



Culture Overview and Summary

September: Exploring our Universe, general introduction

Preschool: Exploring our Universe and the Earth

Discussion/lesson: Our Universe/Our Cosmic Address

In circle time, teachers share the fact that we all live in the Universe. Using the “My Cosmic Address” cards, the teacher introduces that we all live in the Universe in the Milky Way Galaxy. Our address continues into the Solar System to the Planet Earth to the Continent of Europe to Country Czech Republic to city Prague to Street (school address). For each location, the teacher presents a card, showing a photograph of that location.

Children can share their understanding and comments about the universe
Invite the children to explore the “Cosmic Address” cards on their own.

Discussion/lesson: Our Earth

On another day, in circle time, teachers introduce the globe and discuss our world. It’s made up of 7 continents and has many countries on those continents.

Older children can name the continents.

Invite students to share what countries they are from.

Introduce the continent song.

Small Group and Individual Lessons:

- Individual and group work with My Cosmic Address cards
- Solar System book: children can color their own booklet about the Solar System
- Universe puzzle: students can work individually or in groups doing the Universe puzzle
- Students can work on matching the Solar System Nomenclature cards
- Students can work on matching and labeling the Continent Cards
- Globe work: introduce and name the continents. Invite the children to explore and work individually
- Puzzle Map of the World: introduce and name the continents. Invite children to explore and work individually
- Puzzle Map of the World: Introduce how the children can make their own maps
- Maps of the continents: Older children can explore the maps of the continents and the many countries
- Flag work: Introduce the flags of the world
- Geography folders: children can explore specific geography folders made up for each continent

Follow-up Activities:

- Activity: My Cosmic Address Cards
- Activity: Solar System Booklet – children color their own solar system booklets
- Activity: Universe puzzle
- Activity: Matching the Solar System Nomenclature cards
- Activity: Matching and labeling Continent Cards
- Activity: making flags
- Activity: making maps



- Activity: looking at books
- Activity: Learning songs

Additional Activity:

- **Birthday Celebration: Around the Sun**
At circle time a candle, representing the sun, is lit. Labels with each month of the year are laid out like rays of the sun. The child stands next to the month of their birth, holding a globe to represent each. The child slowly walks around the sun one time for each year of their life. As the child walks, a teacher or parent shares about what the child was doing at that age. At the end the child extinguishes the candle. This helps them connect to the concept of the Sun and Earth's movements in relationship to time on Earth.
- **Usborne Book Workshop: European Day of Languages**
Students participated in a workshop, taking a trip around the world using flash cards to identify landmarks, counties and cities. Following this, they were able to look through the cards individually. At the end the whole group listened to the Chinese story, "Why the Sea is Salty."

Elementary: Our Universe

Discussion/lesson: Our Universe

The teacher leads a lesson about how the Universe was formed. Called the First Great Lesson, this includes experiments, photos and story-telling to help children understand the wonder of the creation of the universe.

Following the lesson, children were invited to draw pictures depicting their understanding of the universe and the Big Bang.

Discussion/lesson: Our Place in Space

Using special "nesting boxes", the teacher goes through our cosmic address (Universe...Milky Way Galaxy...Solar System...Earth...). The children are then invited to explore the boxes individually to better understand this concept.

Discussion/lesson: Rock and Minerals on the Earth

The teacher presents a lesson on the properties and characteristics of various rocks and minerals found on the Earth. They also introduced the idea of organic vs. inorganic and connected it to real life. This lesson connects directly back to the Universe lessons, letting children see how everything is connected. Following this, the children were encouraged to explore the rocks and minerals on their own and do research on other rocks and minerals.

Independent Research:

Children are guided in conducting research into the universe and the different biomes that make up earth. Once the research has been completed, children write a short report or draw a picture and share it with their peers.

Follow-Up Activities:

- Activity: Exploration and study of the First Great Lesson about the universe (individual experiments, reading the stories and looking at the charts with pictures of the stories)
- Activity: Students illustrate their own understanding of the universe and their place in it
- Activity: Individual research and reading
- Activity: Individual exploration of rocks and minerals



- Independent work with puzzle maps
- Independent work with the flag work
- Independent work with the geography folders
- Learning songs from around the world

Additional Activity:

- **Birthday Celebration: Our Place in the Universe**
On their birthday, children use the nesting boxes of the Universe to tell their story of their life and their place in the universe
- **Usborne Book Workshop: European Day of Languages**
Students participated in a workshop, taking a trip around the world using flash cards to identify landmarks, counties and cities. Following this, they were able to look through the cards individually. At the end the whole group listened to the Chinese story, “Why the Sea is Salty.”

October: Harvest and Halloween

Preschool: What is Halloween?

Circle Time Discussion: what is Halloween? How is Halloween celebrated?

Halloween is a holiday celebrated in October. It's celebrated in America and other places around the world. What do we know about Halloween?

Student led discussion: this is a time for dressing up and trick-or-treating, often there are jack-o'-lanterns, etc.

Halloween activities include trick-or-treating, wearing costumes, ghost tours, bonfires, costume parties, visiting haunted attractions, carving jack-o-lanterns, and reading scary stories.

Do you remember what we do at school?

Student led discussion

Circle Time Discussion: What is harvest?

Teacher leads a discussion about harvest. In the past, harvest time was the time of the year when the summer crops and gardens were ready to gather, and many fruit trees and patches were full to be picked and dried, canned and preserved. Gardens and fields were all cleared, ready to prepare for the next year's produce. Winter was coming - if there was not a bountiful harvest, then many would not eat well through the winter. Harvest time was a time for hard work, and then celebrations, and then rest.

Teacher led discussion: What kinds of crops do we grow in the Czech Republic? Students will share about crops and plantings they've seen or experienced. The teacher then shares some pictures and additional options.

Read the book: Pick a Circle, Gather Squares: A Fall Harvest of Shapes by Felicia Sanzari Chernesky

Follow-up activities

- Activity, Halloween: Pumpkin washing (set up to wash a small pumpkin)
- Activity, Halloween: Paper jack-o-lanterns
- Activity, Halloween: Dress-up Paper Dolls with costumes



- Worksheets, Halloween:
 - coloring activities
 - number recognition (for students who are ready)
 - word match (for students who are ready)
- Activity, Harvest: Collage using seeds and grains (apple seeds, corn, barley, etc.)
- Activity, Harvest: Sorting Corn Kernels
- Activity, Harvest: Nomenclature cards matching and labeling fruits and vegetables
- Activity, Harvest: Nomenclature cards matching seeds and plants
- Reading books about Halloween, Harvest and Planting

Elementary: History of Halloween – historical implications

Lesson: what is Halloween, history of Halloween

Introduction: Halloween is a holiday celebrated on October 31. It has roots in the Celtic festival of Samhain and the Christian holy day of All Saints' Day. Irish immigrants carried versions of the tradition to North America during Ireland's Great Famine of 1846. The day is often associated with the colors orange and black and is strongly associated with symbols such as the jack-o'-lantern.

Halloween activities include trick-or-treating, wearing costumes, ghost tours, bonfires, costume parties, visiting haunted attractions, carving jack-o-lanterns, pranking people, reading scary stories, and watching horror movies.

Discussion:

Invite children to share their experiences with Halloween. Answer questions that come up. Since several students participated in the discussion the previous year, it's interesting to note what they remembered and what seemed like new information to them. Many of them focused on the celebratory aspect of the holiday and needed reminders about the other aspects.

Follow-up activities:

- Invite children to do follow-up Independent research
- Worksheets:
 - Halloween word search
 - Halloween mystery math
 - Halloween word problems
 - Halloween fill in story
- Activity: children draw their own jack-o-lanterns
- Read Chapter Book: Mercy Watson: Princess in Disguise by Kate DiCamillo

Lesson: Where is Halloween Celebrated?

Introduction: Revisit the discussion about the history of Halloween (Irish immigrants brought the traditions to North America). Discuss where Halloween is celebrated. On a map, pinpoint the countries that celebrate it (North America, parts of Europe, etc.).

Discussion:

Group discussion about migration and expats bring the practices to other countries. The Czech Republic is an example.

Have children share their experiences about Halloween



Follow-up activities:

- Invite children to do follow-up Independent research about Halloween traditions around the world.
- Further map work based on their research

Discussion/Lesson: What is harvest? How is it celebrated?

Introduction: Discuss harvest? What do the children know about it?

Follow-up activities:

- Read Chapter Book: Farmer Boy by Laura Ingalls Wilder
- Independent research about harvest and crops in the Czech Republic
- Montessori Biology Work: Life Cycle of a Plant
- Worksheets: Harvest time word time

November: Diversity

Preschool: What is diversity?

Circle Time Discussion: Introducing diversity

Teacher-led discussion about how all of us are different. Invites the children to name some of the ways they differ. After the children have shared, the teacher acknowledges that we all can look different but that we are also very similar.

Teacher reads “The Colors of Us” by Karen Katz

Circle Time Discussion: Exploring diversity further

Teacher-led discussion: We’ve talked before about how all of us are different. Who remembers what we talked about? Allow the children to share. Teacher guides the discussion to the fact that sometimes people also talk or act differently; they might have a physical disability, which means a part or parts of the body do not work well.

Introduce Mrs. Aliya Bokash, advocate and mother of one of our disabled students. Mrs. Bokash leads a conversation with the children about what having a disability means.

Mrs. Bokash reads “Can I Play Too” by Mo Williams

Preschool: Workshop Teddy Bear Clinic

The Teddy Bear Clinic is a well-known program hosted by Charles University Medical Students. The goal of the program is to teach children about going to the doctor so that children are not scared about it. In addition to their regular program, we asked them to talk to the children about inclusion and diversity. They shared some information about different disabilities and, as the children were “treating” their stuffed animals, the med students used them as a point of reference.

Follow-up activities

- Reading: library has several beautiful books about diversity and inclusions
 - Same, Same but Different by Jenny Sue Kostecki-Shaw
 - The Colors of Us by Karen Katz
 - Can I Play Too? By Mo Williems
 - Whoever You Are by Mem Fox



- Red: A Crayon's Story by Michael Fox
- Usborne Book: Stories from Around the World
- Activity: Children Around the World Nomenclature (matching and labeling)
- Activity: Children and Mothers Nomenclature (matching)
- Activity: worksheets

Elementary: What does diversity mean?

Circle-Time Discussion: What is diversity?

Teacher leads a community meeting asking the children what diversity is and what does it look like? This should be a teacher guided participatory discussion with the students. The focus is on hearing the students' ideas and sharing information

Circle-Time Discussion: Peoples Around the World and Fundamental Needs

Teacher opens the discussion about how there are many people all around the world that are very different but that we are all the same in many ways. Using the Fundamental Needs Chart, the teacher goes through the activity with the children identifying that everyone in the world has the same needs for food, shelter, clothing, etc. Engage in conversation about this with the children. Encourage them to continue to work with the Fundamental Needs work further, researching how different cultures meet these needs.

Circle-Time Discussion: Migration

Using the Migration Charts, the teacher discusses the reasons why people might migrate (environmental, political, economic, cultural). The teacher should encourage the children to share stories they know about immigrants – both those who moved to the Czech Republic and those who left the country.

If you have a teacher in school who is an expat, invite them to join the discussion and answer questions the children might have. Since IMSP has many expat teachers, we had several teachers join this conversation. It was a lively discussion for all!

Self-Portraits in Art Class:

In Art Class, as a way to tie the topic into their art work, children were invited to create their own self-portraits. When done, they shared them with the group as a way to celebrate each student's uniqueness

Additional Follow-up activities:

- Invite children to do follow-up Independent research about the Fundamental Needs of people about the world
- Encourage the children to do follow-up Migration work and use the classroom History Answer Cards to learn more about different cultures
- Activity: Children around the World Nomenclature
- Activity: Children and Mothers around the World Nomenclature
- Activity: What Makes Us the Different Worksheet
- Worksheets
- Reading: Plenty of beautiful books in the library
 - This Is How We Do It: One Day in the Lives of Seven Kids from around the World by Matt Lamothe



- People by Peter Spier
- Same, Same but Different by Jenny Sue Kostecki-Shaw
- Whoever You Are by Mem Fox
- Usborne Book: Stories from Around the World

December: Worldwide Holiday Celebrations

Preschool: What are the holidays that are celebrated during this time?

Discussion/lesson: What are the holidays celebrated in the winter around the world

In circle time, teachers discuss the upcoming Christmas holiday. Ask children to share any experiences they might have with Christmas or Advent. Then ask children if they know of any other holidays celebrated around this time. Some children might know Hanukkah or Kwanzaa.

The teacher shares some general information about both

Hanukkah is the Jewish eight-day, wintertime “festival of lights.” Celebrated with a nightly menorah lighting, special prayers and foods, it commemorates the victory of the Maccabees or Israelites over the Greek ruler; it is 8 days and nights. During Hanukkah, families eat latkes (potato pancakes) and sufganiot (jelly donuts), or other foods which are fried in oil, to celebrate and commemorate the miracle of the Festival of Lights.

Kwanzaa is a week-long celebration that honors African heritage. It’s observed from December 26 to January 1, culminating in a feast and gift-giving. Kwanzaa has seven core principles: Unity, Self-Determination, Collective Work and Responsibility, Cooperative Economics, Purpose, Creativity, Faith.

Discussion/lesson: How is Advent and Christmas celebrated around the world?

In circle time, the teachers talk about how Christmas is celebrated around the world. They share information about the different foods and traditions that countries may have. They also share about the different St. Nikolas traditions in the world.

Invite parents to come in and share their experiences and children can as well.

On December 6th, it’s a very important day leading up to Christmas - Mikulas! Mikulas was a saint who was very kind and took very good care of children. Now, we celebrate his life and goodness on the 5th on the eve of his feast day when we meet the Mikulas Trio who asks us if we’ve been bad or good. Children have the chance to share their experiences with the Mikulas Trio

Field Trip

The children visited KC Zahrada in Chodov for a workshop to make gifts for their families. They learned about how Christmas is for giving and participated in making gifts for their parents and siblings.

Follow-up Activities:

- Arts and crafts:
 - Making paper chains and wreaths
 - Making Christmas cards
 - Making paper Christmas trees
- Activity: Decorating the mini tree
- Activity: Learning songs
- Activity: Reading Books:



- Daddy Christmas and Hanukkah Mama by Selina Alko
- Christmas in Noisy Village by Astrid Lindgren
- 12 Days of Christmas by Rachel Isadora
- Worksheets:
 - Coloring sheets
- Visit from the Mikulas Trio on December 5th

Preparation for the Winter Concert:

- The children learn Santa Claus is Coming to Town, Let It Snow, Jingle Bell Rock and Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer for the Winter Concert

Elementary: History of Advent and Winter Solstice

Lesson: History of Advent and Winter Solstice

Introduction: Since the 11th century, Advent has been the time used for preparation for the Christmas season. It always begins four weeks before Christmas Eve. Many people use Advent wreaths to mark this time and the most important day of the week is always the Sunday of Advent, when the Advent wreath candles are lit.

Long before advent though, communities around the world set aside the weeks before the Winter Solstice as a time to honor the coming of the light. The winter solstice, the longest night of the year, falls on December 21 or 22 in the Northern Hemisphere and June 20 or 21 in the Southern. Since ancient times, people all over the world have recognized this important astronomical occurrence and celebrated the subsequent “return” of the Sun in a variety of different ways. Many celebrations also honor the end of the planting season. During the winter solstice, people are encouraged to reflect on their year and look ahead to the future. One of the Czech Republic’s original winter solstice celebrations was St. Lucia’s Day.

Over the coming weeks we’ll talk about Advent traditions here in the Czech Republic as well as around the world.

Invite children to share any thoughts and experiences they have about advent or winter solstice.

Follow-up activities:

- Invite children to do follow-up Independent research and share with the group
- Advent worksheets
- Learning songs
- Read Chapter Book: The Advent Storybook by Antonie Schneider

Elementary: Holidays around the World

Lesson:

In the Czech Republic, advent traditions. Today we’re going to discuss a few of them. One of the most famous traditions is Mikulas! We celebrate Mikulas on the eve of his feast day, December 5th. Mikulas was a saint who was known for his kindness and how he helped innocent people, especially children. Nowadays we celebrate with the Trio – Mikulas, an angel and the devil.

There are other holidays and traditions celebrated around the world during this time. Can you name some?



Hanukah is the Jewish eight-day, wintertime “festival of lights.” Celebrated with a nightly menorah lighting, special prayers and foods, it commemorates the victory of the Maccabees or Israelites over the Greek ruler; it is 8 days and nights. During Hanukkah, families eat latkes (potato pancakes) and sufganiot (jelly donuts), or other foods which are fried in oil, to celebrate and commemorate the miracle of the Festival of Lights.

Kwanzaa is a week-long celebration that honors African heritage. It’s observed from December 26 to January 1, culminating in a feast and gift-giving. Kwanzaa has seven core principles: Unity, Self-Determination, Collective Work and Responsibility, Cooperative Economics, Purpose, Creativity, Faith.

In the UK and some other countries, they celebrate Boxing Day on the 26th. Do you know what that is? During the Middle Ages, it was the day that the collection boxes for the poor, usually kept in churches, were opened and distributed. It was also tradition then that servants got the day off to celebrate Christmas with their families on Boxing Day. Before WWII, it was common for working people like butchers and milkmen to travel around their delivery places and collect a Christmas box. This tradition has now mostly stopped. Now, many families use this day to donate to people in need.

What other traditions or holidays do you know? Teacher opens the conversation up to the children. In our International school, many children share about specific traditions from their home country.

Follow-up activities:

- Invite children to do follow-up Independent research about other Holidays or Christmas traditions
- Write a paragraph about celebrating a holiday tradition
- Make Christmas cards and gifts for parents
- Make Christmas cards for the other teachers
- Make snowflakes for classroom decorations
- Children can do the Czech divining activities independently or in small groups
- Books:
 - Carl the Christmas Carp by Ian Krykorka
 - Christmas around the World by Mary Lankford
 - Too Many Tamales by Gary Soto
 - The Legend of the Poinsettia by Tomie de Paola
- Visit from the Mikulas Trio
- Worksheets

Elementary Preparation for the Winter Concert:

- Lower Elementary children practice and prepare for their play, “Jackie Frost.” The play features the winter character Jack Frost and some children’s hope for a white Christmas.
- Upper Elementary children practice and prepare for their play, “Christmas Traditions,” which was created by the students and features a series of skits about Christmas traditions around the world.

January: Learning about China and Chinese New Year

Preschool: Exploring China

Discussion/lesson: Introduction to China



In circle time, teachers introduce China and shows it on the Asia puzzle map. Older children can name the continent. The teacher then shares some geographical information about China, focusing on the Great Wall of China, something the children might have discovered in their geography exploration. Invite students to share any information they know about China, note: often children mention Chinese food, which can invoke a nice conversation about food around the world and reality versus what we experience in Europe.

Discussion/lesson: Chinese New Year

Start the discussion by asking the children if they know about Chinese New Year. Explain that it's different from the New Year celebration we recently had. Chinese New Year also known as the "Spring Festival" is an important Chinese festival celebrated at the turn of the traditional lunisolar Chinese Calendar. The celebration has many customs and is centuries old.

Chinese New Year parades have 2 dances – the Lion Dance and the Dragon Dance. Watch a Dragon dance on youtube with the children. We'll make our own dragon and parade around the school.

Acknowledge that other countries and cultures also celebrate New Year's according to different calendars and with many different customs. Children can share their experiences with this as well.

Small Group and Individual Lessons:

- Puzzle Map of the World: introduce and name the continent, specifically Asia. Invite children to explore and work individually
- Maps of the continents: Older children can explore the maps of the continents and the many countries
- Puzzle Map of Asia: Introduce how the children can make their own maps
- Flag work: Introduce the flags of the world
- Geography folders: children can explore specific geography folders made up for each continent

Follow-up Activities:

- Activity: Create the traditional red envelopes with a small drawing to give to loved ones (<https://www.activityvillage.co.uk/make-a-red-envelope>)
- Activity: Explore the Chinese clothing (loaned to us from a parent)
- Activity: Making the Dragon for the parade
- Activity: Paint Spring Blossoms
- Activity: Make paper lanterns (<http://www.show.me.uk/editorial/1188-how-to-make-a-paper-lantern>)
- Activity: Participate in the Chinese New Year Parade

Elementary: Exploring China

Discussion/lesson: China, Research and Discovery

Teacher guides a review of China. Discusses the China project which will consist of students embarking small group research projects about Chinese New Year

The research project will include:

- Research and discovery
- Outline of research
- Report on chosen country
- Group presentation to classmates



Independent Research:

Children are guided in conducting research about Chinese New Year. The research should be focused on this topic whether it's about the calendar, history, customs, food, etc. Since it's a small group project, the children need to divide the research among themselves.

Once the research phase has been completed (approximately 4-6 hours), children create an outline of their research and write their report.

Following this, students create a visual presentation and prepare an oral report

Project Presentation:

Children prepare and practice their oral reports and finish their visual presentation.

Children create and make their own costumes props for the presentation.

Projects are presented to classmates and teachers

Additional Activities:

- Independent work with puzzle maps
- Independent work with the flag work
- Independent work with the geography folders
- Examining atlases and reading books
- Creative Writing exercise: My best Chinese New Year Celebration
- Activity: Create the traditional red envelopes with a small drawing to give to loved ones (<https://www.activityvillage.co.uk/make-a-red-envelope>)
- Activity: Making the Dragon for the parade
- Activity: Paint Spring Blossoms
- Activity: Make paper lanterns (<http://www.show.me.uk/editorial/1188-how-to-make-a-paper-lantern>)
- Activity: Participate in the Chinese New Year Parade

All School Chinese New Year Celebration and Parade

The Preschool and Elementary children helped to make a large papier mache Dragon, a traditional hallmark of Chinese New Celebrations. We then paraded around the building as a community, with small groups taking turns wearing and participating in the Dragon Dance.

February: Valentine's Day

Preschool: Learning about Valentine's Day

Discussion/lesson: Introduction to Valentine's Day

Since Valentine's Day is a popular holiday, the children are likely familiar with the basic concept of it. So, in circle time, teachers review Valentine's Day and have the children share information and facts they know. It will be a lively circle time discussion!

The teacher can then share some pertinent information depending on what has been brought up by the children.

Discussion/lesson: Valentine's Day



Start the discussion by asking the children if they know about Valentine's Day. Many children will share. Explain that even though it isn't a national holiday, Valentine's Day has a lot of significant cultural significance and celebration around the world. It is celebrated on February 14th and honors a saint named Valentinus. It's known as a time to express love and friendship to those around us.

Acknowledge that other countries and cultures also celebrate Valentine's Day. Children can share their experiences with this as well.

Small Group and Individual Lessons:

- Puzzle Map of the World and Continents: Individual work by the children
- Geography folders: children can explore specific geography folders made up for each continent
- Valentine's Day Celebrations around the world

Follow-up Activities:

- Activity: Make Valentines Cards
- Activity: Cook Valentine's Day treats
- Activity: Valentine's Day themed gluing activity
- Activity: Valentine's Day themed cutting activity
- Activity: Valentine's Day themed math activity
- Activity: Participate in the Valentine's Day Classroom Celebration
- Activity: Participate in the Valentine's Day All School Celebration

Elementary: Exploring Valentine's Day

Discussion/lesson: Valentine's Day, Research and Discovery

Teacher guides a review of Valentine's Day and its history. Children will have a lot to share and discuss. Invite the children to pursue small group research projects about Valentine's Day celebrations around the world.

The research project will include:

- Research and discovery
- Outline of research
- Report on chosen topic
- Group presentation to classmates

Independent Research:

Children are guided in conducting research about the Czech Valentine's Day. The research should be focused on this topic whether it's about the customs, history, food, decorations, etc. Since it's a small group project, the children need to divide the research among themselves.

Once the research phase has been completed (approximately 4-6 hours), children create an outline of their research and write their report.

Following this, students create a visual presentation and prepare an oral report

Project Presentation:

Children prepare and practice their oral reports and finish their visual presentation.

Children create and make their own costumes props for the presentation.

Projects are presented to classmates and teachers



Additional Activities:

- Independent work with puzzle maps
- Independent work with the flag work
- Independent work with the geography folders
- Examining atlases and reading books
- Creative Writing exercise: A Valentine's Day story
- Activity: Create Valentine's Day cards
- Activity: Participate in the Valentine's Day Classroom Celebration
- Activity: Participate in the Valentine's Day All School Celebration

All School Valentine's Day Celebrations

Each classroom held individual Classroom Celebrations for Valentine's Day. The students made cards for each other and celebrated with Valentine's themed snacks.

In addition, we hosted an All School Valentine's Day Celebration. The Preschool and Elementary children invited their parents and loved ones to join us for an All School Valentine's Day Celebration. We had several Valentine's themed activities for everyone to participate in and seasonal refreshments for all to enjoy. A wonderful time was had by all!

This theme was also reflected in our values work this month which was focused on love and friendship.

March: Learning about India

Preschool: Learning about India

Discussion/lesson: Introduction to India

In circle time, teachers introduce India and shows it on the Asia puzzle map. Older children can name the continent. The teacher then shares some geographical information about India, especially about its animals and landmarks.

Invite students to share any information they know about India

Discussion/lesson: What is India Known for?

Start the discussion by asking the children what India is known for. Some children will likely reply its food, clothing or animals. Show some photographs of Indian people in traditional dress. The sari is one of the most popular garments worn by Indian women. It's made of a long piece of fabric which is wrapped carefully so one end forms a skirt and the other end is a head of shoulder covering. These days men usually dress in western-style clothing, but some men still wear a short sarong called a lungi. Introduce the other photographs collected about India and invite children to explore when they'd like. Invite students to share about any experiences or knowledge they have about India.

Small Group and Individual Lessons:

- Puzzle Map of the World: introduce and name the continent, specifically Asia. Invite children to explore and work individually
- Maps of the continents: Older children can explore the maps of the continents and the many countries
- Puzzle Map of Asia: Introduce how the children can make their own maps



- Flag work: Introduce the flags of the world
- Geography folders: children can explore specific geography folders made up for each continent

Follow-up Activities:

- Activity: design Rangoli patterns (Indian chalk art)
- Activity: matching exercise
- Activity: baking Naan bread
- Activity: Visit the Indian Embassy
- Activity: Read the book Mama's Saris by Pooj Makhijani
- Activity: Attend the All School Holi Celebration

Elementary: Exploring India

Discussion/lesson: India, Research and Discovery

Teacher guides a review of India. Discusses the India project which will consist of students embarking an independent research project about the country

The research project will include:

Research and discovery

- Outline of research
- Report on chosen country
- Individually designed projects (dioramas, posters, etc.) and a verbal presentation that will be presented to fellow classmates

Independent Research:

Children are guided in conducting research into topics about India. Topics of interest might be historical people of India, food of India, Landmarks of India, Animals of India, Geography of India, etc.

Once the research phase has been completed (approximately 4-6 hours), children create an outline of their research and write their report.

Following this, students create a visual presentation and prepare an oral report

Project Presentation:

Children prepare and practice their oral reports and finish their visual presentation.

Children create and make their own costumes props for the presentation.

Projects are presented to classmates and teachers

Additional Activities:

- Independent work with puzzle maps
- Independent work with the flag work
- Independent work with the geography folders
- Examining atlases and reading books
- Creative Writing exercise: Life in India
- Activity: attend the All School Holi Celebration
- Activity: field trip to the Indian Embassy



All School Holi Celebration

One of the more well-known Hindu holidays is Holi, which is a spring festival also known as the “festival of colors” or the “festival of love.” The festival signifies the victory of good over evil, the arrival of spring and thanksgiving for a good harvest. The Holi celebration is a joyful event marked with food, music and dance. People decorate themselves and their homes with vibrant colors and enjoy time with friends and family.

We celebrated Holi as a school community with a “Family Fun” afternoon. We had a face painting session with traditional smears of bright colors as well as masks and patterns. The children created bright and colorful art using drops of liquid paint and a salad spinner, pretty lanterns out of glass jars decorated with tissue paper, glitter and glue, and necklaces out of pasta dyed with food coloring. The youngest children had fun playing with colorful slime. We had Indian music playing and a corner set up for dancing with colored ribbons. Indian snacks were shared alongside the usual fruit, popcorn and pretzels.

Field Trip to the Indian Embassy

Our students took field trips to the Indian Embassy in Prague 6. They were welcomed by Indian representatives of the Embassy who served them chai and took them on a tour of the Embassy, telling the students a little bit about India. The students also got to try on Indian clothes and learn a traditional Indian dance. The Representatives answered questions and gifted each class with books about India for their classroom libraries. The visit ended with a small performance of traditional Indian dances.

The students loved the opportunity to visit the Embassy and see many beautiful art pieces, learn about Indian history and see some traditional dances. We look forward to visiting more Embassies in the future.

April: Earth Day, One World Overview

This was a combined project focused on Cultural studies (We are One World and cultural celebrations of Earth Day) and Values studies (care for the planet, conservation, respect, etc.).

Preschool: Earth Day

Discussion/lesson: Introduction to Earth Day

In circle time, teachers introduce Earth Day and asks children if they know what it is. Teacher facilitates a discussion about the Earth and how we all must take care of it. Talk about conversation through the idea of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle

Discussion/lesson: Geography lessons using the Montessori materials and recycling activities

In small groups focus on physical geography work introducing the children to the different land and water forms, geographic folders of all the continents and environmental consciousness through Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.

Small Group and Individual Lessons:

- Puzzle Map of the World and Continents
- Land and Water Forms: materials that help children identify and name different land formations and types of bodies of waters



- Physical geography: lessons about the different landscapes such as rainforests, tundra, glaciers, etc. and what we can do to protect them
- Geography folders: children can explore specific geography folders made up for each continent
- Recycling; How and Why we do it
- Reduce and Reuse: What does this mean?

Follow-up Activities:

- Activity: drawing/painting/collage of different land and water forms or landscapes
- Activity: Exploring the parts of the river
- Activity: Recycling matching game
- Activity: Recycling sorting game
- Activity: Participate in the All School Earth Day

Elementary: Earth Day

Discussion/lesson: Earth Day, Research and Discovery

Teacher guides a discussion about Earth Day. Children are invited to do independent research if they wish. Independent research can include:

- Research and discovery
- Outline of research
- Report on chosen country
- Group presentation to classmates

Lessons and Activities

Children participate in a series of Geography and Science lessons using the Montessori materials and the Montessori charts to learn about physical geography, specifics about the land and understand better how the air and water work.

- Land and Water Forms: materials that help children identify and name different land formations and types of bodies of waters
- Physical geography: lessons about the different landscapes such as rainforests, tundra, glaciers, etc. and what we can do to protect them
- Montessori Charts: Work of Water
- Montessori Charts: Work of Air
- Montessori materials: The River
- Recycling; How and Why we do it
- Reduce and Reuse: Advanced ways to reuse products or reduce usage

Additional Activities:

- Independent work with the geography folders
- Examining atlases and reading books
- Research into Earth Day and its history
- Help design and prepare the Earth Day Stations
- Activity: Participate in the All School Earth Day



All School Earth Day Celebration

Close to the official Earth Day, the Preschool and Elementary students gathered for an Earth Day celebration. Based on discussions we'd had with students, we chose the theme of water awareness and conservation since we'd identified it as an important topic to learn about.

For the celebration, we had several stations set up wide variety of guided activities. Children went around in small groups and participated in all stations.

The Stations were:

1. Making paper (showing children how to recycle paper)
2. Recycling rules and game
3. Water usage: how much water do we use?
4. The River – parts of the river and how it works
5. Sensory path – children helped build a sensory path in the playground

Students participated in all the activities so that we could be conscious of the need to care for our earth and the importance of working together to do so.

May: Indonesia Unit

Preschool: Learning about Indonesia

Discussion/lesson: Introduction to Indonesia

In circle time, teachers introduce Indonesia and shows it on the Asia puzzle map. Older children can name the continent. The teacher then shares some geographical information about Indonesia. Invite students to share any information they know about Indonesia.

Discussion/lesson: What is Indonesia Known for?

Start the discussion by asking the children where Indonesia is. Look on the map together and discover where it is located. Point out its geographic highlights and talk about its weather. Show some photographs of Indonesia prompting discussion of what the children see.

Introduce the other photographs collected about India and invite children to explore when they'd like. Invite students to share about any experiences or knowledge they have about Indonesia

Small Group and Individual Lessons:

- Puzzle Map of the World: introduce and name the continent, specifically Asia. Invite children to explore and work individually
- Maps of the continents: Older children can explore the maps of the continents and the many countries
- Puzzle Map of Asia: Introduce how the children can make their own maps
- Flag work: Introduce the flags of the world
- Geography folders: children can explore specific geography folders made up for each continent

Follow-up Activities:

- Activity: Batik art projects
- Activity: matching exercise



- Activity: make Nasi Goreng (fried rice)
- Activity: Angklung Workshop
- Activity: Read Welcome to Indonesia by Patrick Ryan

Elementary: Exploring Indonesia

Discussion/lesson: Indonesia, Research and Discovery

Teacher guides a review of Indonesia. Invites Elementary students from Indonesia (discussed in advanced) to give a mini-presentation about Indonesia.

Discusses the Indonesia project which will consist of students embarking an independent research project about the country

The research project will include:

- Research and discovery
- Outline of research
- Report on chosen country
- Individually designed projects (dioramas, posters, etc.) and a verbal presentation that will be presented to fellow classmates

Independent Research:

Children are guided in conducting research into topics about Indonesia. Topics of interest might be historical people, food, landmarks, animals, geography, history, etc.

Once the research phase has been completed (approximately 4-6 hours), children create an outline of their research and write their report.

Following this, students create a visual presentation and prepare an oral report

Project Presentation:

Children prepare and practice their oral reports and finish their visual presentation.

Children create and make their own costumes props for the presentation.

Projects are presented to classmates and teachers

Additional Activities:

- Independent work with puzzle maps
- Independent work with the flag work
- Independent work with the geography folders
- Examining atlases and reading books
- Creative Writing exercise: Life in Indonesia
- Activity: attend the Angklung Workshop

All School Angklung Workshop

The Angklung is a musical instrument from Indonesia made of a varying number of bamboo tubes attached to a bamboo frame. The tubes are carved to have a resonant pitch when struck and are tuned to octaves, like hand bells.



Representatives from the Indonesian Embassy visited the school to do an Angklung presentation and workshop. The children first enjoyed a performance of several songs played on Angklung. Afterwards, they had the opportunity to try playing them by themselves, eventually creating a musical piece together as a group.

June: Around the World (yearend wrap-up)

Preschool: Exploring our World

Discussion/lesson: Our World

In circle time, teachers review the countries we have learned about this year. Children are invited to share information and facts that we have learned.

Look at the globe – there are so many continents and countries we haven't explored yet!

Invite the children to name the continents and children to share what countries they are from.

Sing the continent song together

Discussions/lesson: Ecosystems

The teacher guides a conversation about Ecosystems around the world. Explain that an ecosystem is a community of living organisms along with nonliving components of their environment – like air, water, etc. Guide the children in discussing various systems we might have encountered.

Further lessons and discussions can focus on the characteristics of the system, such as animals, plants, etc. The teacher can prepare small and large group activities focused on these topics. Children prepare an exhibit-style presentation to share with the school community.

Small Group and Individual Lessons:

- Globe work: Children's independent work exploring the Globe
- Puzzle Maps: Children's independent work exploring the puzzle maps
- Flag work: Children's independent work exploring the flags of the world
- Land and Water Forms: Children's independent work exploring the variety of land and water forms
- Specific Geography folders: children can explore specific geography folders made up for each continent. These folders are related to the geography, culture, clothing, landmarks, etc. for each continent.

Follow-up Activities:

- Activity: making flags and maps
- Activity: looking at books and learning songs
- Activity: Making ethnic snacks
- Activity: Circle Time Share
- Activity: Small group lessons on Ecosystems
- Activity: Visit the Elementary classroom for discussion about Human Fundamental Needs (see below)
- Participate in the International Food Fair

Circle Time Share



Students can make some posters with pictures and texts for a circle time about some of the countries studied. Younger children participate by making maps and flags. In Circle Time, the children can present what they have made.

Elementary: Exploring our World

Discussion/lesson: Our world and countries

Teacher guides a discussion about the Human Fundamental Needs (Montessori lesson) highlighting the fact that all over the world, human needs are very similar. It is this consistency that helps us better relate to others around the world and understand their needs.

Teacher guides a review of the countries in Europe and Asia that we focused on this year. Students participate in sharing the information and knowledge they have learned.

Students are invited to embark on Independent Research about the Fundamental Needs (food, clothing, shelter, transportation, tools, etc.) and how each country meets these needs. The goal of this project is to help children understand that we're all relatively similar and citizens of the world.

Children are invited to present their research to their peers and teachers.

Students participated in a classroom food fair, researching food from around the world and preparing recipes as part of their presentation.

Discussions/lesson: Ecosystems

The teacher guides a conversation about Ecosystems around the world. Explain that an ecosystem is a community of living organisms along with non-living components of their environment – like air, water, etc. Guide the children in discussing various systems we might have encountered.

Further lessons and discussions can focus on the characteristics of the system, such as animals, plants, etc. The teacher can prepare small and large group activities focused on these topics. The children helped to prepare papier mache depictions and art work to share with the Preschool class during their discussions of Ecosystems

Additional Activities:

- Independent work with puzzle maps
- Independent work with the flag work
- Independent work with the geography folders
- Examining atlases and reading books
- Independent work and research with Human Fundamental Needs
- Activity: Ecosystems research and art project (to share with the Preschool classes)
- Activity: Elementary Country and Food Fair
- Participate in the International Food Fair

All School International Food Fair

As a culmination of our yearlong Cultural studies, the entire IMSP community came together to celebrate. Families were invited to share food and recipes from their native Country for a School Wide



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International Food Fair. Parents were asked to include their children in the preparation and cooking of the food.

On a sunny Saturday in June, we all gathered together for an afternoon of fun and games as well as the wonderful International Food Fair.