

Firefly Scientists' Garden

Environmental Education at The Lemberg Children's Center



OCTOBER IN THE GARDEN

Fall is here, and there is a gentle slowing down vibrating through the garden. The cicadas chattering pace has decreased, the warm weather crops, like tomatoes and eggplants, are producing less, and the trees' leaves are starting to change color and fall. It's exciting to hear the hum of autumn and to share moments in the crisp air together.



LEARNING THIS MONTH:

Life Under A Log

This month, we explored the world that we can often ignore, the life underfoot and in the dirt! We read *A Log's Life* by Wendy Pfeffer and discussed the cycle of a tree into a log into soil. We realized the essential qualities of a tree in all stages of its life and how it supports many other creatures.



"Look!"

Then, we went outside and investigated the Fairy Garden, realizing that this cycle is at work here at Lemberg! Working as a team, we rolled over logs to peek underneath logs for crawling slugs and millipedes and worms, oh my! We used our senses to gently touch them and describe what we noticed about every critter.

It was interesting to see how we had many slugs and earwigs in the space, and we hypothesized where they like to live the most. Friends asked questions about what insects like to eat, why they like to live under a log, and more.

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"What's underneath?"

Colorful, Changing Leaves

October brings falling leaves and vibrant colors. We see many changes in the garden, and we wonder why they are happening. We read *Why Do Leaves Change Colors* by Betsy Maestro, discussing the variety of leaves that change color, how trees prepare for winter by losing their leaves, and how chlorophyll creates the leaves' green color.



Daniel is a great storyteller!

We learned that Massachusetts and New England have particularly beautiful leaves in the fall because of our climate. Then, we collected leaves to create colorful leaf rubbings. When we rubbed crayons over the paper-covered leaves, we better noticed all the details, like the veins and edges.



So many colors to choose from!

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It was so fun to make art outside!

Harvesting Potatoes

At long last, it was time to harvest the potatoes we planted last spring! The plants had gone their course, starting from small potato cuts that were covered in mulch and soil, into green leafy plants, and finally drooping brown leaves with strong roots and tubers.



"Come out, potatoes!"

As classes, we discussed the life cycle of a potato plant and the many parts - the roots, the tubers (potatoes), the stalk, the leaves, the flowers, and the fruit (which we don't eat). We asked questions about why potatoes were different than some of the other vegetables we eat. Then, we shared our favorite foods that have potatoes, like french fries, roasted potatoes, and mashed potatoes. Working as a team, we removed the cage protecting the plants.



"Potatoes!"

Everyone got a turn to dig in the soil and harvest potatoes, noticing the different shapes and sizes along the way. Afterward, classrooms had the opportunity to cook with their harvest, making yummy dishes of roasted and mashed potatoes. Delicious!



"Can I have some more?"

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What's Compost?

What's in our compost? What do the various critters and creatures help break down into delicious soil that fuels our garden? In our classes, we read *Compost Stew* by Mary McKenna Siddals, discussing all the various "ingredients" that go into making a yummy batch of compost. From tea bags, to leave clippings, to banana peels, and more, we can put many organic things into the compost - if it grows, it goes!



"Compost!"

We remembered how many critters work together with the air to decompose the pile into rich, nutritious compost for our garden. Then, we played a sorting game of "Compost or Not Compost" where every friend had to place an object into the compost bucket or the not compost bucket.



"NOT COMPOST!"

We figured out that toys, rocks, plastic, and metal do not go into the compost. And, coffee filters, fallen leaves, and flowers can go into the compost.

Family Garden Day

Thank you so much to all the lovely, helping hands who came to our fall family garden day on October 28th!



Big and small, we all lent a hand!

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It was so wonderful to spend a morning outside together, and all of the support really benefitted the garden. Together, we painted our final raised bed and planted some beautiful perennials in the fairy garden!



Our newly painted bed!



We sprinkled fluffy wood aster seeds!

Our next family garden day will be on **November 18th**. We will be finishing our winter garden preparations and helping ready the garden for its rest.

Please reach out to Sarah if you have any questions at secksteinindik@brandeis.edu.

JOIN US FOR OUR... FAMILY GARDEN DAY

HELP US PREPARE THE GARDEN FOR WINTER!



NOVEMBER
19TH, 2023

LEMBERG
CHILDREN'S
CENTER

9:30AM TO
11:30AM

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, REACH OUT TO SARAH
AT SECKSTEININDIK@BRANDEIS.EDU

Thank you to our many wonderful alumni
donors and friends!



