



Values Overview and Summary

September: Values Introduction and Overview

Preschool: What are Values?

Circle Time Discussion:

The teacher introduces the concept of values. Values are something that help define our behavior. An example of a value is choosing to be kind to a friend or helping someone in the coatroom. Behavior like this is kindness. When we listen to our friends in circle or wait for everyone to have food before eating lunch we are being respectful. This year, we're going to learn about values and how to behave in our classroom and at home. Can you give me an example of being kind? The teacher leads a discussion with the students, occasionally offering examples.

Depending on the feel of the group, the teacher can introduce some role-play activities to practice being kind or respectful. However, if the discussion went longer, it might be better to do this another day.

The teacher also introduces the feelings chart as a way for children to think about how they feel and how to express it. This is respectful behavior.

Individual and small group lessons:

- Grace and Courtesy: Role play about values: being kind, being respectful, etc.
- Practical use of the feelings chart with the students
- Worksheets: coloring sheets
- Read stories about respect and other virtues
 - The Mine-o-Saur by Sudipta Bardhan-Quallen
 - It Could Always be Worse by Margot Zemach
 - The Empty Pot by Demi
 - David Gets in Trouble by David Shannon
- Use of the Feelings Curriculum (see attached) to do individual and group lessons

Elementary: What are values? What are the values that are important to our community?

Discussion/lesson: What are values? What are the values that are important to this community?

The teacher leads a discussion about values, offering a definition of it and then prompting students to share their observations. Students are asked to name several values, which are written on the white board. Then the teacher goes around and everyone shares an example of the different values. They are recorded on the white board for future discussion.

The teacher asks the children to either write or draw a picture about a value of their choosing in their journal.

Discussion/lesson: What are the values important to our community? Creation of Community Rules

Another day, the teacher returns to the discussion of the values, asking the children if they remember and if there are any further thoughts about the values. After allowing the children a chance to share, the teacher guides them into a discussion about their classroom community and what they want it to be like during the school year. Through discussing their ideas and values in general, they create guidelines for classroom behavior.



Additional Follow-up activities:

- Coloring sheets
- Writing prompts about values
- Talk about people in history who model respectful, kind or collaborative behavior
- Read books and stories about respect and other virtues
 - Whole World by Christopher Korr
 - Counting on Community by Inno Sanot Nagara
 - The Quiltmaker's Gift by Jeff Brumbeau
 - The Treasure by Uri Shulevitz
 - David Gets in Trouble by David Shannon
- Use of the Feelings Curriculum (see Methodology) to do individual and group lessons
- Participation in the workshop with psychologist Klára Marušincová

Elementary Workshop on Community Behavior w/ Psychologist Klára Marušincová

Psychologist Klára Marušincová visited the Elementary classrooms to lead a workshop on respectful and kind behavior. With discussion, the use of games and role play, she guided the children through exploring the values of listening, kindness, collaboration, respect and many more.

Upper Elementary Rafting and Team Building Trip

At the beginning of the school year, the Upper Elementary children went on rafting trip which served as a team building trip as well. During the trip they explored values and had several group discussions about what was important to them for the coming school year. Following these discussions, when they returned to school, they created and bound a classroom rulebook for all to follow.

October: Mindfulness and Inner Peace

Preschool: What does it mean to be Mindful? How can we practice being mindful?

Discussion/lesson: What does it mean to be mindful? How can we practice being mindful?

The teacher introduces the concept of Mindfulness. Mindfulness is noticing our thoughts, what our body feels like, what our ears are hearing, and anything else that is around us and happening right now. Invite the children to sit quietly, practicing being mindful. The teacher plays a bell and asks the children to listen carefully until they can no longer hear it.

Relate this discussion to our Feelings Curriculum in both individual and small group activities.

Preschool: Small Group Mindfulness Exercise

Gather a small group of children to do this exercise.

When we go outside we can see and feel so many wonderful things. Things like trees, and the wind, and the clouds, and the sun. In many ways we are like these beautiful parts of nature, and for this exercise we'll be like the tree and the wind and the sun.

Our body is like a tree. It grows and it is strong. Our breath is like the wind. It flows in and out. And the sun is like the part of us that is warm and kind.



So, let's close our eyes and sit tall like a tree. We extend our hands way out and stretch our fingers, like branches and leaves. Let's squeeze our fingers together and then let go and feel them wiggle, like they are blowing in the wind.

And now, with the wind blowing, let's be like the wind and take two big, slow breaths. Breathing in...and breathing out, blowing out the wind. Breathing in...and breathing out, blowing out the wind.

And now the sun comes out and warms the tree and the wind. As it shines on the tree, we feel our body. Can you feel fingers and feel your toes? What else can you feel—just by noticing?

And as the sun shines on the wind, we feel our body breathing. Can you feel your belly moving up and down? Can you feel the air flowing in and out of your beautiful body?

And with the sun up high in the sky, brightening and warming the whole world, you too can warm the world—with your kindness!

Think of someone who can use a little kindness—like your sister or brother, or a friend, or your teacher. And as you think of them, wish for them, “May you be happy,” imagining them smiling like the sun. You deserve happiness too. So now wish for yourself, “May I be happy,” and smile like the sun.

And as you smile like the sun, feel your body sitting tall like a tree and feel your breath blowing like the wind. And then gently open your eyes and look around. You are amazing!

Additional Activities

- Inner Peace Day Workshops
- Yoga Module: We had a yoga certified teacher come in and do a yoga module with the students

Individual and small group lessons:

- Grace and Courtesy: Role play about Community
- Read stories about Mindfulness
 - I Matter by Laurie Wright
 - I Can Handle It by Laurie Wright
 - I Am Peace: A Book of Mindfulness by Susan Verde and Peter H. Reynolds
- Activity: small group Mindfulness exercise

[Elementary: What does it mean to be Mindful? How can we practice being mindful?](#)

Discussion/lesson: What does it mean to be mindful? How can we practice being mindful?

The teacher leads a discussion about being mindful, asking the children what they think that means. After hearing their suggestions, she can define mindfulness for them. Mindfulness is noticing our thoughts, what our body feels like, what our ears are hearing, and anything else that is around us and happening right now.

Invite the children to practice being mindful by guiding them in an exercise of awareness – they can breathe slowly, gradually being aware of what they hear, feel, taste around them.

[Elementary: Small Group Mindfulness Exercise](#)

The teacher gathers a small group of children



Sometimes when we're upset or angry or feeling strong emotions, it's hard to let go of those feelings. I want to do an experiment with you. I have this jar full of water here. I'm going to add this big spoonful of glitter glue to it. Shake the jar to make the glitter swirl.

Imagine that the glitter is like your thoughts when you're stressed, mad or upset. See how they whirl around and make it really hard to see clearly? That's why it's so easy to make silly decisions when you're upset – because you're not thinking clearly. Don't worry this is normal and it happens in all of us, grownups too.

Now put the jar down in front of them. Now watch what happens when you're still for a couple of moments. Keep watching. See how the glitter starts to settle and the water clears? Your mind works the same way. When you're calm for a little while, your thoughts start to settle and you start to see things much clearer.

Let's all practice calming our mind and bodies when we're feeling upset or angry.

Elementary Activity: Mindfulness Task Cards

The teacher sets up a basket with mindfulness task cards (pdf included in file). The students can choose a task card and follow the direction whenever they would like. When needed, the teacher can also suggest a student engage in the activity.

Elementary Art Class Project:

To tie Art Class together with the theme for the month, the teacher taught several classes on Mandala art. While Mandalas have certain religious connotations, they are widely believed to help develop concentration and encourage mindfulness. We utilized this work as a way to help children relax, focus and be in the present.

Additional Activities

- Inner Peace Day Workshops
- Yoga Module: We had a yoga certified teacher come in and do a yoga module with the students

Additional Follow-up activities:

- Read books and stories about Community
 - A Handful of Quiet: Happiness in Four Pebbles by Thich Nhat Hanh
 - Master of Mindfulness: How to Be Your Own Superhero in Times of Stress by Laurie Grossman
 - Buddha at Bedtime: Tales of Love and Wisdom for You to Read with Your Child to Enchant, Enlighten and Inspire by Dharmachari Nagaraja
 - I Am Peace: A Book of Mindfulness by Susan Verde and Peter H. Reynolds
- Use of the Feelings Curriculum (see attached) to do individual and group lessons
- The children can do independent research and share other mindfulness ideas
- Writing/Sharing Prompts: End of the Day Jar
- Worksheets



All School Inner Peace Day

At the beginning of October, we collaborated with the Inner Peace Day Project (<http://innerpeace.cz/>) to bring a series of small group workshops to our students. The project leaders lead workshops discussing peace in the world, in interpersonal relationships, and within oneself. They guided the children in singing songs, looking at pictures, and learning simple exercises and techniques for inner peace. The children loved receiving messages and pictures from children who had already experienced the workshop in Paris and Berlin and happily shared their messages and pictures for the next participants in Brussels and London.

November: Respect for Nature

Preschool: What does it mean to respect nature? Why should we respect nature?

Discussion/lesson: What does it mean to respect nature? Why should we respect nature?

During circle time, the teacher introduces the idea of respecting. She asks the children what that means and listens to their feedback. She then leads a discussion about why it's important to respect and care for nature. She should make it relatable to young children so they can understand the reasons.

Brainstorm with the children specific ways to respect nature and encourage them to try them.

Zoo Field Trip

The children took a field trip to the Zoo to learn more about animals, how they live, and the different needs they have. The children all traveled together to the Zoo and then split into smaller groups so they could discuss with the teacher and ask questions. Following the trip, the children were invited to draw pictures and explore our language cards with animals, books about animals and nature and our various "parts of" puzzles.

Forest Exploration

Our school hired a naturalist to take the students on several extended Forest Explorations with the children. The naturalist guided them on these forest explorations, helping them discover living creatures and plants during their trips. During the trips, they focused on different topics. One trip, they discussed the sun and all it provides us. Then they made our own sun to place in the middle of our circle; children could then make a personal sun out of paper for themselves. Another trip they looked at the trees with their different leaves and the fact that some didn't have leaves, or that some leaves were falling. They also looked for pairs of birds and animals, looking to see which animals we could discover together. They practiced being quiet and calm so that they could see and hear all around them.

Individual and small group lessons:

- Role-playing: ways to respect the environment
- Read stories about Respecting Nature
 - Usborne Books: Seasons
 - Usborne Books: Baby Animals
 - The Adventures of a Plastic Bottle by Allison Inches
 - Why Should I Recycle by Jen Green
- Activity: Beautiful Places on Earth Nomenclature (matching and labeling)
- Activity: Puzzles - Parts of a Tree, Parts of a Flower, Parts of a Bird
- Activity: Animal Matching cards
- Activity: Art work projects using recycled materials
- Activity: Forest Exploration



- Worksheets

Elementary: What does it mean to respect nature? Why should we respect nature?

Discussion/lesson: What does it mean to respect nature? Why should we respect nature?

The teacher leads a discussion about respecting nature and why it is important. Since this is an older group, we expect lots of student participation and discussion, with the teacher only guiding it a little bit.

Discussion/lesson: Timeline of Life

On another day, the teacher gathers the children and introduces the Timeline of Life, a large timeline that outlines all the animals that have inhabited the earth, both in the past and the present. The children have time to study it, discuss animals that they see and learn more about the different animal's impact on the earth. They are encouraged to take it out to review and work with on their own as well as to use the support materials to learn more.

Individual Research Project

Once, the discussion has reached its natural conclusion, the teacher introduces the independent research project. 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, students from around the school, and parents during an evening event

Independent Research: Lower Elementary on Animals, Upper Elementary on Biomes

Children are guided in conducting research into their topics (animals or biomes) using the guided research sheets (included in this file).

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, masks and props for the presentation.
- Projects are presented first to classmates
- Following this, students present their projects to visiting classrooms and then, finally, parents.
- For the parent presentation, music and food is also shared (students research and prepare the food with the teacher's help)

Field Trip: Karneval zvířat Concert

The children took a field trip to the church of St. Simon and Jude to attend the Carnival of Animals by Camille Saint-Saens. During the interactive performance, the musicians as well as the children themselves took on the roles of the twelve animals depicted in the piece, bringing the church alive with animals from aquarium fish to elephants. This again highlighted to the children the key role animals play in our world and the respect and care that they need.



Field Trip: Recycling Plant

The Elementary students took a field trip to the paper recycling plant in Strasnice to learn more about conservation and why we need to respect and care for nature. Following the field trip, they had the opportunity to write about or draw a picture related to their experience and what they learned.

Additional Follow-up activities:

- Read books and stories about Community
 - Seeds of Change: Wangari's Gift to the World by Jen Cullerton Johnson
 - Rachel Carson and Her Book that Changed the World by Laurie Lawlor
 - One Plastic Bag: Isatou Ceesay and the Recycling Women of the Gambia by Miranda Paul
 - The Good Garden by Katie Smith Milway
 - The Talking Earth by Jean Craighead George
- Continued community discussion
- Worksheets

December: Generosity and Kindness

December is an extremely short month at most schools. We typically have two weeks of school and they are generally packed with preparations and rehearsal for the Winter Concert, which takes place the last day before break. As such, we focused on generosity and kindness, themes that are weaved through the spirit of the season as well as our daily work with the students.

Preschool: What does Generosity and kindness mean? How can we be generous?

Discussion/lesson: What does Generosity mean? How can we be generous and kind?

The teacher introduces the concept of Generosity in a circle time discussing, asking the children what they think about the topic. Ideally, the children will have some ideas based on their experience. The teacher allows them the opportunity to share their thoughts and then guides the conversation to why being generous is important. She offers some examples of sharing and asks the children to share more examples.

In our Feelings curriculum, we talk a lot about generosity and treating others with kindness.

Field Trip to KC Zahrada

The children took a field trip to KC Zahrada to make presents for their parents. Through the trip, we wanted to guide children to the understanding that taking time to make something and share it is a wonderful thing to do and often helps the person giving the gift feel good too.

Individual and small group lessons:

- Grace and Courtesy: Role play about generosity (what to do if someone doesn't want to share, how to make sharing easier, etc.)
- Use of the feelings chart
- Read stories about Generosity and discuss:
 - Should I Share My Ice-Cream? By Mo Willems
 - The Giving Book: Open the Door to A Lifetime of Giving by Ellen Sabin
 - Llama, Llama Time to Share by Anna Dewdney
 - Those Shoes by Maribeth Boelts



- Activity: Collaborative art project – students can work together (in pairs or small groups) to create a collage
- Worksheets
- Participate in the all-school Charity Drive

Elementary: What is Generosity? What about Kindness? What does Kindness and Generosity look like?

Discussion/lesson: Why should we be generous? What does generosity look like?

The teacher leads a discussion about generosity, asking the children what it means. The children should have a lot of insights to offer as this is often a “hot topic” in the classroom. The children are then invited to share examples of generosity they have experienced.

Discussion/lesson: What does generosity look like?

On another day, the teacher revisits the topic of generosity, this time asking the children to describe what it looks like. The children can offer examples and ideas and one student records the suggestions on the white board so students can return to the ideas later. If it doesn't come up in the discussion, the teacher should make it clear that generosity isn't always about giving things, that sometimes it's giving time or effort as well. Invite the children to brainstorm ways to give without it involving material goods.

In our elementary classroom, some suggestions were going to the other classrooms and reading with the younger children, spending time playing with siblings, and doing something that was needed in the classroom or at home. The children then put these ideas into practice – some of them going to classrooms to read with the younger children, some of them offering to be classroom monitors, etc.

At a following circle time, the teacher invited them to share their feedback.

Discussion/lesson: Sharing Circle

During a group discussion, the teacher guides the children in a discussion about being generous with words or feedback. Everyone is invited to share something about another student. The teacher should set it up in a way that everyone gets positive feedback.

Additional Follow-up activities:

- Read books and stories about Generosity
 - Kindness and Generosity: It Starts with Me by Jodie Shepherd
 - Lend a Hand: Poems about Giving by John Frank
 - Elmore by Holly Hobbie
 - Heart of Gold: The Story about the Power of Generosity by Dharma Publishers
- Continued community discussion
- Worksheets
- Feeling curriculum – related to respect but expanded to include nature
- Activity: Making gifts and cards for parents and our teachers
- Activity: Community Service within the school
- Activity: Acknowledgements – individual or small group based on the large group activity.
- Participate in the all-school Charity Drive, encouraging children and parents to bring items to donate



All-School Charity Drive

We also hosted an all-school Charity Drive. The teachers talked about it during circle time, encouraging children to participate and talk to their parents about it. Children and parents could donate food and clothing for those in need.

January: Collaboration

Preschool: What is Collaboration?

Circle Time Discussion:

The teacher introduces the concept of collaboration and solicits feedback from the children about what it looks like. The teacher can then offer a couple of examples followed by some role-play activities to help the children understand the concept.

Review the feelings chart as a way for children to think about how they feel and how to express it.

Individual and small group lessons:

- Grace and Courtesy: Role play about Collaborative behavior
- Use of the feelings chart
- Read stories about collaboration:
 - Stone Soup by Marcia Brown
 - The Giant Jam Sandwich by John Vernon Lord
 - Teamwork Isn't My Thing and I Don't Like to Share by Julia Cook
- Activity: Ball Bounce
 - Using a parachute or large sheet, the children hold and stretch the edges of the parachute/sheet. A ball is placed in the center. All children start gently tugging up and down to cause the ball to bounce. See how long they can keep the ball going without it bouncing off the surface. More balls can be added for additional challenge and fun.
- Activity: Cooperative Musical Chairs
 - This game is very similar to the original version, with the same setup of two lines of chairs back to back. Make sure there is one chair LESS than the number of players. Began playing music while children dance or march around the chairs. When the music stops everyone needs to find a seat. The goal is ensuring everyone has a place! As the game continues remove an additional chair after each round. With a smaller number of chairs available, children will find the need to work together and cooperate to find room for everyone. This may mean sitting on laps and sharing chairs. Please note: no one is eliminated or asked to wait in this version.
- Use of the Feelings Curriculum (see attached) to do individual and group lessons

Additional Activities

- Visit to the Elementary classroom to see the completed Collaborative Art piece

Elementary: What is Collaboration? What does Collaboration look like?

Discussion/Lesson: What is Collaboration? What does Collaboration look like?

The teacher leads a discussion about Collaboration, offering the definition and then prompting students to share their observations. Students are asked to outline what Collaborative behavior looks like to them and someone records it on the white board.



The Virtue project for the month is introduced.

Independent Work: Virtue Project:

Following the guided sheets, students are asked to reflect on the concept of Collaboration. They answer the provided questions, either individually or with help.

Once they have responded to the questions, they create a visual project and oral presentation on Collaboration. Once complete, this visual and oral presentation is presented to their class.

Additional Follow-up activities:

- Creative writing about Collaboration: How _____ Collaborated together to _____
- Activity: Cooperative Musical Chairs
 - This game is very similar to the original version, with the same setup of two lines of chairs back to back. Make sure there is one chair LESS than the number of players. Began playing music while children dance or march around the chairs. When the music stops everyone needs to find a seat. The goal is ensuring everyone has a place! As the game continues remove an additional chair after each round. With a smaller number of chairs available, children will find the need to work together and cooperate to find room for everyone. This may mean sitting on laps and sharing chairs. Please note: no one is eliminated or asked to wait in this version.
- Talk about systems like model collaborative behavior, such as a hospital
- Read books and stories about Collaboration and other virtues
 - Stone Soup by Marcia Brown
 - The Biggest Pumpkin Ever by Stephen Kroll
- Use of the Feelings Curriculum (see attached) to do individual and group lessons
- Participation in the Elementary Art Workshop on Collaboration

Elementary Art Workshop:

Artist Izabela Anna Kulesza, led a workshop on Collaborative Art which included a discussion about collaboration followed by a two-hour art session that focused on creating individual pieces of art that could then be pieced together to form one large art piece.

The children looked at a template of the final product and chose a section that they would create individually. Even though it was individual work, they had to collaborate with the whole group, especially those whose pieces would connect with theirs to ensure they were using complementary colors, patterns, etc. Once the individual pieces were done, the students need to piece them together to create a large art piece. This required them to work together again to piece it together.

Once complete, the pieces were hung in the Elementary classrooms and the entire school was invited to visit the classroom to see the art work and hear about the process.

Cross-Classroom Projects:

As part of the Collaboration Unit, we wanted to highlight that people of all ages could work together. As a result, we devised several cross-classroom projects during which older children went to other classrooms and worked with the younger children, either on reading, with lessons, or similar activities.



February: Love and Friendship

This was a combined project focused on Cultural studies (Valentine's Day) and Values studies (love and friendship). The combined discussions and activities provided the children with a fully integrated experience.

Preschool: What does Love, and Friendship mean?

Circle Time Discussion:

The teacher introduces the concept of love and friendship and solicits feedback from the children about what it looks like. The children should have a lot to share about this topic. The teacher can then offer a couple of examples followed by some role-play activities to help the children understand the concept. Review the feelings chart as a way for children to think about how they feel and how to express it.

Individual and small group lessons:

- Grace and Courtesy: Role play about behavior that highlights love and friendship
- Use of the feelings chart
- Read stories about love and/or friendship
 - Friends by Rob Lewis
 - Our Peaceful Classroom by Aline Wolf
- Use of the Feelings Curriculum (see attached) to do individual and group lessons
- Activity: Make Valentine's Day cards
- Activity: Classroom Valentine's Day Celebration
- Activity: All School Valentine's Day Celebration

Elementary: What does Love and Friendship mean? What does Love and Friendship look like?

Discussion/Lesson: What does Love and Friendship mean? What does Love and Friendship look like?

The teacher leads a discussion about Love and Friendship, offering the definitions and then prompting students to share their observations and examples. Students are asked to outline what Love and Friendship at home and at school looks like to them and someone records it on the white board.

The Virtue project for the month is introduced.

Independent Work: Virtue Project:

Following the guided sheets, students are asked to reflect on the concept of Love and Friendship.

They answer the provided questions, either individually or with help.

Once they have responded to the questions, they create a visual project and oral presentation on Love and Friendship.

Once complete, this visual and oral presentation is presented to their class.

Additional Follow-up activities:

- Creative writing about Love and/or Friendship: My Friend and I had an adventure!
- Talk about examples of Love and Friendship in literature: Anne Shirley and Diana Barry in *Anne of Green Gables*, Frodo and Sam in *Lord of the Rings*, Harry Potter and Ron Weasley in *Harry Potter*, the March sisters in *Little Women*, etc.
- Read books and stories about Love and Friendship
 - The Invisible String by Patrice Karst
 - Same, Same but Different by Jenny Sue Kostecki-Shaw.



- Best Friends for Frances by Russell Hoban
- Use of the Feelings Curriculum (see attached) to do individual and group lessons
- Make Valentine's Cards
- Participation in Classroom Valentine's Celebration
- Participation in All School Valentine's Celebration

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!

March: Literacy

Preschool: What is Literacy and why is it important?

Circle Time Discussion:

The teacher introduces the concept of literacy and the children share why reading and gaining knowledge through reading is important. The teacher needs to guide the discussion and offer a couple of examples.

Individual and small group lessons:

- Activity: Worksheets
- Activity: Coloring Sheets
- Reading Stories

Additional Activities

- Activity: Reading Challenge
- All School Assembly

Elementary: What is Literacy? Why is Literacy Important?

Discussion/Lesson: What is Literacy? Why is it important?

The teacher leads a discussion about Literacy, offering the definition and then prompting students to share their feedback. Students are asked to outline why literacy is important and someone records it on the white board.

The Reading Challenge for the month is introduced.

Independent Work: Reading Challenge:

Students participate in the Reading Challenge individually and are encouraged to motivate their family to participate as well.

Elementary students are expected to complete a full Book Report for their choice of 1 book. The Book Report must include:



- Book details (name, author, illustrator)
- A brief description of the story
- The student's thoughts about the book and recommendation

Author Visit:

Our school invited American author, Alex McConduit to the school for a presentation to our Elementary students. He gave an hour-long presentation about his life in America as a children's book writer, which included an interactive question and answer session with the children. Following his talk, he read his book, Snowballs for All. He ended his visit encouraging children to always pursue reading as a way to learn, entertain and enjoy life.

Additional Follow-up activities:

- Book Report
- Activities: community discussion, coloring sheets, creative writing, read stories
- Activity: Reading Challenge
- All School Assembly
 - Planned and presented by Upper Elementary students
 - Attended by all Preschool and Elementary students and our staff

All School Reading Challenge:

The entire school community participated in a month-long Reading Challenge with the goal of reading 1000 books as a community. The Elementary students visited the classrooms to announce the challenge and encourage the younger children to participate. Throughout the month students submitted reading logs and the Elementary students maintained a large interactive chart tracking the community's progress. They also made frequent visits to the classrooms to reiterate the importance of reading and to encourage the students and staff to participate in the challenge.

All School Assembly:

As a culmination of the Reading Challenge, we held an All-School Assembly to celebrate our achievement. The Upper Elementary presented a power point on the importance of reading and engaged the students in a question and answer session about reading. Following that, as promised, a number of our staff allowed their hair to be dyed pink as a prize for the children having achieved the goal. It was a beautiful moment of camaraderie and the joy of celebrating a success that everyone helped achieve.

Cross-Classroom Projects:

To promote Literacy in all ages, we set up several cross-classroom projects during which older children went to other classrooms and read books with younger children.

April: Caring for our Earth

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

Preschool: [Why should we care for our Earth? How do we care for our Earth](#)

Circle Time Discussion:



The teacher introduces the concept caring for the Earth and asks the children if they have any ideas about this topic. Hopefully the children will have some ideas about recycling and reusing materials. The teacher guides the discussion about why it's important and offers some examples of what we can do to care for the Earth.

In our Feelings curriculum, we talk a lot about respect for oneself and respect for each other. It's just as important that we respect and care for our Earth as well.

Individual and small group lessons:

- Grace and Courtesy: Role play about behavior that is respectful to our Earth (recycling, not littering, etc.)
- Use of the feelings chart
- Read stories about caring for our Earth and environmental awareness
 - Earth Day Every Day by Lisa Bullard
 - Recycling Day by Edward Miller
- Gluing activity: making an Earth out of recycled paper (<http://iheartcraftythings.com/Earth-day-collage.html>)
- Activity: Sorting Recycling

Additional Activities

- Participate in the Earth Day Celebration

Elementary: Why should we care for our Earth? What does caring for our Earth look like?

Discussion/Lesson: Why should we care for our Earth? What does caring for our Earth look like?

The teacher leads a discussion about why we should care for our Earth. The children should have a lot of input to share based on their environmental work in our Science curriculum.

The teacher guides the discussion about what caring for our Earth looks like. Someone can record the suggestions on the white board so students can return to the ideas later.

It's also helpful to discuss the idea of respect for oneself and others that is part of our school life. We can guide the discussion into expanding these ideas into respect for the Earth as well.

Independent Work: Research Project

Students are invited to undertake individual research into either an aspect of caring for the Earth (recycling, reusing, etc.) or the reasons why we need to care for the Earth (i.e. climate change, deforestation, etc.).

Following their research, they will present their topic in Circle time shares

Additional Follow-up activities:

- Read books and stories about the Earth and Environmental awareness
 - Recycling Day by Edward Miller
 - The Earth Book by Todd Parr
 - Miss Fox's Class Goes Green by Eileen Spinelli
 - Recycle Every Day by Nancy Elizabeth Wallace
- Use of the Feelings Curriculum (see attached) to do individual and group lessons
- Activity: Art Project – creating a Sea World



- In Art Class, the Art teacher leads a discussion about what a beautiful sea looks like – free of trash and rubbish. The children are then encouraged to envision their ideal Sea World and then create it using the art medium of their choice.
- Participation in All School Earth Day Celebration

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 consciousness of the need to care for our Earth and the importance of working together to do so.

May: Sharing

Preschool: What is Sharing? How do we Share?

Circle Time Discussion:

The teacher introduces the concept of Sharing and asks the children if they have any ideas about this topic. Hopefully the children will have some ideas based on their experiences. The teacher guides the discussion about why sharing is important and offers some examples of sharing. The children are asked to share their insights.

In our Feelings curriculum, we talk a lot about sharing and treating others with kindness.

Individual and small group lessons:

- Grace and Courtesy: Role play about sharing (what to do if someone doesn't want to share, how to make sharing easier, etc.)
- Use of the feelings chart
- Read stories about Sharing and discuss:
 - The Rainbow Fish by Marcus Pfister
 - The Boy Who Wouldn't Share by Mike Reiss
 - The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein
 - Gossie by Olivier Dunrea
- Activity: Collaborative art project – students can work together (in pairs or small groups) to create a collage
- Activity: Show and Tell – students bring in items personal to them to share with the class



Additional Activities

- Visit the Random Gifts of Art Workshop

Elementary: Why should we Share? What does Sharing look like?

Discussion/Lesson: Why should we Share? What does sharing look like?

The teacher leads a discussion about Sharing. The children should have a lot of insights to offer as this is often a “hot topic” in the classroom.

The teacher guides the discussion what sharing looks like. A student records the suggestions on the white board so students can return to the ideas later.

Independent Work: Virtue Project

Following the guided sheets, students are asked to reflect on the concept of Love and Friendship.

They answer the provided questions, either individually or with help.

Once they have responded to the questions, they create a visual project and oral presentation on Love and Friendship.

Once complete, this visual and oral presentation is presented to their class.

Additional Follow-up activities:

- Read books and stories about Sharing
 - Share and Take Turns by Cheri Miners
 - Help Me Be Good Book about Being Selfish by Joy Barry
 - Fill a Bucket by Carol McCloud
 - The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein
- Use of the Feelings Curriculum (see attached) to do individual and group lessons
- Activity: Show and Tell – students bring in items personal to them to share with the class
- Participation in the Random Gifts of Art Workshop

Random Gifts of Art

We were very happy to host artist Tim Holmes and Speaker/Storyteller Garret Garrels for an interactive workshop with our students. Together Tim and Garret created Random Gifts of Art, a social art movement developed to spread generosity and connect people across our world. The focus of their work is creating art work and then giving it away to strangers, taking note of reactions and insights. It's been very successful, allowing them to travel the world to pursue this work and was featured in a TEDx Talk.

Tim and Garret came to our school and gave a two-hour interactive workshop to the students. Following this, the students had the opportunity to create their own art work. In the afternoon, we took a field trip to the Prague center and practiced giving our art away to strangers. It was a unique experience focused on the concepts of sharing, of being vulnerable and of being in an unexpected situation. When we returned to school after the experience, students had time to share in a circle about their experiences and how they felt. It was an entirely unique and overall beautiful experience.

<http://randomgiftsofart.com>



June: Community

Preschool: [What does Community mean? How can we be a Community?](#)

Circle Time Discussion:

The teacher introduces the concept of Community and solicits feedback from the students. We can discuss that there can be many different communities and that each of us can belong to more than one community. Hopefully the children will have some ideas based on their experiences. The teacher guides the discussion about why community is important and offers some examples of sharing. The children are asked to share their insights.

Relate this discussion to our Feelings Curriculum in both individual and small group activities.

Individual and small group lessons:

- Grace and Courtesy: Role play about Community
- Read stories about Community and discuss:
 - Good People Everywhere by Lynea Gillen
 - Whose Hands Are These by Miranda Paul
 - Here We Go Around the Mulberry Bush by Sophie Fatus
- Activity: Preschool Come Draw with Me – students invite their parents or loved ones to join them in class and do a collaborative art project together. Highlights the idea of family as a community.

Additional Activities

- Activity: Visit the Elementary Art Exhibit to celebrate their achievements as a community
- Participate in All School Sports Day

Elementary: [What does Community mean? What does being a Community look like?](#)

Discussion/Lesson: What does Community mean? What does being a Community look like?

The teacher leads a discussion about Community. Since this is a topic that is often discussed in the classroom, the students should have a lot to share. It's also important to discuss what makes up a community and that there can be many different communities. Children should see that they can belong to many different communities.

The teacher guides the discussion what being a Community looks like. A student records the suggestions on the white board so students can return to the ideas later.

Workshop with psychologist Colleen Knutson:

We invited psychologist Colleen Knutson to join our Elementary students for an interactive workshop about being a community and learning to work together. Her two-hour workshop focused on how to work together, communication and the importance of partnership. She highlighted the themes with a puppet show, group discussion, small group games and sharing activities. The children participated with gusto and often referred back to the workshop when coming up with ideas or resolving conflicts afterwards.

Independent Work: Research Project



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Students are invited to undertake individual research into a type of community that interests them. They can write a short report about why it's a community and how it works. Following their research, they will present their topic in Circle time shares

Additional Follow-up activities:

- Read books and stories about Community
 - Whole World by Christopher Korr
 - Counting on Community by Inno Sanot Nagara
- Use of the Feelings Curriculum (see attached) to do individual and group lessons
- Activity: Visit the Elementary Art Exhibit to celebrate their achievements as a community
- Participate in All School Sports Day

All School Sports Day

We hosted an All School Sports Day to celebrate our community together. The entire community of students, parents, staff and former families were invited to join us for a festive day. Throughout the day we had family friendly activities and games that everyone could participate in.

We also had a wonderful International Food Fair, served potluck style so that everyone could share and learn about foods from all over the world. We event culminated in an all-school Tug of War – parents against students and teachers, highlighting the importance of working together.

This fun event really emphasized the importance and beauty of a community coming together.