

November
in the
Outdoor Classroom

In the classrooms, the children were learning about the story of The First Thanksgiving and as an extension, we provided our 'little saints' with an assortment of props inviting them to create their own feast and celebration. During the First Thanksgiving, the Pilgrims and the Native Americans gave thanks for their homes, the bounty of the harvest, their families, their friends and all their blessings.

In the Block Center, we provided the children with hollow blocks, small tree cookies, and fabrics. These 'loose parts' encouraged them to be creative and to build. We observed amazing structures/shelters created and every single creation was the result of planning, collaboration and engineering. The children's attention to detail was impressive and even some of the left over pumpkins from October were repurposed. There are many learning possibilities that block play supports since playing with blocks fosters learning in all areas of development. As a child follows his/her own plan or as a child shares a vision with friends, their imaginations enable them to build unique creations. Blocks help children learn to take turns, to share materials, and to cooperate with others as it increases attention span. Block play requires fine and gross motor skills and it enhances children's problem-solving skills. Blocks offer opportunities to test hypothesis and build scientific reasoning. Important concepts and mathematical skills like estimation, symmetry and balance are practiced and strengthened as they build. Also, construction with blocks builds self esteem and feelings of success.

In the Dramatic Play Center, our friends gathered together to cook and to enjoy their very own special feast. We have a lot of great chefs at school!

For Sensory Fun, we provided a trough filled with cracked corn and an apparatus that worked like chutes so that our friends could convey the corn to the lower level. The children sat, stood and reclined in the trough. One time, we heard "Row, row, row your boat..." while several friends sat in the corn and used the rhythm sticks as pretend oars. We had a Sensory Path made of large card board tiles covered with different textures and their favorite tile to walk on was the one with the foam mattress pad.

We are grateful for your support of our very special outside play space and we are blessed to observe the children's joy as they play in it.







