

Outdoor Art began the week decorating the grove of trees to the left of the main entrance to Pike. We learned weaving and wove between two trees. We also created clay faces for the trees in the grove. We have gone on several long nature walks to collect materials from the area and painted with natural paint brushes like flowers and grass and pine cones. We painted rocks and decorated magic wands. A fun time was had painting flowers using bubble art!

In **Tech Talk** we discussed computer technology and learned how to use Google Apps on a Chromebook. After learning how to use Google Slides and Drawing, students applied these skills and their research skills to create an authentic autobiography project of an often used object. Ronny Raleigh, a bicycle chain, had a very interesting life climbing mountains in his native France.

The stars in **Actor’s Theater** improvised, acted, and performed their unique work with items from glittering gowns to 3-D props. The room was abuzz with enthusiasm as they designed costumes from tablecloths, feathers, fabric, and a big bag of ‘stuff’ to represent their hero or heroine. One student’s skill with stage makeup to create special effects was great fun!

Upon meeting one another, students in **Celebrate Music** quickly realized that they all were musicians with diverse backgrounds and skills on different instruments. After discussing interests, and experiences, the Celebrate Music group decided to form a rock band. They collaborated on choosing a song that incorporated everyone’s talent and ultimately chose to work on “See You Again” by Charlie Puth and Whiz Khalifa as it had a positive message, and included parts for everyone (vocals, drums, piano, hip-hop). Additionally, the Celebrating Music is using the Apple application Garageband to learn how to collaborate in the creation of their own songs using audio, and software loops.

This week our Science Magic Special Interest group has been crossing the lines between science and magic, all in the name of good entertainment! Our magic included: Pennies Disappear due to the light bending in the water and reflecting off the bottom of the cup, Pepper Move Mysteriously when you touch a "magic wand"-really a toothpick with soap on it- to the water, the pepper all swims away as the surface tension of the water is broken, Water Disappear, Objects stay "Dry" under water, as long as the object is a feather, which repels water due to the natural oils on it, Colors Explode using a black Mr. Sketch marker on a napkin, with water, to see the colors spread and separate in the process of chromatography, Popcorn Seeds Swim in water when the popcorn seeds swim up and down in seltzer water, due to the carbon dioxide bubbles adhering to the seeds, and finally Straws and Paperclips Dive and Float on Command because the straws are filled with air and anchored with paper clips, and as their swimming pool bottle is squeezed, the pressure change makes them dive to the bottom.

It has been an amazing week at K.I.T.E!! What better way is there to spend time in the summer than by learning, creating and smiling with a whole class of motivated learners? Thank you for sharing your capable and enthusiastic children with us! We look forward to seeing you in 2017.

Janis Baron and Ethel Coltin