

Sunflowers
January 2012



Dear Parents,

Happy New Year! Time is flying by in the Sunflower room and we can't believe how far we've come since 2011! We are very excited for all the new things we have to learn in 2012 and are going to be just as busy. Before we start on all the great upcoming things we are going to be doing in the Sunflower room, let's recap December. Our first themes of December were **Global Sharing** and **Universal Bazaar**. During these two weeks we examined several different cultures around the world. Our letter of the week was "W" for World along with the vocabulary words global, celebration and tradition. Here at A Child's World during these themes the students created their very own passport and traveled around the globe to different cities and explored their traditions, music, food and unique holidays that they celebrate. The Sunflowers class looked into the country of Trinidad and the holiday "Carnival." We also explored their culture and people that live there. Along with this, we also explored the climate, cuisine and location of this country. It was a fantastic learning experience. We transformed our room to reflect this country and shared all that we have learned with the other classes. We also set off to the various other countries of New Zealand, Thailand, Philippines, Switzerland and Peru. We had our passports stamped and had a blast learning about all these different cultures.

The next theme was **Traveling through Time**. We used the letter "Y" for year and looked back into time and explored what it is to be remembered in history and reviewed the exciting points in our lives. We learned about the general concept of time by counting seconds, minutes, and hours. We used this knowledge to determine how many units it takes to make up days, weeks and years. As we explored the concept of time and years, the Sunflowers got their dancing feet moving. We used music to see how things can change from year to year. We all know the Sunflowers love music and we expanded on that through this theme. To further explore the concept of time, we took an in depth look at history and how it is recorded. The Sunflowers also took a look at the people who have written history and why they thought it was important. As a final presentation this week, we had a holiday class dance party and showed off all the fancy moves we had learned.

We closed the year off with **2011 Welcomes You!** During this week the Sunflowers reviewed the school year thus far and talked about the exciting things yet to come. We discussed our favorite themes and which ones we would like to do again. We also discussed what things we can do differently to make the next year even better. In this mindset, we also worked on making New Year's resolutions on how we can improve the world around us. For fun, we made noise makers and hats to ring in the New Year and practiced counting backwards from 10 then yelling "HAPPY NEW YEAR!"

We'll kick off January with ***Winter Wonders!*** This theme will be introduced by looking at pictures of some winter related activities such as building a snowman, going skiing, making snow angels as well as arctic animals like penguins, seals and polar bears. We will read books related to snowmen, arctic animals and hibernation. Our letter of the week will be "H" and our vocabulary words will be "hibernation", "thermometer" and "temperature." We will review and discuss information we learned earlier in the year about the four seasons and what makes winter different. We will bundle up in our winter jackets, gloves, hats and scarfs to go outside and make observations of what we see in the winter time and how frigid it feels. We will talk about how some animals hibernate and birds migrate to the south because it's too cold where we live. During this week we will be very busy making snowmen, snowflakes and different arctic animals during art to hang on our Winter Wonders board. Finally, to end our week, we will read "The Biggest Snowball Fight" and then make our own snowballs and have a friendly snowball fight in our classroom!

Our next theme will be ***Respect Diversity!*** We will introduce this theme by looking at pictures of people of all different nationalities from around the world. Our letter of the week will be "D" and our vocabulary words will be "diversity", "respect" and "dream." We will be reviewing and discussing information we learned earlier in the year about each one of us being unique and compare differences and similarities that we have with each other. During this week, we will be incorporating team building activities within the classroom as well as the different learning centers to help develop cooperation and respect for each other. During this week, we will discuss what Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. day is as well as what a dream is, when and why we dream. We will talk about what Dr. King's dream was and what our dreams for the future are.

Our third theme for the month of January will be ***Geographical Concepts.*** Our letter of the week will be "G" and our vocabulary words will be "represent", "map", and "geography." We will introduce this week by looking at a variety of maps and passing around the globe at circle. We will review the concept of a map and expand our knowledge by learning different details such as how different things are represented like oceans, mountains, roads, cities, states, etc. Through brainstorming and discussion, we will decide what kind of map we would like to make as a class and what we would like to represent on it. To end this week, we will all work together to make a special volcano and watch it erupt.

We will be ending this month with our two week theme, ***Dinosaur Dynasty.*** During this week we will be introducing the theme by looking at pictures of different kinds of dinosaurs. Our letter of the week will be "F" and our vocabulary words will be "prehistoric", "carnivorous", "vegetarian", and "fossil." We will read informative books like "Bizarre Dinosaurs" and silly books like "Dinosaurs Love Underwear." We will discuss what a dinosaur is as well as other prehistoric animals. We will talk about what dinosaurs ate, their size, did they fly or walk on two feet or four, where they lived and what kind of habitats they had. We will role play according to the dinosaur and the information we learned about them, have fossil hunts, make our own fossils and dig in our tactile sand table. As a class, we will create our own dinosaurs to present on our board. Together we will name the dinosaurs and decide what they will look like then create them using different art supplies.

Sincerely,
Miss Erin, Miss Gina & Miss Avery