



# Early Childhood Newsletter

## Monthly Highlight from Creative Curriculum

### Blocks

#### What We Do and Why

Blocks, the hard wood units that come in proportional sizes and shapes, are one of the most valuable learning materials in our classroom. When they build with blocks, children learn about sizes and shapes, spatial relationships, math concepts, and problem solving. When children lift, shove, stack, and move blocks, they learn about weight and size. Each time they use blocks, they are making decisions about how to build a structure or solve a construction problem. When children build with blocks in the classroom, we encourage them to talk about what they are doing. For example, we might say:

- "Tell me about your building."
- "How did you decide to put those blocks together?"

We also ask questions that help children extend their thinking about their block play. For example, we might say:

- "You built a tall apartment house. How do the people get

to their floor?"

- "How many blocks do you think it will take to fill up that space?"
- "Where do people park their cars when they come to visit the shopping center?"

These questions and comments are designed to help the children become aware of what they are doing and think of ways to extend their work.

#### What You Can Do at Home

Hardwood unit blocks are expensive, but there are several other types of blocks you might want to have at home to support your child's learning. For example, you might wish to purchase table blocks, colored wooden cube blocks, or cardboard brick blocks.

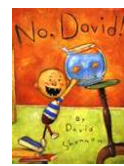
Small blocks can be stored in shoe boxes or plastic tubs and containers. You can put a picture label on the container so your child knows where the materials belong. Identify a place where you child can build and play with the blocks, either on the floor or a table. As your child builds with that blocks, you can talk

about the structure and ask questions. Props such as clothespins, small plastic animals, and cars and trucks will extend your child's play and inspire new ideas. Playing with large or small blocks, you child can learn to:

- judge distances, space, and size,
- create scenes for dramatic play,
- stack blocks carefully (using eye-hand coordination and small muscle control),
- compare and sort by size and shape, and
- use words to describe a construction.

Perhaps the most important contribution you can make to your child's learning through blocks is to take an interest in what you child does, both at home and at school. We welcome you to visit the classroom at any time so you can see for yourself how much you child is learning.

## October 2010



David Shannon

Steven Kellogg



### Bringing in the Harvest on the Farm

October 4-15

Concepts:

Color: Yellow,

Shape: Star

Number: 5

Letters: F and N

### Pumpkins are for Fall



Oct. 18-29

Concepts:

Shape: Circle

Color: Orange

Number 6

Letters: P and M

## Upcoming Events

**Reading Festival—Saturday, October 16; 9:00 am -12:00 pm**

*Located at The Ramkota Exhibit Hall 3200 W. Maple St.*

**Sioux Valley Optimist Fall Festival and Craft Fair—**

**Time** Saturday, October 23 · 10:00am - 3:00pm

**Location** Bollinger Center 1309 W 51st Street

**More Info** Vendors selling their wares and FREE activities for children. Silent Auction.



## Character Counts



### What is "Respect"?

- Respect is treating others as you would like to be treated.
- Respect is being considerate of other people's feelings.
- Respect means recognizing the value of people, property, the environment, and yourself.

Here is an activity you can do at home to help teach "Respect".

Read Aesop's Fable, **The Sun and the Wind**, to your children.

### *The Sun and the Wind.*

Long ago, the Wind and Sun were having an argument about who was stronger. They decided to have a contest. "Do you see that man walking along the road, wearing a cloak?" asked the Sun. "Yes," answered the wind. "Let's see who can make him take off his cloak," said the Sun. So the Wind and Sun agreed. First, the Wind tried. It began to blow. It blew harder and harder. But the more it blew, the tighter the man wrapped himself in his cloak. Finally, the Wind said to the Sun, "I give up. You try." The Sun began to smile warmly at the man. The man began to feel the warmth of the sun. The sun got brighter and brighter. The man felt warmer and warmer. Soon the man was sweating as he walked along the road. Feeling hot and tired, he sat down on a big rock and threw off his cloak.

*Lesson: Gentleness can do what force cannot.*

Ask your children what the wind used to try to win the contest and what the sun used to try to win the contest. Give your children a playground situation to role play such as: A player on the other team always uses his hands when playing soccer, giving his team an unfair advantage. Role play the situation trying to solve the problem as the wind would (with force) and as the sun would (with kindness).



## October Bookmobile Schedule

**River Crossing:** 9:00—10:00

October 12th

**14th Street:** 10:30—11:00

October 5th and 26th

**Eastside Learning Center:** 10:15—10:45

October 8th and 29th

Remember to send your child's library card. If your child does not have a library card, ask your child's teacher for information. You can fill all the necessary information out at your center to get a library card for your child. What a great opportunity for your child to get new books to bring home to share and read.