

February 2017

Friday, February 3

Wednesday, February 15

Monday, February 20

Monday, February 27

Professional Day - no school

Board Meeting 7:30 pm

Vacation week begins

School back in session



Notes from the Head of School

This week I spent some time in the classrooms and asked the following to some of the children: "Tell me about love", "What does love mean?", or "What do you think of when I say the word love?" Of course I received a gamut of responses - some funny and some loving:

"I love my Mommy and Daddy" - age 4

Love is a kiss" - age 4

"You love your family" - age 5

"Love is my birthday party" - age 3

"I think about my Mommy. She's super sweet and gets me lots of toys" - age 3

"I love Johnny, Mama, James, and Dada" - age 4

"I love my puppy" - almost 3

"I love Owen" - age 3

"A heart" - age 3

February is the month of hearts, flowers, and love; many expressions and declarations of love will be made around the 14th of this month. At Berrybrook, we encourage the children to use their words all the time, even if those words aren't necessarily on the loving side. When we see conflict between children, we help model the words for them if they are struggling to find the words to express their emotions. It is important for children to learn to express themselves all the time, during both positive and not-so-positive interactions. These interactions are the basis for friendships being made in the classrooms and this is the best time for preschoolers to learn in a comfortable environment how important - and powerful - their words can be. Words can hurt, but words can also heal. Each year, when teachers overhear for the first time with their new students someone asking a friend if they are okay, or how they feel after an interaction with a classmate - that's their home run! They know that the children are really developing empathy for others. Now is the crucial time to develop these skills. Friendship building and emotional awareness is what's appropriate for preschoolers and I am so thankful we have the opportunity each and every day to help your child develop these skills.

Happy Valentine's Day! ~ Mrs. Watts



Valentine's Day Celebration

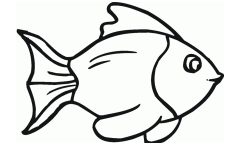


All of our classes will be celebrating Valentines Day by delivering cards and enjoying a special Berrybrook snack.

We ask that the children bring a valentine for each classmate. Please remember, because we have children with food allergies, valentines should not include candy.

A L L c a n d y s h o u l d r e m a i n a t h o m e .

Beginners Notes



Valentine's Day ...Validating Emotions

Children in the Beginners Class are just turning 3 years old this year. They are just beginning to understand their emotions and are just beginning to understand how to best express what they are feeling to others. To be 3 years old is very empowering and there is so much pride and independence present. When turning 3, a child realizes they can do more than they could at the age of 2. They begin to interact more with each other at more complex levels – practicing how to do it more cooperatively, and in a more engaging way. There is more narrative involved in their play now. With teachers close by, they begin to practice negotiating, taking turns, problem solving and resolving conflicts. In their future years at Berrybrook, teachers will begin to be further away in the shadow of their negotiating and problem solving scenarios because with daily practice provided with teachers now, using these skills, the more and more words **they** will have, on their own.

Here are some words we give Beginners during a very common interaction, wanting what someone else has...

Scenario ~ Child A wants something Child B is using...

Child A : "I need that!" (may even try grabbing it).

Teacher: "I see that. You'd really like a turn. How can we let Child B know you'd like a turn?" Encourage Child A to the idea of asking Child B for a turn. If unsuccessful, Teacher may say, "Child B, are you using that right now?"

Child B: "Yes."

Teacher to Child A: "Child B said he's using it right now. Would you like a turn when he's done?"

Child A : "Yes."

Teacher to Child A: "Let's ask him. Child B, can Child A have a turn when you're done?"

Sometimes Child B will say yes because we have just *validated* that they are still using it and are showing *respect* towards them. Sometimes they may say "no" because the concept of "when you are done" often takes time to learn. It is natural for children to practice the idea of "ongoing possession", meaning "I'm using it now, I'll always be using it", which is developmentally appropriate to their age. With practice and experience they will understand they *will* move onto another activity, by their choice, and when they do, they *will* be done and will feel proud to share it with someone else.

Validation and respect for Both Child A and Child B are very important in this scenario. When the toy *is* shared, validation such as “Thank you Child B for remembering that Child A was waiting for a turn with that” and “Thank you Child A for being patient while waiting. See? Child B remembered to give it to you!” It may also be that Child A is *not* able to be so patient in the waiting. This too, is very developmentally appropriate. By asking them what else can they play with while they’re waiting, that they can trust that Child B will give it to them when they are done with it, and even by asking them their plans with it once they have it all continue to show validation and respect. With daily practice in this scenario, children become empowered and confident to ask a child, “Can I have that when you’re done?” Also with daily practice in this scenario, children are empowered and confident to answer, “Yes!”

February is a very appropriate time to recognize the care children have for each other in their class. On Friday, February 10th Beginners may bring in valentines for their classmates. *****Please keep the outside envelopes BLANK as Beginners will be independently placing one valentine into each classmate’s Valentine Bag. This is a wonderful learning opportunity and takes a lot of concentration. Writing and recognizing classmates’ names on envelopes will come in future programs at Berrybrook when it is more developmentally appropriate. Also, please remember DUE TO CHILDREN WITH ALLERGIES, PLEASE SEND VALENTINES ONLY ~ WITHOUT CANDY, ETC. Thank you!*****

Happy Valentine’s Day!

~ Mrs. LaForest

Mrs. Laforest teaches in the Beginners and 4 Day classes



.....FYI.....

Berrybrook artwork is being featured at the Duxbury Free Library during the month of February.

The display, “Winter Wonderland”, is comprised of several classes:

Beginners, 2 Day and both 3 Day classes are participating.

So if your family happens to visit the library, be sure to check it out!

First Year Project Notes **Fabulous February**



There is lots of learning going on this month! Valentine's Day brings thoughts of love for all to share and many opportunities for the class to talk about feelings. At this point in the school year, the children are very comfortable at school. They know their routine, their teachers, their classmates, and what is expected of them. The children dive into deeper levels of learning, exploring, play and social interaction. It is a very exciting time of the school year for everyone to see!

A favorite traditional project for me is "marble painting" a valentine for the family.

Art is explored in a new way by marbles dipped in cups of paint. The children use a spoon to scoop the painted marbles up (which can be tricky) and place them in a tin. On the bottom of the tin is a heart shaped paper. Setting aside the spoon, the child picks up the tin and tilts it side to side watching with fascination as the painted marble creates tracks of paint across the paper.

Mathematics is tested when a child uses one marble, two marbles, three marbles or more at one time!

Science is observed as the paint transfers from the marble to the paper; how tilting the tin makes the marbles move side to side. And finally, how the paint colors blend with marbles mixing them up.

Social Studies is experienced when this fun and beautiful creation is given to someone they love. And of course, when Valentines are passed out to those we love.

Language Arts are expressed in the process of the child writing their name, or "mark" on their heart-shaped paper and also heard in the many stories and conversations about "Be My Valentine".

A sincere Happy Valentine's Day to all!

~ *Mrs. Delano*

Mrs. Delano teaches in the 3 Day Room 3 class

Duxbury Post Office Field Trip ***56 Depot Street***

Remember to save the date, and meet your teachers there at 9 a.m.

3 Day Room 3: Tuesday, February 7

3 Day Room 1: Wednesday, February 8

2 Day Room 1: Friday, February 10

Second Year Project Notes

What's In a Name?



“Words have meaning and names have power” ~ Anonymous. The Second Year classes have been learning all school year about the meaning, power and importance found in words and their very own name.

In a name there are the letters that create it. These letters *belong* to the owner of that name. When recognizing those letters, their name, they can identify it as their own. Their name attached to something belongs to them. *Their* cubby, *their* take-home tray, *their* turn. When they write their name, they attach themselves to the very thing upon which they write. *Their* artwork, *their* creation. When their name is therefore written on a valentine, given to a classmate *from* them, there is even more importance and meaning. Their name signed on a valentine says “I took the time to write my name for you; you are important.” When they write their classmate’s name on the envelope and deliver it to that classmate’s Valentine Box, it says even more. To do all that says, “I wrote your name, too, to let you know I care about you. I worked hard to write your name and carefully looked to match the letters I wrote to your letters on your Valentine Box. This is very important and meaningful.”

So much goes into developing writing skills. When observing the skill in action, of course there is strength needed in the muscles of the hand and fingers to be able to form the letters on paper. But did you know it also takes muscles in the arm and shoulder to support the hand and finger muscles’ movements? In order for the muscles in the arm and shoulder to work, one needs a strong core to properly hold up the body while using the shoulder, arm, hand and fingers to write. Not only that ~ before the writing even begins eye hand coordination is involved, understanding positional words (up/down, across, over, around, etc) is necessary, in addition to using memory to recall what each letter looks like.

All Second Year students have been practicing daily their writing and other fine motor skills. Valentine’s Day comes at an opportune time to use these skills we’ve been practicing. However, because of the meaning and importance of the children’s valentines, as well as the time and effort it takes to make them, we strongly encourage children to ***write two or three valentines a day leading up to the holiday to avoid fatigue and frustration.***

Both 4 and 5 Day classes will be decorating special Valentine boxes to hold their beloved deliveries from classmates and teachers. Children come on February 14th with their valentines (****signed by them, with their classmate’s name written by them on the outside envelope, ready for delivery****) and, throughout class time, work hard matching the name on their envelopes to the name on the appropriate boxes. It is very rewarding for children as they show pride and independence when delivering their valentines.

*****Attached to this newsletter you will find a class list for your child to refer to when writing their valentines. Children practice writing using all capital letters.*****

Happy Valentine’s Day!

~Mrs. LaForest

Mrs. LaForest teaches in the Beginners and 4 Day classes

Parents Association Notes

Winter is in full swing and we even survived our first snowstorm a few weeks ago! Even though the temperatures are dipping (although we have seen many mild winter days so far), the students will still venture outside at Berrybrook to play and explore as often as they can. Please remember to pack hats and gloves and of course, snow pants and boots when necessary.

Enrichment

Yoga is officially underway for the entire school. It is amazing to see the smiles on the first year students when they see Miss Kim in the big room and learn that she is there to teach them. The Beginners and First year students are just beginning their yoga journey, but the Second year students are now proficient at many yoga poses. The Second year students will continue to learn how yoga is beneficial to their bodies. Make sure to ask your child about their yoga experience. Some upcoming enrichment activities include our annual visit from the dental hygienist and Soule Homestead.

Family Fun Fridays

The puppet show in January was fun and well received by those who attended!

The BPA has planned some fun on the turf at the Duxplex for our next Family Fun Friday event. Please join us **Friday, February 10th from 1:30-2:15** for some structured activities and then free play for the kids. Molly Curtin has kindly offered to run a class for the kiddos to get them moving and having fun. Be sure to wear your sneakers and bring water. You can sign up for this event at the BPA table. This is a free event, however, we need to have an accurate headcount so please remember to sign up. Be on the lookout for more upcoming Family Fun Friday events!

Watch your emails for notification for the next BPA meeting. Some agenda items for the next meeting include planning future enrichment activities, 2017 BPA officers, finances, an additional winter community service project, and Berrybrook's annual Spring Fling event!

As always, thank you to those who have already paid their BPA dues! If you have yet to do so, it's not too late! We ask for a \$30 contribution per family, which goes directly toward student enrichment in and out of the classroom. Forms are available at the BPA table for contributions. A big thank you to our Berrybrook families for your continued support and participation! Please let us know if you have any questions, comments, or concerns. You can email us at berrymbookparentsassociation@gmail.com.

Thanks,
Jill Cooney & Danielle MacKinnon
Co-Presidents

The Berrybrook Staff would like to thank the Parents Association for arranging snacks for our monthly after-school meetings. Each month we have a 2 hour meeting to discuss curriculum and other matters. These meetings are scheduled from 4:15-6:15 and we appreciate having a snack to fortify us. We are thankful for all of the support and encouragement we receive from parents. It is very thoughtful of parents to take time from their busy schedules to prepare refreshments for us.

Thank You Very Much!!

From The Board of Directors

***Here is a blast from the past.....
an article written in 2008 by a former board member...***

On Monday, March 12, Berrybrook, the town of Duxbury, the South Shore area and yes, even Mother Earth all benefited from a vote at Duxbury's annual Town Meeting. That is when the official purchase of 40 acres from the Lucretia Prentiss Bailey Trust to the town of Duxbury took place. This purchase, brought forth by the Conservation and Preservation Committee, will ensure that the beautiful open space that we see every time we go to Berrybrook will be preserved as open space in perpetuity. Currently, the hay in the field is mowed to feed the cows at the O'Neil farm.

Isn't it nice to know that because the field will not be developed we will always have beautiful vistas from every room in our beautiful new school house. The Board of Directors is thankful to the community and thrilled with the town's decision. This is another example of where everybody wins.

~ Angelique Kanía, Treasurer

Berrybrook has been through many changes in the past 63 years. The Board of Directors strive to always ensure Mrs. Mann's vision to continue on through time.

It is hard to believe that it has been 9 years since the board had undertaken the challenge of a new building.



Snow Cancellation Reminder

Berrybrook will cancel school if Duxbury Schools close due to a snow or other emergency.

Parents may call the school to check the voice mail message if they are unsure about a snow cancellation.



We would like to congratulate Mrs. O'Neil on becoming a Great-Grandmother twice this past year: Gianna Frances, born September 9th and Joseph Robert, born December 22nd. What an exciting time for her!



Welcome!

Congratulations to the Dempsey family in the 2 Day Class. They have a new addition, baby James Patrick!

Congratulations to the Godbois family in the 3 Day Room 1. They have welcomed a new baby sister, Calliope!



The Berrybrook Summer Nature Program is offered during June and July on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 – 1:00. Children must be 4 by September 1st , (or Berrybrook Beginners!) to register. We also welcome siblings up to 7 years of age. All families will receive complete information about the program and registration the week of February 27, 2017.

THANK YOU!!

Thank you to our families for attending The Berrybrook Curriculum Evening. It was exciting to see the hard work on display from all our children. While children play at Berrybrook, the activities and projects available each day meet or exceed the Curriculum Standards set out by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC). EEC is the state organization responsible for licensing all early education programs in the state. Teachers also connect curriculum to the standards set out by The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). To earn this accreditation, we must prove that our program meets the individual standards of this respected organization. If you would like to look at the curriculum binders created by each class, please ask Mrs. Piccuito or Mrs. Watts. We are very proud of our work with young children. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to learn with your children.

~ The Berrybrook Teachers and the Connections Team