

Dear parents,

Piggybacking on last week's Dr. Seuss fun, we introduced the next installment in our study of different types of literature - poetry. On **Monday**, we got our poetry study underway with the poem *Keep a Poem in Your Pocket!* by Beatrice Schenk de Regniers. It reads, "Keep a poem in your pocket and a picture in your head and you'll never feel lonely at night when you're in bed." We explained that poetry is a type of writing that uses words to create images, express emotions, and tell stories. Poets use rhythm, rhyme, and sound to create a musical effect and to engage the reader's imagination. Many of the poems we'll read this month do contain rhyming words - much like Dr. Seuss, as our class pointed out - but we talked about how words can come together to make a poem even if they don't rhyme. Some funny poems we read at snack time were *The Dog Show*, *My Snake*, and *The Burp*. (Never let it be said that poetry is boring or doesn't speak to the people!) Some of our poems lend themselves to movement activities and/or singing. And still others serve as inspiration for a fun art activity - more on that below.

After an active yoga class, the children stitched their own felt "pockets" to collect all the poems we will read together this month. We decided we'd need something a little bigger than a regular pants pocket to hold all our poems, so ours are larger than life. We modeled how you travel from one hole to its next-door neighbor and use an "up, around, and up again" pattern to stitch your pocket. This was tricky business, and occasionally we skipped a hole, or we went "up, down, and around and around" instead of "up, around, and up again." We all know it's no big deal if you make a mistake; in fact, the occasional wayward stitch just gave us the opportunity to practice undoing a stitch and pushing our needle through the correct hole. (Say it again for the people in the back - "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again!") After they finished stitching their pockets, the children used foam alphabet stickers to label them. We now have 11 colorful pockets that will be full to the brim with poems by the end of the month.

And hip, hip, hooray, we went out to play! We tried to remember how long it had been since we'd last played on the playground - whenever it was, we agreed it had been waaaaaay too long. We all loved getting to run around, practice our pumping on the swings, and do some good digging in the sandbox.

Tuesday's poem of the day was [*Five Little Kites*](#). The children could tell right away that it was very similar to *Five Little Pumpkins*. Then, using scissors and staplers, they repurposed their lemony easel paintings to make their very own kites, complete with crepe paper tails. We all agreed that they probably weren't sturdy enough for outdoor kite-flying, but you can see them flying high in our classroom.

In the classroom, we did some kite-inspired math. The children worked on a kite-counting and number identification workshop. And they "built" a second kite by identifying the number on their own little kite and placing the correct number of beads on the pipe cleaner tail. We wanted to make this a challenging exercise for the class, so we focused on numbers 6-11 - some of these can be hard to recognize. At our second circle, we learned

just how silly and fun the *The Name Game* song is - you know the one: “Anna, Anna, Bo-banna, Banana-fana Fo-fanna, Fee-fi Mo-manna, Anna!” As we did on Monday, we had a busy, sun-drenched half-hour on the playground. And this time we got to say an up-close-and-personal “hello” to the hundreds of worms that were sunning themselves in their bin.

On **Wednesday**, after reading several on-point poems about rain, we spent the morning learning about the water cycle - that never-ending process of collection, evaporation, condensation, and precipitation. (This was actually something we’d planned for February, but our very own Larchmont water cycle got in the way when it delivered 18 inches of snow and two snow days.) Given how much precipitation we’ve been experiencing recently, we decided to turn our gaze skyward and learn about what makes rain, and its close relative snow, come down.

As part of our morning meeting every day, our calendar helper looks out the window and identifies what kind of weather we’re having. If the streets are wet from an overnight rain shower or there is snow on the ground, the answer will often be “rainy” or “snowy,” even if a look outside shows no clouds at all. We introduced the experiment by explaining the water cycle and talking about how rain and snow cannot fall without heavy clouds to help them along. Then, using shaving cream and droppers of blue and red water, we demonstrated what happens when a cloud becomes super-saturated with water - rain! Your children can tell you what color our rain was (and some may even be able to sing the answer to you). [Here](#) is a link to instructions for how to do our experiment if you’re interested in replicating it at home. In the art room, we memorialized our experiment, using a mix of shaving cream, glue, and cotton balls to create puffy clouds and pipettes of colored water to make the rain come down.

During our second circle, we read *Clouds* by Marion Dane Bauer. It introduced the children to the three most common clouds: stratus (low, flat sheets of cloud - “like a quilt,” as someone pointed out), cumulus (fluffy cottonball clouds), and cirrus (high, feathery clouds). As we took the long way round to the playground, we looked up to identify what kind of clouds we could see - we were pretty sure we could spot all three types of cloud floating above the church.

Between Spanish and our letter of the week, **Thursdays** are always nifty, and this Thursday was no exception. During our Spanish class, we learned numerous **N** words, a few of which start with N in English too: *nieve* (snow), *nutria* (otter), *nube* (cloud), *noche* (night), *nido* (nest), and *nariz* (nose). Our letter N work included making Wiki Stix capital Ns, completing our letter N worksheets, rolling out small PlayDoh eggs in the right quantity for some numbered nests, and decorating our classroom N with newspaper. Ms. Carolyn brought in a book that was perfect to read as we study letter N and anticipate the imminent arrival of spring: *Bird Builds a Nest* by Martin Jenkins. We also got to admire a nest that Ms. Carolyn had found in her yard. We read [The Nose Book](#) by Al Perkins - no big news here, it was about noses of every description. And to supplement our veggie sticks at snack, we nibbled some nori, which was new to a lot of the children. Was it a popular item? No, it was not (although we did have three enthusiastic nori nibblers). We were very proud of the

group for being willing to give the nori a try. And we reminded the children that, if you try something and decide you really don't like it, you can always just say, "**No**, thanks, it's **not** for me."

Friday's Show and Tell was **neat**. We had some **nickels**, a **narwhal**, several **necklaces**, **nail** polish and stickers, a photo of **newborn Natalie**, an **N** cookie, and a favorite **Nama** (aka Mrs. Spader). To round out our study of letter N, the children made "**nine-noodle necklaces**." As we often do, we ended our Friday morning with some singing and dancing. We learned the catchy song *I'm a **Nut*** - a fitting conclusion to our letter N studies. And of course, we also had to tune in to *Purple Rain* to commemorate the rain we conjured this week. The song was new to most of the group, but they learned the two most important words and sang their hearts out (with the help of some paper towel roll "microphones").

Looking ahead to next week:

- Next Friday is a staff conference day and the children will not be in school. Because our Thursdays are so busy, **we will skip a letter O Show and Tell**. We'll pick up with letter P on Friday, March 27.
- Now's the time to buy those spring shoes you've had your eyes on! **We could still use a few more shoeboxes**, so please send in any you might have. Thank you!

Wishing you a happy weekend,
Pam and Carolyn









