



REDDAM EARLY LEARNING SCHOOL LINDFIELD NEWSLETTER



REDDAM
ELS

20TH SEPTEMBER 2019

Principal's Message

By Mrs Kath Boyd

As the rain cleared yesterday afternoon, children and teachers from all classrooms donned their hats, applied their sunscreen and moved to bathe in the golden sunshine. We are SO fortunate here at Reddam ELS Lindfield to have a variety of lush, outdoor learning spaces both on campus and in very close proximity (Ibbitson Park).

People used to disregard the importance of the natural environment and think that children were ready for Kindergarten if they could say the ABC's, count, identify colours, and write their first name. Research has proven that readiness isn't just knowing the academic basics. It means a child has a **willing attitude** and **confidence** in the **process of learning**: a healthy state of mind. Experiences outdoors invite open-ended interactions, spontaneity, risk-taking, exploration, discovery and connection with nature. They also offer the opportunity to develop positive relationships and promote conversations. Pictured above: Vivienne and Christopher (Stage 4) with Manoela (Stage 1 Teacher).

Each day the Reddam ELS Teachers strive to have a **contact talk** with every child in their class. A contact talk is a few moments of shared time between adult and child - with the aim of enhancing the relationship. These conversations can happen anytime, but tend to flow more easily in the outdoor environments (for example: whilst walking around the garden, studying the flowers in the planter box or exploring the sandpit). When a child approaches us we make an effort to stop what we are doing - listen, encourage, and support. We don't "teach" during these moments. The aim is to learn more about every little person and helping children learn more about us (the adult). These talks support the development of a child's self-esteem, social skills, thinking skills, and language abilities (key capacities for school success). If contact talks take place during physical activities, they enhance physical development.

As I walked past the large sandpit yesterday, Joshua (Stage 3) was very keen to have a chat:

Joshua: "Kath - I have a turtle at home."

Kath: "Where do you keep him?"

Joshua: "In a tank. He's little but he's also stinky." (Giggle)

Kath: "He's lucky to be your pet. Does he eat lettuce?"

Joshua: "Yes. He's going to grow bigger and bigger - probably as big as me."

Kath: "That will be one impressive turtle!"

Joshua: "His name is Mr Turtle. He has a sister named Miss Joselyn . . . just kidding!" (Infectious laughter)

In time, Joshua will understand that his turtle won't grow much bigger, but no correction of this perception is needed now. What is important is a shared quality moment around Joshua's beginning interpretations of the world and the people in it. Contact talks don't have to be long, but they do have to happen, every day. They tell children that they are valued and what they say is worthwhile.

Principal's Message Continued...

"There is an inner voice that pushes children on, but this force is greatly multiplied when they are convinced that facts and ideas are resources, just as their friends and the adults in their lives are precious resources. It is especially at this point that children expect – as they have from the beginning of their life adventure – the help and truthfulness of grownups." (Loris Malaguzzi)

Fabulous food for thought for all parents . . . the key qualities of a strong family unit identified by Australians in the most recent *Family Strengths Research Project* were:

- **Communication** – listening to each other and communicating with openness and honesty.
- **Togetherness** – sharing similar values and beliefs that create a sense of belonging and bonding.
- **Sharing activities** – spending time together doing things they enjoy (for example, sports, reading, camping or playing games).
- **Affection** – showing affection and care regularly through words, hugs, kisses and thoughtfulness.
- **Support** – offering and asking for support, with family members knowing they will receive help, encouragement and reassurance from one another.
- **Acceptance** – understanding, respecting and appreciating each family member's unique qualities.
- **Commitment** – seeing family wellbeing as a first priority and acting accordingly with commitment and loyalty.
- **Resilience** – being able to tolerate difficulties and adapt to changing situations in positive ways.

Pictured below: Ryunosuke (Stage 2) investigating a provocation.

Enjoy the sunny weekend with your beautiful family.



"We delight in the beauty of the butterfly, but rarely admit the changes it has gone through to achieve that beauty." (Maya Angelou)

This week we are exploring everything related to Eric Carle's *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. Throughout the week, each Stage 1 child used a thick paint brush and a cotton wool ball to dab green paint on a paper plate. We then connected these plates to form our very own Hungry Caterpillar. We extended the learning further by placing pictures of various foods behind the caterpillar's bumps. This homemade flip-and-learn display which the children adore is now on the display board.

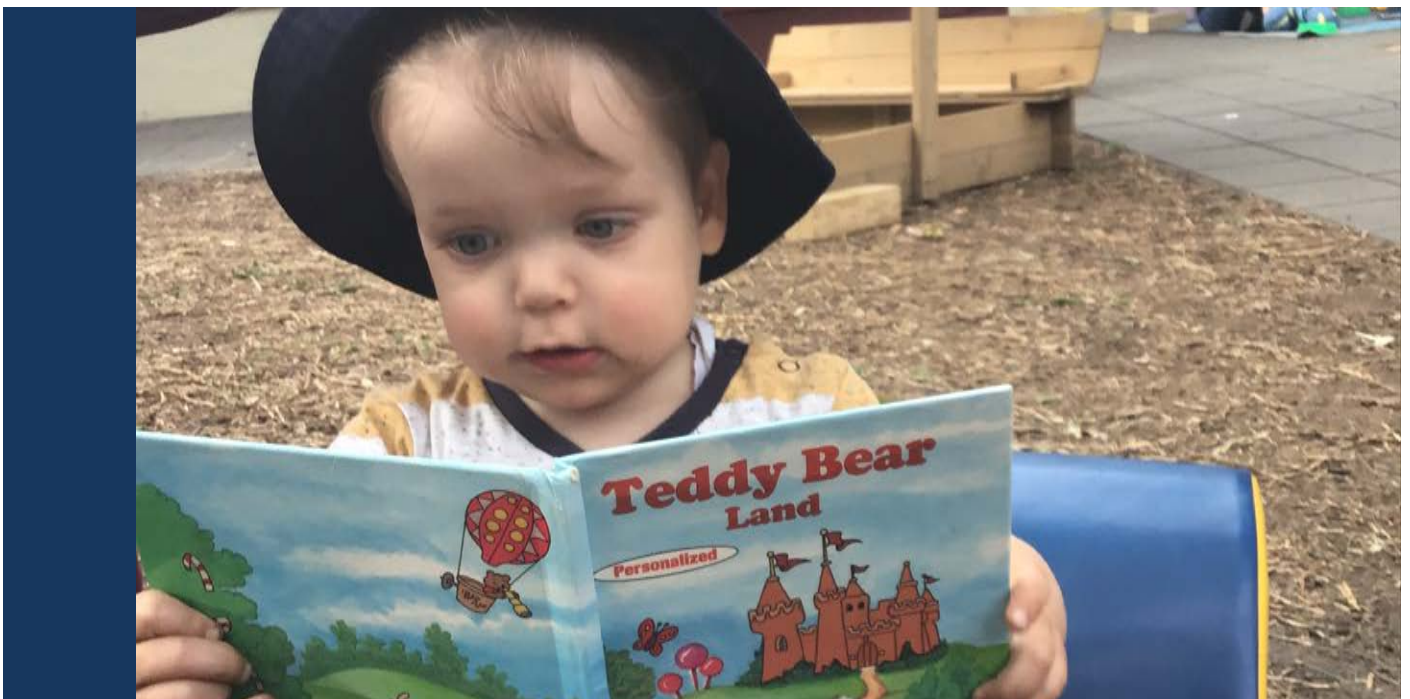
This experience allowed the children to work collaboratively whilst exploring their fine motor skills and creativity. Miss Natalie collected some large leaves from our outside environment and facilitated a threading experience for the children. The children's hand-eye coordination skills were enhanced as they threaded the yellow yarn through the holes in the leaves. It was wonderful to see our little ones so engaged throughout the experience.

Miss Manu facilitated an adventurous sensory experience, painting the children's feet with red and green paint and encouraging them to create caterpillar prints on paper. It was very rewarding to see the children's faces as they explored the sensation of paint on their toes. Some children were very tentative and others very enthusiastic. After this experience we went outside to attempt to find caterpillars with Miss Charity, but instead the children noticed a very cute visitor (rabbit) in our playground. "Hop Hop!" some of the children call him/her. The Stage 1 children thoroughly enjoy exploring our outdoor area, playing in the cubby house, at the sensory tray and participating in a game of 'Hide & Seek' with teachers and peers.

The fascination for books continues in our classroom. Miss Natalie read and discussed *What can you see?* by Eric Carle. This story focuses on a hungry caterpillar and is accompanied by a magnifying glass (which makes the sounds of different insects that can be found in a garden). This book is very popular as it promotes discussion (and giggles). Our Stage 1 children have made incredible progress with their language skills since the beginning of the year. Other books included: *Bug School* by Sam Lloyd, *Who's that Jumbin in the Log?* Narelle McRobbie and Grace Fielding and *My Little World* by Julia Cooke.

Another fabulous week of learning and laughter in Stage 1.

Natalie, Manoela, Heather, Vivian, Charity and Jenny



Stage 1: Beginning Our Caterpillar



Stage 1: Language & Literacy - Caterpillars & Butterflies



Stage 1: Leaf Threading & Caterpillar Footprints



Stage 1: Searching for Caterpillars



This week our provocation focused on the countries in our world. The Stage 2 children had the opportunity to share with their peers information about the country they (and their parents) were born. We looked at photos of children visiting their relatives in Egypt, Norway and Japan. The teachers took great delight in sharing information about their culture and native language during learning groups.

Tracey discussed her Vietnamese culture with the class. She showed the children pictures of significant landmarks in Vietnam and demonstrated how to make rice paper rolls with fruit. Lauren (Stage 4 Core Teacher) shared stories about her Canadian experiences. She showed the children where Canada is located on a globe, what to wear in a Canadian Winter and discussed the animals found in Canada. Each child was given a Canadian flag and invited to try maple syrup. Luan (Stage 4 Teacher) shared his Brazilian culture with us, showing the flag of Brasil, photos of animals found in Brasil and teaching us how to dance the Samba!

“The wider the range of possibilities we offer children, the more intense will be their motivations and the richer their experiences” (Loris Malguzzi)

Whilst we were learning about the different countries in our world we had the opportunity to match some countries and continents on a map of the world. This experience encouraged the children to discuss the places they have visited overseas. They used their cognitive and language skills while engaged in the experience.

The books we read this week were *Belonging* by Jeanie Baker, *The Wooden Fish* by Wenxuan Guo, *Hello World* by Paul Beavis, *Mulan* by Li Jian and *Hush A Thai Lullaby* by Minfong Ho. *Hush A Thai Lullaby* is a beautiful book which the children wanted to revisit. The story was about a mother putting her children to sleep.

Our sensory table had blue and green play dough which encouraged children to make their own Earth. The children were able to make small, medium and large balls of Earth with support from their teachers. We discussed with the children that the blue represents the water and the green represented the countries.

The creative art table hosted green and blue paint, and using balloons we dipped them each into the paints to create our globe prints of the Earth. The balloon printing was popular among the children. The second art experience was set up with circle shaped paper, green glue paint and blue crepe paper. The aim of the experience was to encourage the children to create their own Earth using collage materials and paint.

We hope you have an enjoyable weekend.

Jillian, Tracey, Georgia, Pawinee and Doris



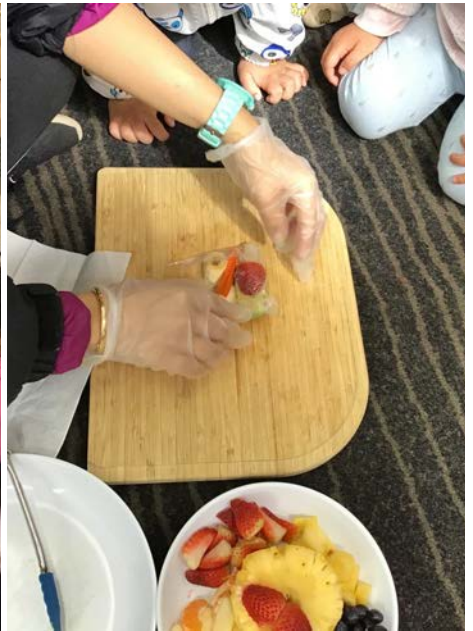
Stage 2: Making Planet Earth Using Play Dough



Stage 2: Matching Continents



Stage 2: Making Vietnamese Rolls with Miss Tracey



Stage 2: Discovering Brasil with Luan & Canada with Lauren



Stage 2: Discovering Our World



Stage 2: Earth Prints Using Balloons



Stage 2: Outdoor Play



Stage 3

By Mrs Joselyn Bruzzano

During the past few weeks, we have been talking about the sun and the light that it gives us. We have also been revising discussions around last week's solar oven and how we used heat from the sun to cook food. Following on from this, this week we continued to look at renewable energy derived from the sun in the form of basic solar powered systems. Solar energy comes from sunlight that reaches earth and it can be harnessed to create electricity. During circle time we looked at a basic solar cell in the form of a robotic solar bug, a basic photovoltaic system and talked about how the solar cells turn light from the sun into electricity. The benefits of renewable energy are vast, solar energy benefits the planet, reducing pollution and waste.

Following on from this, we placed 'Pip,' a small robotic solar bug fitted with a solar panel, into the sun. Throughout the week Pip collected light from the sun through the solar panel on his back. When we flick a switch, Pip's legs moved, and he made his way around the room. It was a great way to learn about solar technology and ways of harnessing the sun to power objects.

Linking in with our discussions around light and the sun, we began to look at shadows and how they are made. We used torches and projectors to create shadows on the walls of our room. Animal cut outs including giraffes, zebras and tigers made the perfect shadows. It was great seeing all of the different animal shadows moving across the walls. Torches were held just in front of the cut-outs which seemed a little tricky but with trial and error, we created the desired effect. Our shadows looked fantastic.

Small torches were also used to illuminate glitter bottles, replicating lava lamps. Shaking the bottles made the oil, coloured water and glitter move around, and the torches created a glowing effect on the bottles.

We have been using torches and light in different ways, marrying in with our focus, we made our own torches. A small battery was connected via wires to a tiny LED light. When connected it gave light.

Amazing robots! Our creative experiences centred around robots and mechanics, where robots were created using a range of loose parts. Collages of robots were also made throughout the week using coloured foil and metallic paper. Our robots look stunning, some have three eyes, and some have more. It has been fantastic to see these creations being made.

Loose parts including nuts, nails, bolts and screws were used at our sorting and transferring station. Small tweezers were used to grasp tiny screws, nails and bolts. They were then sorted and transferred to two small jars. Our hand-eye coordination and concentration were really tested and extended during this experience.

This week we continued to use our office themed dramatic play area. The children have been asking questions about the keyboard, Thomas asked, "Why are there letters on the computer?" Eabha responded, "So you can send messages." The children then pointed to different letters on the computer board. It was amazing to hear the children describing aspects of technology as they used it in their play experiences. We followed on from this by offering a tray of sand with letters in it. We have been pressing metal letters into the sand to make our names.

We celebrated the Moon Festival this week by reading a story titled 'Lin Yi's Lantern' by Brenda Williams. The story celebrates the Mid-Autumn festival, an Asian festival celebrating the harvest. The book was about a child called Lin and his desire for a red rabbit lantern during the moon festival celebrations.

Following on from our story we made our own special Moon Festival lanterns. Red and yellow paper was decorated with all things glittery. With help from our teachers, we cut and glued our lanterns together. Our lanterns were ready for this year's Moon Festival.

Have a fantastic weekend!

Joselyn, Vivian and Sara

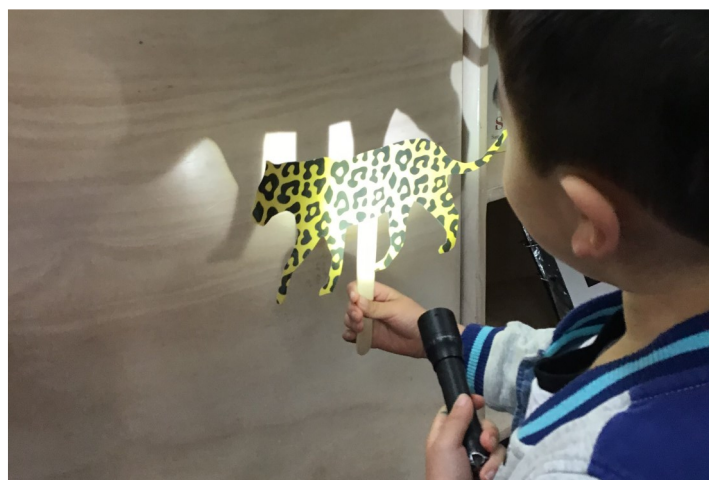
Stage 3: Making a Conductor and Small Torch with Sara



Stage 3: Robot Collages



Stage 3: Creating Shadow Puppets Using Torches



Stage 3: Making Lava Lamps with Torches



Stage 3: Loose Parts Robots



Stage 3: Celebrating the Moon Festival



Stage 4: Solar Bug



"If you want to be happy for a lifetime, be a gardener." (Chinese Proverb)

Spring is finally here and we put on our gardening hats to learn about different types of seeds and how they grow into plants, flowers and trees. We identified the main parts of plants including the seeds, roots, stem, leaves, flowers, stamen, and where the pollen is located. Bees collect pollen to turn into honey whilst pollinating each flower. Without bees our plants wouldn't survive and our food source would diminish. The children were very interested in seeds so we played a 'seed guessing game' where the children studied jars of different seeds, using their corresponding seed packets as a clue. Some were very tricky to guess e.g. the marigold seeds looked like little sticks and the beetroot seeds were spiky.

Our story of the week was *The Tiny Seed* by Eric Carle, which explained how seeds can be carried by the wind and travel across the lands and oceans before landing on the ground and growing. We continued to investigate "seed dispersal," learning that dandelions are light and have feathery bristles making them perfect travellers on the wind. Animals disperse seeds through their droppings or if they get tangled in their fur, and many aquatic plants rely on the method of dispersal such as mangroves. Some seed pods burst open dispersing their seeds around them, and seeds are also planted purposefully for agriculture and crops. Our investigation into seeds led to our sunflower project where the children planted rows of sunflower seeds in our planter boxes outside. The children each made a wish to make sure their sunflower would grow tall and strong, and they promised to tend to them every day. Our storybook *That's Not a Daffodil* by Elizabeth Honey taught us how some flowers grow from bulbs, inspiring us to plant our own daffodils. Our last project for the week invited the children to start germinating their own green beans and avocado seeds. Whose plants will grow the tallest?

There are many benefits that the children can receive when engaging with gardening projects:

Eating healthy: When the children have a chance to take care of their own fruits and vegetables, they will soon learn to love trying and eating them.

Improving motor skills: As the children bend, stretch, dig, weed, lift, plant and water, they use plenty of muscles in their upper and lower bodies, improving their motor skills.

Developing STEM skills: Gardening teaches the children how to analyse a situation and solve problems. For example, when the children were deciding on where to plant their sunflower seeds the teachers asked them, "Is there enough sunlight here?" Observing a plant's life-cycle or supervising the insects living around the plant can intrigue and engage the children too.

Enhancing cognitive abilities and social skills: Gardening can lead to significant improvement in social interactions, teamwork and cognitive abilities. As the children watch their plants grow, they also learn how to be patient and dedicated.

Relieving stress: By connecting with nature, plants, fresh air and sunlight, the children can find their own peace of mind and enjoy moments of solitude.

Around our classroom this week the children engaged in manipulation experiences, moulding and shaping spring-themed play dough where they used flower cutters and pressed carnations and stones into their dough. In the construction area the children worked cooperatively in small groups to build gardens using the blocks, and a range of faux plants and flowers. The gardens turned into playgrounds and eventually into "garden cities where people lived in small houses." Oh how magical! In the atelier our artwork was inspired by gardens, flowers, and Vincent van Gogh's famous *Sunflowers Painting*.

Next week we will extend on our Spring provocation and learn how minibeasts including butterflies, bees, ladybugs, snails and worms inhabit our gardens.

Lauren, Luan and Lucia

Stage 4: Constructing Garden Cities



Stage 4: Artwork Inspired by the Garden



Stage 4: Exploring Different Seeds



Stage 4: Growing Beans and Avocado Plants



Stage 4: Manipulation Experiences Inspired by the Garden



Stage 4: Planting Daffodil Bulbs with Luan



Hi everyone!

We started our lesson today playing the Playball version of “dodge-ball”. We all ran around the grass and Lauren tried to catch us with a beanbag. If Lauren catches us, we know that we don't get cross or upset – it's only a game!

We concentrated on tennis – we love tennis and were so excited to see that Lauren brought tennis bats with her to Playball today.

We ran around the court balancing a beanbag on our bat – always remembering to keep the bat nice and flat so that the beanbag doesn't fall off.

We flicked our beanbag high up to the sky with our bat. We all have pretty amazing body strength and muscle tone because you will not believe how high some of those beanbags flew up to the sky.

Lauren gave us each a ball and we “boofed” (our very own Playball word) the ball away with the bat. We also did little “boofs” with our bat, and when Lauren blew her whistle, we “trapped” (stopped) the ball with our bat, always remembering that we do it nice and gently. Lauren went faster and faster and faster so we really had to listen carefully.

We had an opportunity to hit our ball off a ball holder and Lauren even encouraged us to try and bounce the ball with our bat – always remembering to wait for the ball to “pop up”.

We crossed the “Playball river” on “lily pads” (beanbags) and cheered so nicely for our fellow teammates.

Such a fun lesson champs!

Lauren



Dear Reddam Lindfield ELS Parents,

Stage 2: Before we started our lesson, the children showed me their new shoes or new clothes. I used "Hao" (good) in response. Then we started our Mandarin lesson by saying hello to each other in Chinese. All the children were quite happy to shake hands and greet me in Mandarin. Afterwards, I encouraged them to recall how to say "good morning" and "good evening" in Chinese. With a little bit help, they pronounced those two words properly. In order to help them strengthen the memory, we played the Chinese whisper game, which they enjoyed. Then we practiced "Ni hao ma" (Hello song) with western and Chinese manners. I asked them the routine questions and then we enjoyed our songs: 'Two Tigers', 'Pulling out the Radish' and 'Little Rabbit'. Followed by singing the little rabbit, we talked about more animals in Mandarin. At the end of the lesson, we started to focus on a new topic - Transport. We learnt how to say "fei ji" (airplane).

Stage 3: Children in Stage 3 are used to saying "Ni hao" (hello) when they see me. So we started our lessons with routine questions. I was so glad to hear that most of the children replied "Wo kai xin" (I am happy). Of course, a few told me that they were "Bu kai xin" (unhappy). Therefore, I suggested that we should sing 'The happy song' to cheer them up. They were glad to sing the song with clapping, stomping and lifting their hands. After we finished the song, the children wanted to enjoy "Pulling out the radish" and "Little rabbit". Afterwards, I asked them whether they knew "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" and we sang it together. I praised them and encouraged them to learn the Chinese version. Seeing that the Chinese version is tricky we just learnt the first two sentences. We also started to learn how to say "shui de" (whose) by reading a book about animals. The children enjoyed guessing the animals and were so happy to repeat the sentence "Shui de pi gu" (Whose bottom is it?).

Stage 4: To celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival I started my lesson with a short introduction of the festival followed by a quiet game to review numbers. The Stage 4 children enjoyed the game very much. Then we started to review our routine questions. As for "wo shi ao da li ya ren" (I am Australian), most of the children can repeat this statement. The pronunciation and tones are improving! Stage 4 also were asked "What animal do you like?" I brought 9 different animals toys to school. We practiced the animals we have learnt. The children then attempted to tell me what their favourite animal was.

Thanks for working so hard - I am very proud of the progress you have made. Next week we will be focusing on animals and transport.



Hey, it's James from Applause Musical Theatre Academy!

This week I brought in a tin whistle (or pennywhistle) to show everybody. The tin whistle is native to the British Isles, particularly Ireland, and since European settlement has also been used extensively in Australian folk music. We talked about why the instrument is made of tin - because there are many tin mines in the UK and Ireland, which meant that it is a very cheap material for locals to make things out of (hence the name pennywhistle - you could buy one for a penny!). We also discussed Celtic music, and how musicians have used the tin whistle as an instrument for Irish dancing. Some lucky friends got a chance to hold the whistle and get a closer look - they asked great questions such as 'what are all the holes for?' (your fingers), 'how do they make it?' (rolling up a sheet of tin and welding it together - usually done today by robots!), and 'what's the blue bit?' - the 'blue bit' is the mouthpiece, which is nowadays made of plastic, but in older times used to be made out of either wood or lead!

With some of the classes looking at countries from around the world, we started a song called 'Way Over There', about how people say 'hello' in different places around the world. We also did 'The Seasons', and finished with 'The Painting Song', and 'When I'm Having Fun', both of which are action-based songs involving everybody's suggestions of things we could paint, and things that are fun to do!



Stage 1 & Stage 2

This week was all about rabbits and what was at the bottom of a rabbit hole. Xanthe began the lesson as a silly rabbit performing a song that the children watched, repeated and discussed.

A number of questions were asked including:

"Have you ever seen a rabbit?"

"Have you ever had a rabbit for a pet?"

"What do rabbits look like?"

"What do rabbits eat?"

"Where do rabbits live?"

"How do rabbits move?"

"Do rabbits have long ears or short ears?"

The children used their imagination to go down the rabbit hole (tunnel) before arriving at the 'Mad Hatters Tea Party'. Xanthe had brought some pictures of food on plates and asked the children to mime eating what was on the pictures, recapping what they did a few lessons back. A 'Magic Hat' was introduced and the children took turns to create some magic. Rabbits kept appearing and disappearing from the hat! The last child found a note in the hat that said "Look under the mat". Under the mat was a picture of a heart that signalled that the Queen of Hearts was about to appear. They discussed how they would greet the Queen, then one of the children dressed up as the Queen and gave the rest of the class commands that they had to comply with (jump up and down, spin around, balance etc.) This exercise focused on language, allowing the children to respond using tones, facial expressions and levels. Next the children went on a carrot hunt. They had to find the carrots that were hidden around the room and then they collectively discussed why carrots are good to eat.

Stage 3 & Stage 4

After the success of last week's lesson of exploring a new island, Xanthe continued to be 'Xanthe the Explorer' and the children visited a make-believe land and met a number of characters from Alice in Wonderland. The children developed a story, guided by Xanthe, using the Heathcote theory of problem solving. The children began by going into the garden and describing what they could see, setting the scene. Xanthe then looked through her binoculars and saw a rabbit hole. The children wanted to go down and see what was at the bottom, so off they went down the burrow (tunnel), Xanthe in tow!

A status game was played similar to that of Simon Says but was renamed 'The Queen of Hearts Says'. One of the children dressed up as the Queen of Hearts, as soon as they put the costume on they became powerful and instructed the others to comply with her demands, as she ordered them to jump up and down, spin around, balance on one leg etc.

Next Xanthe transformed to become the White Rabbit, exploring the concept of being "late". Using the music from the movie, Xanthe asked if the children had seen the Queen and if she was angry with her, as she was late for the party.

To round off the session the children created an interactive movement piece for returning back down the rabbit hole. Wonderful work by the children this week.



Scarves / Coordination, Creative and Cognitive Interpretation

Experience:

This fortnight's theme is the environment. By using scarves and tambourines to work on hand-eye coordination, gross motor skills and impulse control, students will use creative thinking and cognitive interpretation to portray different animals. They will also be introduced to the musical concepts of staccato and legato through movement.

Further Development:

By focusing on specific animals and movements we use concepts and ideas that students are already familiar with to develop their creative, cognitive and presentational skills by encouraging them to pull movements and impressions out of their heads and turn them into words and actions using provided resources (scarves). These activities once mastered can be appropriated & used in other contexts.

Scarves / Patterns

Experience:

Following on from last week's adventures, we continue with the environment! Students will use scarves to create patterns and represent different environmental phenomena, using rhythmic and physical cues to explore rhythm, flow and shape through song and movement.

Further Development:

Using environmental phenomena (wind, storms, fire, volcanos) to create motion and connections between climate and weather patterns work to develop connections between movement, imagination and physical representation. As with last week's class these activities once mastered can be appropriated to be used in other contexts.

