

GROWING TOGETHER
GNP NEWSLETTER
September 30, 2022

OUR THEMES THIS WEEK

Our Senses – Touch, Taste, Smell, Feel, Taste

Rosh Hashanah

Introduction to Pumpkins

Looking Closer and Vocabulary Development

NOTIFICATIONS

Thank you to Maryann (Olivia's mother) for helping us out this week with the children and for Ali for sharing wonderful books and information about Rosh Hashanah. We were able to integrate family traditions and our apple studies while learning about the Jewish New Year and our hope for sweet new beginnings together.

In our daily comments home we have mentioned some of the many activities we did this week. This newsletter is to share some insights into the **“why”** and **“how”** we engage in our experiences. We include research-based best practices from renowned educational institutions and educators.

REMINDERS

OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Why

Slow looking and close observation and being an active part of our own learning journey, helps children to dig deeper into what they see, hear and feel, and helps to create greater understanding and vocabulary development. Most profoundly it helps children to know who they are in relation to the land, plants and animals in their natural world.

How

This week we have both returned to familiar places and to new places. By allowing children time to explore they have discovered different kinds, textures, sizes and colors of moss, mushrooms, leaves, worms, slugs and ant hills, to name a few. Their vocabulary is bursting with identified objects and with descriptive words! They offer insights and ask and answer increasingly detailed questions.

We also embrace the concept of "Teachable Moment". That is, even if we are in the middle of something else, if something extraordinary happens we stop to enjoy the moment. For example, this week while playing tag, some friends observed worms and slugs. We stopped our game and gathered to explore, wonder and otherwise learn about these creatures.

We continue to find connections with our games and things in nature. A game of "Duck Duck Goose" led to creating sounds that geese make, and relating it to what we know about their migration.

We encourage symbolic thinking, as well, and love seeing your children use their imagination to dig for a raptor bone or light an imaginary fire with sticks.

Our Close Looking and Thinking Routines are inspired by Project Zero out of Harvard University Graduate School of Education.