

Elementary Newsletter
March 2021

Nutrition & Cooking - K-4th Grade
By Carrie Hartman (Julia's Mom)

As part of the City Kids life skills curriculum, students took nutrition and cooking weekly throughout the month of March. These classes were taught by Chef Carrie and covered the following standards: Basics of nutrition, recipe development/execution, ingredient selection/substitution, kitchen/food safety, and knife skills.

In the first week, the focus was nutrition. Students discussed the energy and nutrients our bodies need to grow and stay healthy while exploring balanced meals and snacks. Students discussed the importance of specific nutrients for certain bodily functions and which type of foods provide those nutrients. They also explored daily recommended servings and balanced plates.



In the second week, students learned how to read packaged food labels: nutritional data, ingredients lists, and marketing labels. They also selected the food they wanted to make in the last week of class: pie, cookies, donuts, and fruit pizza! Students then brainstormed ingredient substitutions to increase the nutritional value of each food. They

suggested adding ingredients such as whole grains, nuts/seeds, and fresh fruits and vegetables.

In the third week, each team compared the nutritional data for their selected food: City Kids version vs. a standard recipe. In doing so, they were able to see how wise ingredient selection can reduce saturated fat, sodium, and added sugar and increase fiber, protein, and vitamin content. They also practiced basic knife skills by cutting zucchini sticks or fruit using junior chef's knives. Students in the 3rd and 4th grade watched an eye-opening video highlighting the staggering impact of food waste on our



communities and environment. They then discussed the often subconscious choices we make that lead to food waste and some possible solutions.

In the fourth week, the students demonstrated their understanding of kitchen safety, food safety, and knife skills while cooking their team food of choice. Everyone was rewarded with delicious treats.



Exploring Mother Nature - K By Clara Cruz

The year just seems to be going by so fast and March is already over. During the month of March we explored nature more than ever and how we can utilize what we see in nature and in our own surroundings to create natural products and art. The students took a particular interest in recycled paper because as we walked around the neighborhood, we noticed many beautiful trees and started to understand the implications of paper waste on our environment. It is our responsibility to reduce our paper use and waste less.



Our first task was to look around the school and identify all our recycling bins. Then, the Lightning Owls took the initiative to draw attention to them by creating signs explaining what can go inside each bin as well as purchase some additional bins to place around the entire school. We want to see how much paper we use at the school each day and how we can utilize any recycled paper in our next project.



We researched how paper is recycled and wrote down the process and compared it to what we are doing with our recycled paper. Although our process of creating recycled paper uses fewer tools and no large machinery, the process mimicked that of a large scale recycling plant! Our next step will be to try to make recycled paper again and create a brochure in Spanish about how our paper is made so that others can follow along through our step-by-step instructions. We used old magazines to create our cover pages, cutting out letters to create our words. Our goal as a class is to find ways to reduce paper waste in our school, encouraging our peers to recycle paper, and help conserve our trees.

Next, we thought about different ways to teach others how to make recycled paper and decided to make a Youtube video in Spanish explaining how to make recycled paper. The kids have all been very excited to work on the video and hope to have many followers and viewers! They came up with their own Youtube channel name and want to develop more educational videos in Spanish.



This month, we traveled to South Africa and learned about their culture. The children learned about clothing styles in some regions, and learned that they have ten official languages. We also took some time to recreate the South African flag with recycled construction paper. Since the beginning of March, the children were excited to celebrate St. Patrick's Day at school and were excited to catch the leprechaun. We began the week of St. Patrick's Day by reading some stories and watching videos on what this festive day is and how it is celebrated

around the world. The children made rainbows and pots of gold to attract the leprechauns and then had the idea to create leprechaun traps in the hopes of catching the pesky visitors. Our traps were created with lots of gold, rainbows, green, shamrocks, and a special note for the leprechauns. The children set out their traps and waited. Unfortunately, the leprechauns were not caught by the Lightning Owls but our special friends left clues and notes answering all their questions.



We are excited for our second attempt at our recycled paper and adding more to it. We are starting from scratch once again and we are making some corrections to the process in hopes of it coming out better than the first batch. As we go through the process the children will be filming each step in Spanish. We can't wait to share our final video with you! Stay tuned to see what the Lightning Owls will be up to in the month of April.

Keys to the Universe - 3rd/4th Grade By Jorge Chavez

Students began this month learning about light. We need light on a daily basis to see, but light is also made up of wavelengths and



colors that can transfer energy. We focused on the sun as

a source of energy, using the relation of the sun to other planets to learn the cardinal points. Then, we used the sun to build our own solar clocks.

Next, we focused on learning about stars and constellations. We began identifying constellations and designing our patches for our astronaut suits. Students decided that they wanted to learn more about mars and if it was possible for people to survive on mars given the information we know today. Our final project will be a Minecraft simulation of a colony on mars. We are working with Teacher Lauren from Design Hive to put our plans into



action and create our colonies.

Game Design - K-2nd Grade By Jorge Chavez

After exploring different games last month, we decided to collect our data about our game design research. We scored each game based on the following criteria and gave a score between 1-10: Level of Difficulty, Fun, Good for Groups, and Overall





Experience. Then, each student wrote a review in Spanish about the game they scored the highest. It was great to see so many of the students enjoy so many games that many of the scores were very high. With our data collected, we used Microsoft Excel to record our data and represent our scores with graphs. After exploring the best chart type to use, we discovered that a histogram was the best way to show our data. We asked each other questions about the histograms and how to interpret the information given through each graph. Now that we had completed our research about some of the most successful board games in the United States, we embarked upon our own game design, completing the first drafts of our games. We also took some time to reflect in our journals about the game design process so far. What has been the easiest part of this process? What has been the most

difficult? What has been an unexpected challenge?

As we continue to develop our games and complete our instruction manuals, we are excited at the prospect of sharing these games with you!

The Holistic Farmer - K-2nd Grade By Tasha Taylor

During the month of March, our holistic farmers have been studying different elements pertaining to running a farm such as plant management, soil composition, time, places to find water, and how different ecosystems can either hurt or benefit farming. The students learned why knowing times of the day are essential in managing animals, growing plants, and harvesting. The students practiced telling time by the hour, half hour, 5 min intervals, and by the nearest minute. Some of the students were even able to build their own clocks to understand the parts and number order of the clock. We talked about how telling time can help in other areas of addition, subtraction, and multiplication by 5s.



The students started on a draft of informational posters to communicate to our community the importance of gardening and composting as well as the steps we have taken at our own school in our gardening and compost projects. Our compost has been extended by gaining an extra compost bin. We are also excited to see the



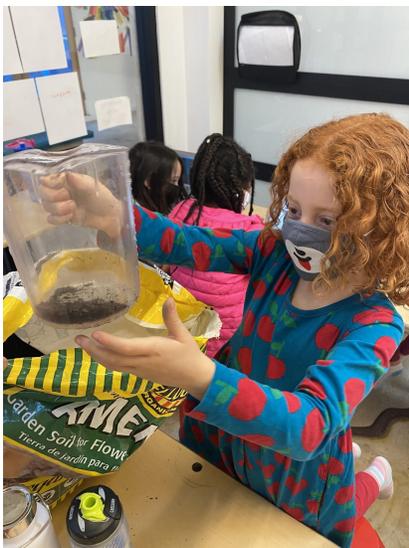
construction of our planters underway as one of our three planters is nearing completion for our garden.

The classes discussed the topic of competition in ecosystems and how it pertains to plants, or animals potentially visiting, in our garden. We ran an experiment where the students had three small pots and had to measure, in cups, the correct amount of soil. They then put 3 seeds in one pot, 10 seeds in another, and 20 seeds in the last. They made hypotheses about how many they thought would grow and which pot

would grow the best carrot plants based on their knowledge of competition for resources. On our past field trip to the Madrona Marsh, the students looked at the amount of biodiversity and soil composition and guessed why they thought a wetland would attract so much wildlife and be able to filter water to make it cleaner. They also explored an outdoor garden to bring back ideas for our own at school. We then ran an experiment at school where each student got a layer of what comprises marsh soil - rocks, sand, leaves, etc and filled a plastic bottle with the layers. They then took a cup and dirtied water as much as possible, and then poured it through the marsh model in a bottle and watched how the layers strained a good majority of the dirt out, leaving cleaner water at the bottom. We talked about how this kind of soil could benefit plants and animals, and how farmers could apply it on their farms as well. We quizzed our knowledge on our topics by

having a fun running quiz game at the park to find the correct paper plate answer to a math or science question!

Some highlights this month have been our whale watching trip. Even though we didn't get to see any whales or dolphins this time, we got to learn a little more about how they are studied such as through trackers and tracker maps. We also explored South Africa's efforts to reduce snare traps



on endangered species like the African Elephant and Black/White Rhinos by creating Snare to Ware art pieces.

History of California - 3rd/4th Grade By Tasha Taylor

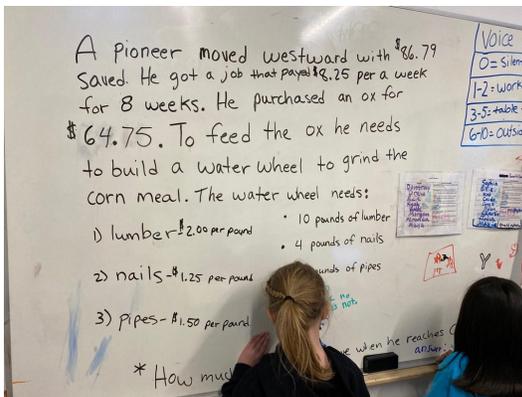
The Loyal Leaders have made their way through early native American



medicinal plants and were lucky enough to meet with Bridey, an expert in medicinal plants, who met us on a field trip to identify some of the plants we studied along with new plants used by the native people to LA. We have been continuing our journey west by studying new scientific technologies such as the extension of the train, and how this affected the spread of pollution and disease. We have been learning about gold panning and the cost that went into not only buying supplies, but how much they might be able to make. Utilizing multiplication and our knowledge of number



sense, we practiced converting money from the year 1850 to present day currency. We have also been working hard on comparing and adding fractions with like and unlike denominators. The students learned how money can also be converted and



represented by fractions.

Some of our highlights this month have been whale watching and celebrating our South Africa day by learning about the big five animals: Rhino, Lion, Leopard, Elephant, and Cape Buffalo. We talked about the dangers of poaching and what some organizations such as Snares to

Wares and Kainav Conservation have done to raise awareness of snare poaching. The students were able to create their own art out of fake snare wire just like the organizations sculpt animals out of real snare wire.





Music - K-4th Grade By Luis Sanchez

After spending some time identifying the different families of instruments in the orchestra, we started March incorporating new instruments to our classroom, especially percussion.

First up, was the Glockenspiel. We discovered that it is a very beautiful instrument. One of the students commented that when they played it, they felt like they were in a magical movie like Harry Potter! It has the same configuration as the piano but instead of keys, there are metal pieces, so it was very easy for us to explore and play melodies that we had previously played on the piano. This time, with a new sound and using the correct technique to hit the keys.



Another instrument that we had the opportunity to explore was the djembe, originally from Africa, that we played in our South African music class. We also discovered that it is used in many other countries around the world as it has a common percussion sound.

The djembe is a difficult instrument to play because you have to hold it between your legs to get a more full sound. Although it was large and heavy for many of our students, they approached the challenge with a huge smile!

Without a doubt, our favorite percussion instrument was the new piano that suddenly arrived one day. Wait a minute! Did you say percussion? Yes! Did you know that the piano, although it has strings, is a percussion instrument? It has an internal mechanism that hits the strings to create sound so it is a percussion instrument!



What we like the most about this instrument is that it is a real piano and the weight of the keys is felt immediately as soon as you start playing it. We also counted, and found that it has a total of 88 keys compared to the 48 on the keyboards. One of our favorite

discoveries has been the pedals which we can use to regulate the volume and add sustain to our melodies.

Another thing we focused on this month was reinforcing the musical notes on the staff so each of us chose a note and pasted it on a sheet of paper to memorize the location of each one.



We started a new book focused on classical music, we did not think that playing the classical music of the great masters of the past would be so easy and fun. We also find these pieces a bit more difficult because they require more technical skill but there is nothing that daily practice cannot solve. Our favorite pieces are Beethoven's Ode to Joy, Vivaldi's Spring from The Four Seasons, Brahms's Lullaby, Offenbach's Can Can and a few more.

Also, this month we were singing a lot and doing many exercises to warm up our voices. We learned a new song in Spanish that

we love called "Vivir mi Vida" that talks about being positive, dancing, laughing and singing despite adversity or problems in life. We are looking forward to singing it for you soon.



We also learned many new Spanish verbs and vocabulary with games. We started a new theater project, writing and practicing a script with our friends from different situations of daily life. We choose to start with "Vamos al doctor" to practice common words and phrases we would use at the doctor. Our script explored different types of illnesses and ailments, naming parts of our body. It was a lot of fun watching our friends perform the play.

