



Goosehill Primary School

Weekly Notes-April 15, 2016



Dear Parents,

As part of our school district's partnership with the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, the first graders enjoyed their visit to the lab this week where they participated in six exciting science activities. They examined their fingerprints and explored the properties of solids, liquids, and gases. They learned about the brain and even examined a sheep's brain! The children loved learning about magnets and about how DNA is a code for the proteins that make up the human body. They loved the experience and learned so much. We are so grateful that our students have the opportunity to see "real" scientists at work in our own community.

In school, our students are fascinated by science. Teachers share poems and informational texts about living creatures, physical science, and the environment. All of our students engage in exciting science investigations on a regular basis. It is wonderful to witness their delight as they explore such topics as the water cycle, force and motion, magnets, and sound. They especially love learning about the turtles and earthworms they are raising through our work with the Cold Spring Harbor Fish Hatchery.

The goal of science in a primary school is to build students' understandings about how the world works and how science is practiced. Hands-on experiences help our students form theories to explain "how" and "why" things happen. In school, they use tools like magnifying glasses, eye droppers, measuring cups, rulers, and scales to gather information. They make predictions, record their ideas on charts, and "try things out." Our teachers help our students use language to ask questions, describe what they see, and draw conclusions.

Here are some ideas for ways parents can nurture scientific thinking at home: (from the National Science Teachers Assoc.)

Observing: Invite your child to notice details in his/her environment.

- What happens when we heat a pot of water?
- What do you notice when you breathe on a window pane?

Classifying: Put things in groups based on their characteristics.

- Try sorting your socks by color.
- Divide your toys into groups according to how they work. (push, pull, bounce)

Predicting: Predict and then test what happens.

- How long will an ice cube last sitting on the counter?
- Which will fall faster to the ground, a marker or a crumpled piece of paper?

Quantifying: Encourage children to quantify the world around them.

- What is the temperature outside? Is it warmer or colder than the freezing point of water?
- How many cups will it take to fill this container?

The most important thing you can do as a parent is encourage a sense of wonder in your child. Talk and read about interesting topics. Pose questions like the ones above and look for answers together. Visit the library and take your own field trips to explore the natural world. Just remember...*science is all around us!*

Enjoy the weekend!

Mrs. Herschlein

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