

Chinese New Year Planning

We want to do a Dragon Dance

Using picture books and our classroom calendar we began to make plans for our Chinese New Year Celebration. We decided we needed a dragon puppet, music, and dancers.



Using Our Understanding of Materials to Make Decisions

The children identified the parts of the dragon they wanted to make. After exploring different possibilities they choose fabric for the body because it was stronger than paper and more flexible than cardboard so the dragon's body could move easily. Trying to figure out how big to make the dragon led to the idea of using our prior knowledge of sewing to construct a body long enough for many children to fit under.



Clara "It (body) needs to be colorful"

Painting the body and head. And...

Watching a video of a real Dragon Dance! WOW!

Using Our Knowledge and Skills to Create Our Dragon

Today we...

...Counted, compared, traced, cut, sewed, collaged, compromised, solved problems, and collaborated!



The work continues...

We learned that in the Dragon Dance the dragon "dances" after a symbolic sun (sphere) carried by a parade leader. Some people believe that if the dragon chases the sun we will have many days together. As we continued to read informational books about the Dragon Dance the children talked and made plans for their interpretation of a Dragon Dance. A small group of children worked together to identify the different roles people have in a Dragon Dance. While we were compiling our list one child asked if we were going to take turns.



We decided to present this question at the next whole class meeting. At our class meeting the children were given the opportunity to state their ideas and feelings about sharing roles. Next, we generated a list of possible solutions to make turn taking fair and equitable. This process seamlessly integrated learning opportunities in math, language, language, literacy, social, and emotional domains.



Designing the teeth!



Comparing and experimenting with tools.



Choosing the teeth for our dragon...

Voting, counting and comparing quantities.

Lucky Money Envelopes

Another Part of Our Celebration Plans

Using Mathematical Processes and Role Playing to Solve Issues of Inequity



The oldest children in the group were invited to fill our Lucky Money envelopes with play money. The children looked at the pile of Money and began to talk about how many should be placed in the envelopes. Initially, many of the children picked quantities they wanted regardless of how many we had. They gave no thought to how they should be distributed based on issues of fairness and equity .



Some children believed they had a right to get more money because they were older. Five year old Julia speaking for the youngest in the group thought it would make them (the "little kids") feel sad and they would cry. It was frustrating for some of the children as they grappled with their desire to have more money in their envelope. After engaging in a teacher facilitated role playing experience the group generated possible solutions and decided to implement Julia and Clara's idea ["We should make more (money)."]. To be fair they decided everyone should get the same amount of money in their envelope.

Our Chinese New Year Celebration



Packing up the Lucky Money Envelopes and working on our streamer wands.



Child Initiated Parade Leader Practice!

During morning meeting we listed the different things children could do during the Dragon Dance parade. Each child made choices and some opted to try many of the different roles.



Our parade was colorful, musical and fun! Thank you to all the family members who were able to celebrate with us!

Our Chinese New Year Celebration Revisiting a Yearlong Curriculum Thread...

We Are All Alike, We Are All Different

All of us celebrate! What we celebrate may be different ...

...but **all** celebrations include special, food, music, dance, clothes, decorations...

...With Family and Friends!



Thank you to Tiffany and Ernie's families for helping to make our celebration complete by providing the food for our gathering.