

November Newsletter Elementary

Mysteries and Theater - Orley

This month, we broadened the concept of "Mystery" in several different ways.

First, the children chose questions that interested them, and undertook research to find answers. Questions ranged from "Who invented the chair?" to "Why do snakes have scales?" to "Who made life?"



Second, we explored the mysteries of superpowers, both by writing stories about superheroes, and by using the superpowers that we have to create change in the world. The charity that City Kids voted to support in the election was Charity: Water. We took a closer look at the impact of lack of clean water access to communities, and developed a business plan to make and sell bracelets as a Charity: Water fundraiser.



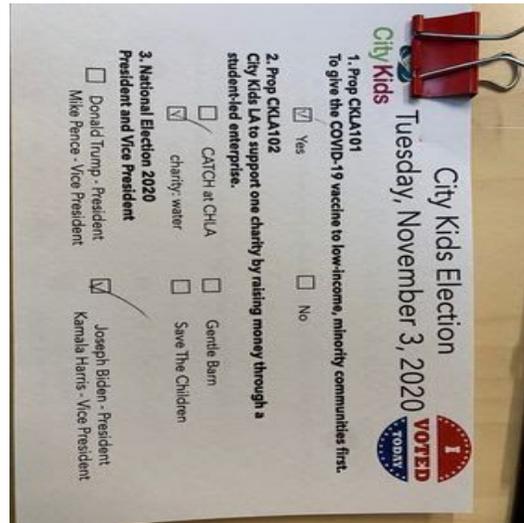
Finally, guest magician Michael Gee Zoomed in from London, England, to perform a magic show for us, and to provoke the question: "How did he do that?"

As November drew to a close, we read the stories of Christmas (Tennis Hawks) and Hanukkah (Icebreakers), and brought them to life through dramatization. We also prepared to

solve this important mystery: Who is my Secret Santa?

Government and Theater - Orley

The Loyal Leaders excelled themselves by presenting key issues in this month's presidential election, voting for a charity for the school to support (the winner was Charity: Water), and delving into a proposition to advocate for distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine to minority, low income families.

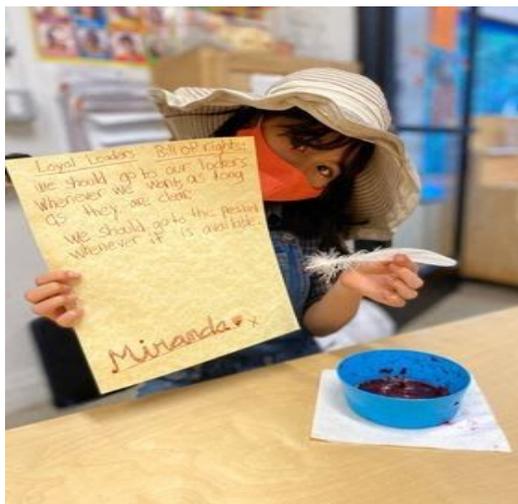


We then traveled back in time to the formation of the US Government, discussing the Bill of Rights, and creating a list of Loyal Leaders' rights that were agreed to by two thirds of the class.

Our focus for the rest of the month was westward expansion and the Gold Rush. We read the book "Gold Rush Girl," whose hero is a teen girl so intent on traveling with her

father and brother from Rhode Island to California, that she becomes a stowaway on their journey.

As the month came to an end, the Loyal Leaders prepared to perform their version of the story of Diwali.



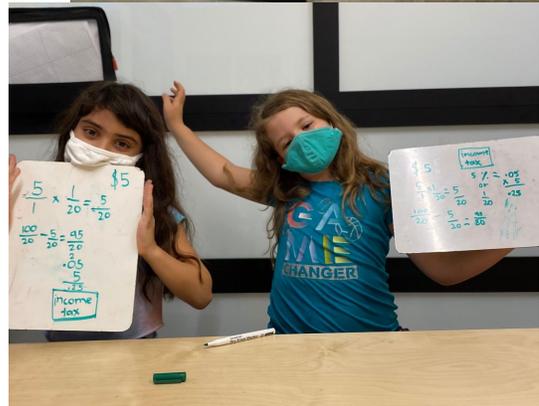
I Can Be A Scientist - Tasha

This month our Loyal Leaders finished up mammalogy by completing their species projects. The students paired up and randomly picked a mammal from a bag to do a research project to investigate each mammals' common name, scientific name, life cycle, diet, habitat, area of habitat, population size, and population growth expectancy in the next 10 years. We have been utilizing our knowledge of fractions, multiplication, perimeter, and area to help in our research study. Our next step in science was becoming wildlife biologists, focusing on animal migrations. We first studied a variety of birds and their migration patterns including the number of miles they travel in a year, and using math to determine how many miles they will travel over the next. We worked on practicing



the conversion of cm, km, and m to further our knowledge of animal travel. We put this to use by picking our own tagged sea turtles to track online thru a conservation site called Tour De Turtles.

While studying other migratory animals such as elephants, we studied weight conversion to see the size difference between some of these animals. As wildlife biologists, it's important to understand other aspects of the ecosystem such as animals' environment and traits that help them survive. We played a game in two teams where each team were given the amount of \$200 to "bid" against the other team for environmental and animalistic traits to create their own species and



environment. This helped us with our financial literacy practice as we have just started implementing “income tax” on our pay days. Another highlight this month was our celebration of the United States where we were able to learn about and make our own ink and quill utilizing our knowledge of measurements for the ingredients.

Nature Explorers - Tasha

This month we have been focusing on our measuring skills and determining the best units of measurement for specific



objects. We started studying different methods of seed dispersal by animals or the wind. We created our own maple seeds and helicopter seeds to test by partnering up and watching them fly through the air. We then measured our seeds’ travel distance and the time it took for them to travel with no wind vs with our partner creating wind. We have been working on place value with our addition and subtraction with larger numbers as well to help us compare each other's seed distance and the total amount of distance traveled. Place value has also helped us with counting money, as we are steadily continuing our financial literacy program earning kudos in anticipation for “pay day.”



Our newest project has been learning about the perimeter of objects, which we got to use

when we created our very own islands while studying different types of landforms and where water is found on Earth. The Icebreakers and Tennis Hawks drew 2D models of their ocean, island, and choice of two landforms for the island, while measuring the objects’ perimeter and length. They then recreated a 3D model of their



island with a plate, playdough, and paint, making sure the length of their objects were measured up correctly.

The Strawberries created their 2D and 3D islands based on shapes, number of sides, corners, length, and weather type (wintery/cold or summery/hot). They have been working on how the sun affects the four seasons and the types of weather associated with each. All three groups have been working hard on their observation book which they bring on each field trip to write down observation notes and questions they might have.



Mr. C. Highlight - Tasha



It is amazing to have such great friends in the neighborhood. The Icebreakers have had a special treat these past couple months as we befriended a retired teacher named Mr. C., when he let the students pick carob from his tree. This turned into an 8 week



science/music/magic course every wednesday morning. The students have loved getting to know Mr. C. and learning about trees, flowers, birds, nests, butterflies, bees, wasps, and different types of seeds.



The students also learned about different types of instruments such as the tongue drum. Mr. C. is also a skilled magician and performed vanishing dice acts as well as allowing us to take home our very own magic trick to show our friends and family. We are so appreciative of Mr. C. as we have our own "Mr. Rogers" in our wonderful neighborhood.

Prey vs Predator - Jorge

This month, students focused on the difference between an ecosystem and a habitat. A habitat is a place where a community of animals and plants live, compared to an ecosystem, which describes how organisms interact with their habitat. The students took their knowledge to Waterfront Education where they worked with their staff to create their own ecosystems based on parameters set by those teachers. It was a great opportunity for our students

to apply what they learned in the classroom to work done by marine biologists and oceanographers. We also challenged our students to incorporate their knowledge of



perimeter and area to compute the space needed to create their habitats, utilizing knowledge of inches and centimeters to construct proportioned models.

Knights of the Not-So-Round Table - Jorge

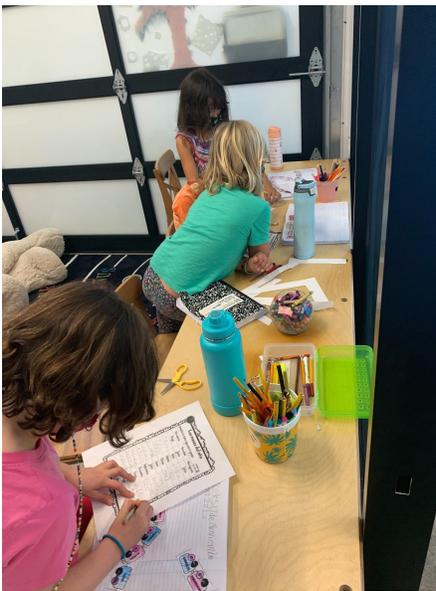


We continue to learn the names of the pieces in Spanish as well as exploring different techniques and moves. We also incorporated some math vocabulary and shapes to learn some quick moves that can be useful in game play strategy. Horizontally, we name every square with numbers, and vertically, we name every square



with letters so every time they move a piece they have to

say their position and practice implementing the vocabulary during the game. For example, "Knight is moving to B4." We will spend the remainder of the year challenging our friends to games and practicing our newly learned strategies.



Music - Luis

We started conducting with our new boomwhackers. Each of us led the others by pointing and changing the notes while we interpreted the sound and rhythm indicated by our leader. We also started using our listening station with headphones and listened to different musical genres every week while drawing, dancing and controlling the volume with our hands.

We were excited to begin practicing our favorite holiday songs with the arrival of our holiday books for the piano. We enjoyed playing the game "Speed Note" to learn the order of the musical notes. For the first time, we started playing the guitar, and the students were happy to learn this new six-string instrument. We also began to practice the most important verbs in Spanish by playing charades. It was fun watching each student act out each verb. We continued to study the different values and symbols of the notes by using a color for each symbol and discover what is behind the mysterious drawing. We learned that each time we sit at the piano, and before starting to practice any song, we must warm up our hands with various exercises to gain flexibility and skill.

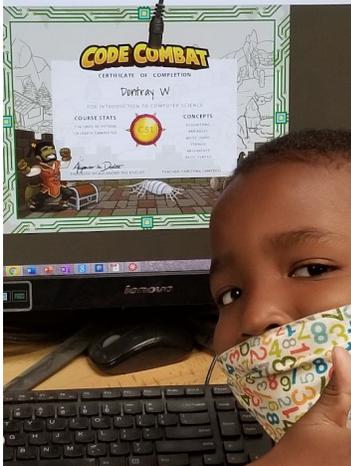
We also talked about how important it is to have a good posture when playing the piano so as not to hurt our hands, back or fingers. Some of the pieces we learned were: Deck the Halls, Jingle Bells, Joy to the World, and We Wish You a Merry Christmas, etc.

This month, we also learned more about our country and its culture by discovering the music that formed this nation. We listened to various musical genres, such as Native American sounds, blues and gospel, jazz from our African American heritage, rock n' roll, and country from our southern heritage leading up to the 20th century American classical music composers that we inherited from the European tradition. After listening to various styles of music, we chose our favorite genre and drew a picture representing the feelings that each of the pieces evoked, as well as, the instruments that we manage to distinguish each style. We learned how important it is to give feedback to our classmates without judging, as well, as learn from our mistakes and help each other improve. We will finish our trimester with the holiday concert which we are excited to share with all of you!





Treehouse Masters - Phil



This month, in preparation for our next project, all classes have been studying robotic motion and propulsion. Why is there a need for robots and what do they add to our lives, what jobs do robots do? When would we use a robot instead of a human to complete a task? Why is it important that robots should be able to think and make decisions while others can

just follow a program or list of commands? If you could design and create your own robot, what would it do and why? As we delve more into robotics, students have physically explored servos, linear actuators, motors, programmable logic controllers,

and lipo batteries. Combining these with circuit building experiments we have already performed, we were able to apply power to some of our robotic components to give us an idea of how they work and move.



The Loyal Leaders class continues to make positive strides with learning to code using python. They are beginning to understand new expressions, compiling strings to achieve a number of objectives within CodeCombat. Many have completed the introduction to computer science and are now

well into game development. Proficiency in python will be key in executing our next project where there will be multiple ways of writing code but the challenge will be finding how to optimize functions.



Strawberries Homeroom - Clara



It seems like this year has gone by so fast and we are already ending the month of November. This month Teacher Clara and the Strawberries were able to build a stronger connection by getting to know each other and our interests. At the beginning of the month we began to learn about Dia de los Muertos. We learned about the many traditions that are done on Dia de los Muertos including "papel picado" to decorate



around the school.

We also made some calaveras which represent a happy afterlife, which is why they are very colorful. To conclude our unit about Dia de los Muertos, the children enjoyed some very delicious pan de muerto.

We then moved on to learning about "otoño" and what occurs during this season. The children began to describe how the trees change color and the leaves fall off the trees as well. We focused on learning and identifying the colors in spanish as well as writing these words, practicing our letter formation and utilizing our knowledge of the spanish alphabet. During our nature walk, we collected leaves and sticks to incorporate into our next project. We then used descriptive words to illustrate the color, size, and time it took for each leaf to fall to the ground, practicing our



counting in spanish.



We moved on to learning about *dia de accion de gracias* (Thanksgiving). We had many discussions about what we are thankful for while using Spanish to name the people and things in our lives that we

cherish the most. We read some books that talked about being thankful and what

some families do as traditions. We also shared our plans and traditions within our own families while engaging in writing activities practicing writing words including, *e/ alfabeto, los dias de la semana, and partes del cuerpo.*



Lastly, every morning we begin our class with some music and movement, especially zumba and yoga. The children learned zumba to the song titled "Azukita" by Steve Aoki. The children looked forward to this every morning and were working on their gross motor skills and eye hand coordination. After a couple of weeks, the children were able to zumba their way through the whole song on their own!

