

Firefly Scientists' Garden



Environmental Education at The Lemberg Children's Center

FEBRUARY IN THE GARDEN

February marks the beginning of longer days. It's light outside for longer, and finally, the sun is setting after 5pm. The garden may seem asleep but the interns are busying themselves with seed sorting and purchasing, garden planning, and organization for the start of the spring season.

LEARNING THIS MONTH

Exploring Fungi

The Navigators, Voyagers, and Pathfinders had the opportunity to get up close and personal with some fun guys... Well, we mean fungi! We read *We are Fungi* and discussed the vast variety of fungi. We talked about the mushrooms we like eating, the mushrooms that could hurt our tummies, and the mushrooms that we use as medicine. We learned that some mushrooms help trees and some hurt trees. That some mushrooms grow on fallen leaves or dead wood or old food.

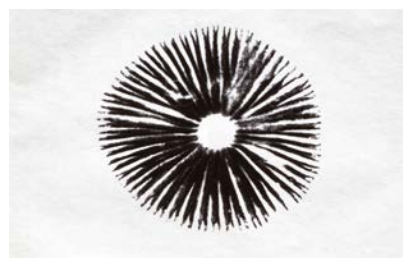


Covering up the mushrooms to see the print

After finishing the story, we examined mushrooms, asking questions like how do they feel, how do they smell, what are the names of the different parts. We learned that fungi grow or reproduce from spores, so we created a spore print. We placed the mushroom caps, gill face down, on a piece of white paper and then covered them for a day. The next day, we looked underneath and found a print from the spores!



"The mushrooms smell a little like dirt!"



Our spore prints came out like this!

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After starting our prints, we searched around the garden to find the mushrooms and fungi that live alongside our plants!



"Do you see the mushroom?"

Phases of the Moon

Bright in the night, we look up to the sky with wonder – look at the moon, shining so bright, and changing shape every night! Well, the moon doesn't actually change shape, as we learned in this lesson; the Navigators, Voyagers, and Pathfinders investigated the various phases of the moon, learning that the moon orbits the earth and, depending on its location in relation to the sun, appears to be a different shape. We read *Marcella and the Moon*, asking questions and making connections.



The garden team then acted out the moon (Daniel), the earth (Sylvia), and the sun (Sarah) in orbit to further explain the relationship between all three.



We love to watch the garden team act!

To help better understand the complex relationship between these astral bodies, we used a round ball and a flashlight to simulate the shifting phases.

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With our backs to the sun, we see the light reflecting

Now, when we peer into the sky before bed we know that the moon is orbiting overhead!

The Story of Snow

February has brought us some snow, and we are so excited to see the snow flakes fall and blanket the garden. Our Pathfinder, Explorer, and Navigator friends read *The Story of Snow*, learning about the journey of a teeny tiny ice speck in a cold cloud into a snow crystal and then a snowflake! We discovered that snow crystals come in different shapes and sizes: stars with 6 arms, thin hexagonal plates, or columns.



A snowflake starts as a tiny speck

After the story, we ran outside, snowflakes falling on our heads, and used pieces of black construction paper to catch the falling flakes. When we looked closely, we could see that there were a lot of columns. Once the crystals fell on the paper, they melted away pretty quickly. We observed how our hot hands made the snow melt. Now, we know that the snowflakes are many shapes and sizes, just like us!



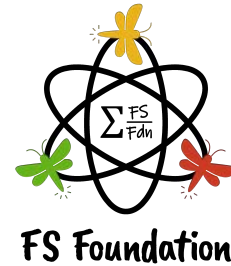
We looked closely to see what shapes we could find

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FAMILY GARDEN DAYS



We are beginning to plan for this spring's garden days and will send a schedule out soon! In the meantime, we are excited to partner with BJEP (Boston Area Jewish Education Program) on Brandeis's campus this [Sunday, March 5th for their Purim Festival!](#) We are excited to celebrate this as a Purim Pollinator festival where we explore the worm bin, make seed balls, and learn all about how to support our pollinator friends during Purim and all through the year! Please reach out to Sylvia if you have any questions at skohnlevitt@lebergcc.org



The Feinberg Family

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