

Junior Kindergarten Week of September 6th

Academics for the Week

1. Learning the Letter M and distinguishing words that begin with the letter M. Most of them did very well with identifying the letter S and hearing the S as a beginning sound. I was pleased.
2. Fine motor activities: cutting skills, coloring, and tracing. These lead to their ability to use a pencil and write, among other things.
3. Almost all of the students know their colors. They do not know their color words and I will not tackle that until Spring.
4. Learning to write their name. We will only be working on tracing their name and making their name with letter tiles. They do not yet have the fine motor skills to write with a pencil.
5. Learning numbers. We are still working on identifying numbers, counting to 20, counting on and making groups of (1, 2, 3, 4). I would say that probably most of the students can name their numbers through 5, some to 10, but some are still struggling to make groups of beyond 5. We will work on this continuously. Those students who have a good grasp will be provided more challenging or accelerated work. I sent home pictures of jars asking them to

- show 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 groups of bugs. We used bee manipulatives to make "groups of". Feel free to practice with your children at home. You can use anything around the house, like pennies. Number sense is the most critical mathematics concept. Everything builds on it. From my experience those students who struggle the most are the ones who do not have a firm grasp of number sense. Personally, that was hard for me. Without it they cannot understand or complete problems where you add and subtract, multiply and divide, and complete more complex operations in algebra. We will continue working on this skill.
6. We will be talking about how God loves us, how great God is, prayers, and etiquette for Mass. We did take a short trip to Chapel this past week to practice etiquette, (how you quietly walk in, how you show respect for the people who are praying and how to sit quietly and listen). We began weekly Mass this week. It will be on Fridays. Due to Covid restrictions the grade levels will rotate who attends Mass in the Chapel. The Mass will be shown virtually for the rest of the grade levels. I will let you know when JK will be going.

Books for the Week

1. "It Looks Like Spilt Milk", (about seeing how the clouds can look like objects and animals. We will do our own cloud gazing and an art project to go with it).
2. "Little Cloud" by Eric Carle
3. Sticking with our Laura Numeroff theme, "If you Give a Dog a Donut".

Daily Folders

The papers that I send home are for you to keep. If you have any notes about early dismissal or other notes please, put them in the folder or email me. I look at both my email and the folders everyday. We have decided to pack the folders in the student's backpack instead of them doing it themselves. As you may have noticed some of them forget to pack them.

Nap Time

I do not expect the students to nap at nap time. I do require them to lay quietly. It is a time when the students can learn to quiet their bodies and to sooth.

Praise

As I said last week, I am amazed at how far they have come in such a short time. Both their listening skills and following directions have improved as well as their stamina. At the end of the week the students were able to sustain their attention during language arts and math for up to 40 minutes. The students participate in a variety of activities and use lots of music/videos to help keep their interest. They need to pat themselves on the back. I do have high expectations for behavior. I do realize that they are only 4 but feel the need to hold them to a high standard.

I feel so lucky to be at Charlottesville Catholic School and to be working with this age group. I also appreciate the warm welcoming and support you have given me. This is a new chapter for me. I will stumble sometimes but know that I am here because I love what I do and love your children.

Yours in Christ,
Christine Shank
Junior Kindergarten Teacher