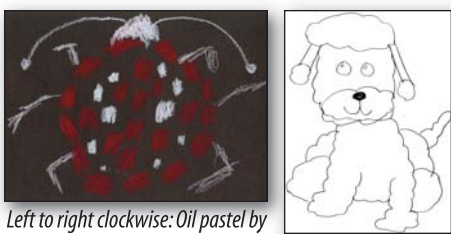




**2009 Summer Sessions
Spark Your Imagination
July 13–17**



**First-Plymouth Early Education Programs
Dimensions Research Classrooms
2045 E Street, Lincoln, NE 68510
(402) 476-8304 • Fax: (402) 476-8060**



Left to right clockwise: Oil pastel by Jarod S.; pencil drawing by Madisyn S.; Connor S.; hand-crafted dolls by Henry R. Bottom: T-shirts by Sam W. and Claire E.



Spark Your Imagination

Children ignited their imaginations and embarked on a journey into the wonderful world of creativity. The possibilities were endless...they made-up stories, acted them out, choreographed dances, created art masterpieces and so much more. Their creativity flowed freely this week!



Side Notes:

July 18...
Nature Explore Families' Club, 10:30 to Noon, Maxwell Arboretum, UNL East Campus. There are metered parking spaces available on the East Campus Loop next to the Arboretum. Please join us for some playtime exploring the magnificent trees and the prairie maze nearby.

July 20–24... Closed

- Please wear socks and closed toe shoes that fit properly. No flip flops or Crocs—these are dangerous when children are running and using the climbing equipment.
- Please apply sunscreen to your child/ren before coming to summer sessions.

Summer Sessions Bookshelf

- Clouds*, Anne Rockwell
- Dream: A Tale of Wonder, Wisdom & Wishes*, Susan V. Bosak, Leo Dillon, Diane Dillon, & Robert R. Ingpen
- Goldilocks & The Three Bears*, Jan Brett
- It Looked Like Spilt Milk*, Charles G. Shaw
- Little Cloud*, Eric Carle
- Mother Goose Rhymes*, from Alex Toys
- Puff the Magic Dragon (book & CD)*, Peter Yarrow & Lenny Lipton
- The Three Little Wolves & the Big Bad Pig*, Eugene Trivizas & Helen Oxenbury
- Weslandia*, Paul Fleischman

Preschoolers define, then use their imaginations!

text, photo by Kristine Luebbe

What is imagination?

- Alex H.: "If something is a cloud, it's different things that aren't real."
- Cadynce R.: "Like when you're something, but not for real."
- Eli K.: "Pretend and making something different."
- Haven P.: "You can think of something and then it is."
- Ivy E.-H.: "It's thinking."
- Lily R.: "Anything you want it to be."
- Marcus W.: "It means pretend to be something."

How do you use your imagination?

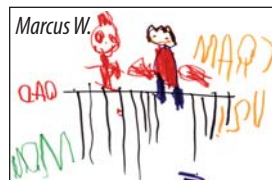
- Marcus W.: "You think about stuff."
- Ivy E.-H.: (pointing to her head) "You think about things that aren't real."

In the preschool groups of Mrs. Heinzman and Mrs. Luebbe, imaginations ran wild all week. Children spent time watching the clouds and sharing their ideas of what they saw.



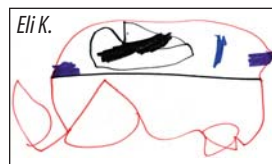
Regan L.

They read the book *It Looked Like Spilt Milk* for inspiration to create their own cloud pictures.



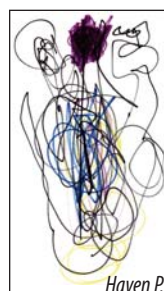
Marcus W.

Some of the children exercised their imaginations by creating pictures that began as only a line. Marcus W. turned his line into a picture of his family. Eli K. added more lines



Eli K.

to make a submarine. Haven P. created a tornado out of her line.



Haven P.

During Music and Movement, children used scarves as props to their imagination. They took turns manipulating the scarves into various objects and situations. Rubie D. made her scarf a dress. Ethan K. used his scarf to make a cape. Tate R. covered himself with his scarf and then crept around like a ladybug. Lily R. put her scarf behind her neck so it would like wings.

After reading *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, some of the preschoolers acted out the story. Keira S. ate Baby Bear's porridge 'til it was all gone, broke his chair and fell asleep in his bed, but she was sure to run away after the bears woke her up!

On the Nature Explore Classroom, children

pretended to be cooks.

They worked together to make ice cream by mixing together dirt, sand, water and woodchips. While mixing the concoction, Cadynce R. and Haven P. noticed it didn't smell very good so they went around the garden and picked some of the dill weed to add to the ice cream. They agreed that this made their ice cream smell and taste better!



Making ice cream on the Nature Explore Classroom. Lazlo W., Ethan K. and Marcus W.

Toddlers' imaginations at work

text, photos by Nicole Carl

What shapes can you see if you were to look up at a sky full of clouds? A ship? A car? Maybe a flower? Everyday we use our imaginations. As adults, we look for something that we can recognize. As toddlers, even the strangest shaped cloud can be a train.



Toddler friends look for shapes in the clouds.



Drew L. and Cole S. create their cloud pictures.

This week the toddlers used their imaginations while looking at the sky. They saw cookie clouds, train clouds and even motorcycle clouds.

They also created their own cloud pictures with cotton balls. We read stories like *Little Cloud*; *Clouds*; and *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*. We turned our focus to Goldilocks and identified the good and bad choices made in the story. Mia knew that Goldilocks was not making good choices by eating another person's food, going into the bears' house and sleeping in their beds. Toddler expanded their part to whole relationship skills in mathematics by piecing the Three Bears' body parts together on our wall. We also pieced together the parts to Goldilocks and then placed the key elements of the story on the wall to finish the week.



Grayson S. makes clouds with his hands and feet.



Miley G. and Levi P. put together Mommy Bear.

Visual and spatial art displayed through the use of imagination

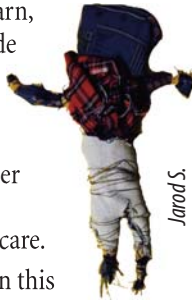
by Hannah Wike

The 2-5 group has been very inventive this week. They have imagined and discovered using a variety of materials and ideas!

The children used oil pastels, fabric, and even their acting skills to stage a play from a childhood story, *The Three Little Wolves and the Big Bad Pig*. Each child used their emotions and facial expressions to act out the feelings of the wolves and the pig. The play had quite some humor due to each child's skills.

Each child made their own doll this week out of many different types of materials, but mainly fabric. They constructed the dolls very carefully using cotton, wire, staples, yarn, and glue. Some children made two or three dolls and houses for them; some used them as action figures; and others used them to play other games. Each doll was very impressive and crafted with care.

Art activities are a favorite in this



Jarod S.



Oil pastels by Brooks B.

group. This week we used oil pastels in an impressionistic style. Before we began drawing, we read a story called *Dream: A Tale of Wonder, Wisdom & Wishes*. Then we discussed dreams the children have had and what their dreams are for the future. Next we used the oil pastel to express our dreams in a visual way. Henry R.'s dream was to become an environmentalist and he drew a very elaborate eco-friendly scene and explained it. He told me it had windmills to support the house with wind power and he grew his own plants and harvested them. He also invented a car that ran on solar panels and when it was not sunny, it used electricity.



Oil pastel by Henry R.

Young builders negotiate, design obstacle course

text by Katie Logan

Eli K. explained the obstacle course: "Want to see how it works? I'll show you! See, you start here and come through this part, then go down here. When you're down here you have to knock this over, then you can knock down the rest."

"Want me to make it tricky-er? I'll make it tricky-er," said Eli. "That's too tricky!" exclaims Marcus W.

After a short negotiation between the two, a second obstacle is added to the course. Agreement ensues and Eli announces, "That's what I'm talkin' about!" Alex H., Tate R., Rylan R. and Ethan K. proclaimed their community glee with a "Yeah! Yeah! Yeah!"



Infant creativity? It's all in a day's play!

text, photos by Denise Topil

The infant room was filled with activities for creative play this week.

Creative Representation is actually one of several guidelines from the High Scope philosophy that we use to observe and document young children's learning. This stage of learning during the infant and toddler age includes imitating and pretending, exploring building and art materials, and responding to and identifying pictures (in books) and photographs.

This week we played with baby dolls, imitating some of the ways children have seen others interact with real babies or even themselves. We also explored dress up clothes and hats and even some fun animal masks. Masks are often hard at this age because children don't like having anything on their face and a mask, or even a hat or headband, changes their appearance of themselves, a familiar friend or a teacher into someone unfamiliar. This can change a child's comfort level and maybe even frighten them. The trick with masks and costumes is to follow their lead and let them explore items in their own way until they are comfortable with them.



Everett G. in his Engineer hat.



Audrey P. wore a Rabbit Ear headband.

Imagination week wasn't complete until we brought out the spider puppet and used hand actions to sing along to the "Eensy-Weensy Spider" or the many books we read throughout the week. One of our favorites was *Mother Goose Rhymes*. We used finger puppets to help us explore the many characters in the rhymes.

Ezra P. began work on his structure the first day of Spark Your Imagination week. Using self-initiative, he initially spent about 20 minutes working on it using lightweight twigs, larger sticks and heavier objects like tree cookies and blocks to build it. Ezra incorporated lean and balance principles to create his sturdy structure. He also experienced awareness of body movement as he scrunched his body small enough to fit inside the structure.

Fast forward to Wednesday: Ezra was so excited to observe that his structure was still standing. "Look, Mrs. White, like wow! It's still up!" Ezra then invited two of his friends, Henry M. and Hunter T., to play with him inside his structure.

text by Joyce White

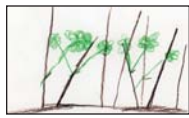


Kennedee H. and Fiona G. created an airport with room for animals. Joshua L. and Josh W. worked together to create some wonderful machines. Joshua made "The Flamer" and Josh created "The Hot Rider." They put their machines together and called it "The Hot Flaming Rider." Ray R. and Atticus W. found wonderful building opportunities with large dominoes. Ray made the State Capitol building and then sketched it using a bird's eye view. Atticus created his own interesting building. Lewis R. works with Legos every day. This is his spaceship creation.

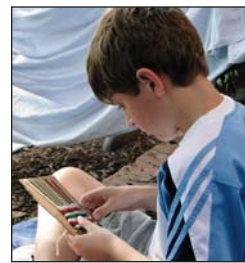
text by Katie Logan

Imaginative building on the NEC

Libby S. wove pliable saplings with cut branches into a free-standing structure on the Nature Explore Classroom. After returning to the classroom, she documented her creation by using visual recall to sketch two colored pencil drawings.



Right: Karson H. and Henry R. work on stabilizing part of the overall 2-5 Group structure. Below: Jackson B. used just a couple of saplings, several connectors and a sheet to create shade over a bench on the Nature Explore Classroom. Lower right: Henry R. used previous knowledge of how to construct a homemade, handheld loom and created a multicolor weaving.



K-1 children catch the spark, stage "Puff the Magic Dragon" show

text by Kathy Marshall

Puff the Magic Dragon sparked the imagination of the K-1 group this week. After looking at the book and listening to the Puff CD, children determined which characters they would be portraying (Puff the dragon, Jackie, flower fairies, the Noble King and princesses, pirates, dolphins, mice and a tree).



Will L. details his t-shirt.



Sarah H. created and then sketched her "Puff" t-shirt outfit.

As we proceeded, each child received a t-shirt. Using acrylic and fabric

paints, they designed their shirts to reflect the character they would become. Some of the children also used tempura paints to create backdrops portraying "The Land of Honalee" for the play. Face paints will be used to enhance their characterizations.

Children rehearsed the songs and ended the week with a Friday performance for parents and other children attending this week.



Working on the backdrops. Above: Josh W., Joshua L. and Lewis R. Below: Kennedee H. and Sarah H.

