

Preschool Summer Camp Learning Story

Building Blocks Preschool

July 27, 2017



Today we continued to study the whole Monarch Butterfly Lifecycle using a few different learning languages.

First, the children were invited to observe different stages, including an egg on a leaf, a newly hatched caterpillar and a very tiny 2 day old caterpillar.

Our two full grown caterpillars had molted several times (shed



their skin) were ready to pupate. They spun a silk button on a study



place inside the tank and attached themselves to it, head down. Then they hung from it and made a 'J' shape with their body. One of the caterpillars made its chrysalis last night by seemingly unzipping its skin and exposing the pale green pupa.

Once the first crack in the caterpillar skin appears, it takes less than two minutes for the pupa



to appear. Over the next few minutes, the monarch pupa will continue to change by whirling and twirling in its 'pupa dance.' When the process is complete, the pupa will be a beautiful jade color with gold trim. The monarch will remain in the chrysalis state for one to two weeks. You can tell when the butterfly is ready to emerge with the bright green chrysalis begins to



darken and become transparent. You will be able to see the monarchs wings inside.





Children use many different ways, or learning languages, to show their understanding and express their thoughts and creativity. As we study the monarch caterpillars, some of the children have noticed that they have a striped pattern on their bodies. Today we invited them to use yellow, black and white unit blocks to create some of those patterns. Sorting and creating patterns are basic math skills in which many mathematical concepts are based on. The simplest



pattern are those involving two different colors. We call those AB patterns. More complex patterns



in ACE, AABB and ABCD just to name a few. After the children create the pattern, they are encouraged to read it to a teacher. This allows them to self correct any misplaced objects in the pattern. Rhys was able to make an AB pattern with minimal teachers assistance. Miles made an ABC pattern independently and counted 9 unit blocks total. Charlotte was able to sort the white, black and yellow unit blocks independently.



Atreyu was more interested in grouping the blocks together. He would talk about the different colors as he added them.

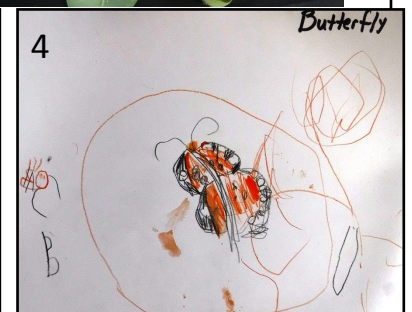
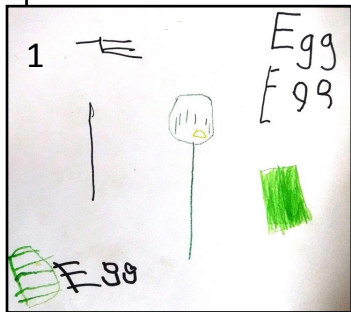


Some of the children used clay as a learning tool. On her own, Meadow carved out a leaf shape and then added a round ball of clay on top of it. She explained that she made a monarch egg waiting to hatch on a leaf. Anna and Mia each created a butterfly out of their clay. Anna explained that her butterfly had stripes on its wings.





The children were also engaged in an cooperative documentation piece displaying the whole monarch life cycle. As they created with colored pencils, we continued to use the word life cycle and talk about each stage. We also introduced the word metamorphosis as a way to describe the changes.



Towards the end of the morning, the children were excited to discover a monarch butterfly floating around out gardens on the playground. Several children were able to see the butterfly drink the nectar and add eggs to the milkweed leaves! Emily said, ***"The butterfly came back to our***



playground because we planned it that way. We have flowers for them to drink here."



Today Ms. Megan B. spent some time with a small groups of children building upon their Mud Kitchen play. First, they searched around the building for nature finds—talking about different colors and shapes along the way. Lila found a heart shaped leaf, Asia found red flowers and Miles found two purples flowers and collected



several small green pine cones. He said, ***“They are for the ingredients.”***

After collecting the items, the children took them back to the Mud Kitchen to create and mix with. At

times they talked about measuring for their recipes by counting petals. Several children announced they were making soup. Mia made a mint smoothly. Some of the children made cupcakes and used bird seed as



sprinkles.



Ms. Michelle spent the morning with another small group of children in our new construction area. The children spent time transporting different materials and creating simple machines. Look for her documentation on this project later this Summer.