

The Children's Center at Groton

Remember to like us on



It is so easy to get caught up in the fast pace of today's world, moving quickly from activity to activity and rarely stopping to enjoy the simple moments. However, children are experts at slowing down and making the most of each and every moment. Ever notice how the faster you want children to move, the slower they actually do? How often do you try to slow down and enjoy a simple moment with your child? At CCG, one of the reasons we don't have particular times attached to our classroom schedules is so we can go at the pace of the children. Teachers have a plan for the day, but if the children are showing them that they need more (or less) time for a particular activity, classrooms are flexible and go at the pace of the children. Do you wonder what that would look like at home for your family? Here's a great example from Heidi of The Harmony Tree House, mom of 2 young boys:

Upcoming Dates:

Dec 7: Progress Reports to Families
Dec 12 & 13: Parent Conferences
Dec 24-Jan 1: Closed for Winter Break

"When things do not go to plan, does it bother you? Or do you ride the acceptance wave? In my short time as 'mum' I have learnt the importance of my own acceptance of things.

Our day started with big plans, and then slowly we shifted gears as I realized there were bigger things happening. We planned to get up early, go to playgroup (the fun one with all the kids) pick up a new pair of shoes for babe, drop off kindy forms, visit a new baby and then visit the farm butcher out of town.

But it did not go that way. Instead we woke up late, the boys were still tired. I was not feeling it after I was up all night with baby. They refused showers, they refused breakfast. So we sat and hugged on the couch watching silly cartoons. By the time we got dressed we technically could have still gone to playgroup but something happened, my big boy decided it was really important he wrapped the gift for the baby we were visiting. The gift he had picked the day before. I agreed and handed him some pastels and brown paper and whizzed around getting ready, I noticed him staring at the crayons... and I said honey, are you going to pick one? And I walked away...

I came back and he had drawn a single circle on the paper. I asked him what he was doing? And maybe we could speed things up so we could go to playgroup. I took two steps forward and then I realized. I gently placed a hand on his shoulder and asked if he could tell me about his drawing. He replied that he wanted to draw a pirate ship and a baby, and he didn't know how. I was so touched he was putting so much love and care into it, I replied, 'There are no mistakes in art, draw how you feel.' He beamed and continued on.

It took him an hour to finish, and he even went out and collected treasure to put with it. I gave him space and time and thought in my head, who gives us deadlines? We do! We do it to ourselves. If we are always rushing, we miss out on so much.

We left the house three hours later than we originally intended. One little boy, beaming with pride. He was so happy to give his gift to the baby, everything else in the world melted away. This is the change. This is what we do to change the world. We stop rushing."



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Classroom Updates

Seedlings

During the month of November, the Seedlings explored and experienced several natural materials of the season. The children have been interested in sensory bottles, so several bottles were filled with different materials such as brown kidney, white navy and black beans, orange lentils and green split peas. Pumpkin seeds, popcorn and cranberries also found their place in sensory bottles. The children examined the corn plant: stalks, husks, tassels, kernels and the cob. Also, a cranberry bog was created to investigate using the sensory table. Young children learn about their world through their senses and experiences, and all of the Seedlings took pleasure in exploring the natural materials of the season in the classroom.

Ava found painting with the corn cob enjoyable, dabbing the cob with the colors of Fall: green, orange and yellow. Liam experienced the corn husks by throwing them up into the air and listening to the sounds of the husks as he crinkled them with his hands. Lachlan experienced the weight and sight of the colored beans layered in a large container by lifting and shaking them. Lincoln placed small kernels of corn onto glue on painted cardstock using his fine motor skills. Linley enjoyed scooping and pouring the beans and listening as they fell on top of each other in the sensory table. Rosie was eager to scoop out the cranberries in the sensory table bog using her eye/hand coordination with the slotted spoon. Tate and Ginny used their sense of sight and touch to look at and feel the corn cobs and small pumpkins.

The children had an incredible time using their senses to explore and experience the natural materials of Fall during the month of November. Everyone is grateful for the friendships and the time spent together.



Sprouts

In November, the Sprouts have been interested in the sensory experience of cooking. This interest began when the children were observed using different loose parts to cook with, such as sorting stones, napkin rings, decorative pumpkins and gourds in imaginative and creative ways. The teachers observed Emerson placing the pumpkins in muffin tins and pretending to place them in the oven. Nessa likes to place the different objects in pots to stir over the imaginary stove top, as she imagines she is making mac and cheese.

This exploration of cooking was further brought out during music with Ms.Pat, for the children enjoy singing the song "No More Pie." Quincy and Callum can be heard singing this song throughout the day and request to sing this song at group time. This led the Sprouts to make two types of homemade pie: apple and pumpkin. During the cooking process, Reade enjoyed smelling the different spices, while Evan liked to taste the different ingredients. Children further explored the cooking process in different ways, as Lucy enjoyed feeling the flour between her hands. This experience further led to a fine motor activity, for James enjoyed cutting the apples and Alina enjoyed stirring all the ingredients together.

With this interest in cooking and music, the Sprout teachers expanded this exploration, by making shaker bottles with different foods, such as beans, salt, cranberries and pasta, in order to explore with sound. The children listened to how the different objects had a different sound and pitch. The children further used these materials in unexpected ways, as Rose used these to feed the baby dolls. In the month of December, we hope to continue to expand the Sprouts interest with cooking, as we intertwine it with baby dolls and music.



Lily Buds

During the month of November, the Lily Buds continued exploring their interest in where food comes from. They have explored clementines, herbs, potatoes, spices and baking ingredients. While squishing a clementine, Biz commented "This is slobbery!" Cosi examined seeds and said, "There are seeds in tomatoes, too." Asher worked hard cutting herbs and decided he was "making spinach salad". There were many cakes being made while working with spices, pumpkin and flour. Lily made "a batch of food for a cake" while Audrey decided "I'm making blueberry cake". Carter added more water to her mixture and called it "soup pie". Some of the spices we used were nutmeg, allspice, and cloves. The cloves were "smashed" up with the mortar and pestle. Lucy smelled them and said, "They smell yucky to me." The potatoes were difficult to cut, and the Lily Buds tried different ways to cut them. Alyssa held her potato up and said, "I poked mine!" The Lily Buds explored with all their senses, including some tasting. Working with real ingredients helps children make connections with their world and encourages role play.



Peace Lilies

In November, the Peace Lilies have begun exploring their 5 senses. We have talked about how we use our senses throughout the day and how important all of our senses are. We focused a lot on our sense of smell this month and did many activities that involved having to use our noses. We painted with liquid water colors that were infused with lavender, vinegar, soy sauce, and vanilla. Bear, Paul, and Cooper were immediately able to identify the smell of vinegar, saying it was “strong” and “yucky.” Arden and Harry commented that the paint with the soy sauce in it smelled like, “some kind of food” and “french fries.” Bella, Ella, and Emma S. thought the paint with lavender was, “a flower,” “powder,” and “lotion.” Adam and Elise described the vanilla scented paint as “something sweet” and “treats.”

We also gave the children the opportunity to cut up garlic, oranges, and fresh herbs as well as putting out jars with different spices in them to guess what they were. We made scented playdough this month using parsley, orange, peppermint, cinnamon, apple pie spice, and eucalyptus. The children also really enjoyed experimenting with soap this month. We did an activity to make Clean Mud using ivory soap. We first watched the soap change shape and texture by putting it in the microwave, then added water to the soap, and lastly added a roll of toilet paper to the mixture. We were then able to play with and mold the clean mud in the sensory table.

November also gave us the opportunity to go from playing in big leaf piles to playing out in the snow. We went on a fun walk to a nearby farm this month. We were able to feed the cows, were introduced to a baby calf, and watch the chickens.

