

So Much Fun and So Little Time!

Of all the articles I've had the honor to write detailing activities at the Hilltop Lutheran Neighborhood Center, this one is the most action packed!!

Last month, the Center's youngest scholars were on the move! Early Childhood Curriculum Coordinator, Dashaba Fielder, says they went everywhere. "On the floor, in the crib, climbing on the table, walking, eating, singing and dancing!!!! They love to clap, clap, clap! Object permanence was very prevalent in the infant room this month. Playing "Turtle hide and seek" was so much fun!! Seeing the delight on their faces when the object was revealed reminded us of why we do what we do each day."

The toddlers were active too. Dashaba says they enjoyed what's called "Life in the Pond."

"(It's) a unit all about pond friends. Fish, turtles and ducks. They loved singing, "The Five Little Ducks." During sensory play, the (toddler) twos practiced pouring water into different size containers."

Meanwhile, Dashaba reports the preschoolers were looking at objects and creatures in their backyard. "The children made their own binoculars using empty paper towel and toilet paper rolls to help them find bugs in the yard. Creating a "nature" face using leaves, pinecones, pine needles, and flowers was a great experience. Our science area was filled with living objects such as seashells, plants, soil, and even bugs!"

After all of that work, the kids needed a fiesta, which Dashaba says was turned into a learning experience. "We read; *Let's Have a Party* and *The Sombrero*. The children enjoyed taking turns wearing the big 'ol sombrero. The fiesta was a hit. The children enjoyed chicken empanadas, rice and beans, chips and salsa, music and of course; a pinata! What a way to bring in Spring Break!

Hilltop's kindergarten and 1st grade scholars got in on the act by celebrating Dr. Seuss' birthday in March. Center Youth Services Coordinator, Teresa Allen, reports that her team used the Dr. Seuss Reading is FUNDamental curriculum. We decided to celebrate him by doing activities that highlight his work." "The first activity was (using) Sight Words to color the sheet. Each color had a sight word attached to it and the children colored the sheet by identifying the sight word and the color. They also... (used) numbers and a Dr. Seuss word find sheet to help increase their vocabulary. In honor of Dr. Seuss," Teresa says "we made large paper Birthday cakes which the children colored and hung on the wall by their hooks."



Teresa reports our 2nd and 3rd graders worked on Dr. Seuss' book *Oh the Things You can Think* to work on parts of speech. "(They played) a game entitled Can Do Reading Games Prefixes & Suffixes. The parts of speech the game specifically concentrated on were Prefixes, Suffixes and Root words.

But wait, there's more fun! Not wanting to be left out, Center Deputy Director, Brandon Furrowh says young evening scholars who met after Easter took part in numerous activities. "The week kicked off with a cooking class, where the students learned how to make their own barbecue sauce. The students shredded rotisserie chicken, toasted slider rolls, and slathered a sweet and tangy handmade barbecue sauce on each sandwich. The room was filled with messy and smiley faces." Brandon says the fun didn't end there. "Tuesday and Thursday consisted of Springtime Bible Study. There, the students learned the meaning of the Great Commission, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and key components when reading the Bible. Last but not least, the students spun tunes and their bodies during the DJ workshop led by DJ Mega Skills."

Our thanks to the students and staff of Hilltop for sharing all their fun activities with us.

*Eric F. Mease
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