

It's the little things citizens do. That's what will make the difference. My little thing is planting trees.

Education, if it means anything, should not take people away from the land, but instill in them even more respect for it, because educated people are in a position to understand what is being lost. The future of the planet concerns all of us, and all of us should do what we can to protect it. As I told the foresters, and the women, you don't need a diploma to plant a tree.

There are opportunities even in the most difficult moments.

I'm very conscious of the fact that you can't do it alone. It's teamwork. When you do it alone you run the risk that when you are no longer there nobody else will do it.

Dr. Wangari Maathai

April Topics

- **Peace Maker, Nobel Peace Prize Winner Dr. Wangari Maathai.** April 1 is Dr. Wangari's birthday. We honor this incredibly inspiring woman's work for women, children and the environment advocacy. We tell Dr. Maathai's life story in an age appropriate storytelling with a children's book about her life, there is a section regarding her imprisonment. During your continued research of her work, you find her discussion of experiencing police abuse, please note at school we address this as a reality that to frighten her, to stop doing her earth work police imprisoned her and she was able to get it . We emphasize her bravery and the circle of support from others who helped her get her out of jail and helped her work. We end our discussion with questions of what makes us feel safe during big imaginative play with friends and how do you offer peace to the earth. The insight was listed and will be photographed for our April google photos folder. We decided as a group to use safe words at school because school is meant to be a safe space. Additional words you possibly will hear at home: trees, women, babies, money, planting, poor/no food for the babies or families, soil, water, helping one another. A wonderful educational reference giving tribute to Dr. Maathai's work is from Project Learning Tree is at <http://www.plt.org/words-to-live-by---a-tribute-to-wangari-maathai>

- **Water Conservation & Erosion:** Learning through introduction and practice of water fetching, uses and conserving water and the importance of fresh, clean water and how we can help.
- **Circle Showcase:** Opportunity for children, one at a time, to bravely enter the circle to tell a joke, dance, act, sing, silly movements or impersonation during circle. Following each showcase we clap and celebrate the person's bravery. Like all spring life surrounding us, our class is popping with activity, interest and movement. At the end of the day we might do group stretching and we also might create group story telling.
- **Please, Thank you, Pardon Me, Introductions & More Listening:** Songs, role-play of manners and facial expression/body language practice. A fun and practical request for good old, Grace and Courtesy as well as practice of connecting. With our deeper work with communication, our circles will focus on listening games to practice exploring what listening is, how to listen to self and groups.
- **Parts of a Flower:** roots, stem, leaf, corolla (pedal), stamen, pistil using our class microscope at the science table. Our class will begin exploring more of the plants in and outside of the garden and using much more scientific vocabulary as well as labeling the plants with names and if edible or non-edible. In April we will encourage to gather dandelion and kale greens for class salads the children will make.
- **Relationship of pollinators and flowers:** Butterfly life cycle, bees, Robins, hummingbirds and encouraged observation of larva to butterfly process
- **Earth Day:** varying earth month projects honoring discussion of how we all are Earth Peacekeepers and focus on renewable and reusable resources and water conservation activities and art.

- **Peace Pole:** Please donate colorful, long ribbon for the garden peace pole

Art and Science Projects for April at Home:

■ **Planting Seeds at home:**

- Find seeds in your supplies, germinate if needed. Use eggshell bottoms, egg container cartens, plastic containers (puncture holes in the bottom), if on hand: compost-soil combination.

■ **Peace Pole:**

- Ribbon, yarn, pieces of leftover fabrics. Together as a family designate a Peace Pole. Circle the pole together sharing one at a time a gratitude for the Earth, each other and then twine the ribbon around the pole. With each sharing add a ribbon or something of beauty to and around your peace pole. Maybe this becomes a family space to express when witnessing an act of Kindness, Empathy, Peace to the household.
- Journaling: How are you a Peacemaker for Mother Earth? What ways do you help our Earth, your home-your habitat? Read the prompt with your child, ask for you both to sit for a moment and think about what you seek to write. First draw a picture of the prompt and then help your child dictate and you scribe. Make one for your adult self too. Read it aloud at dinner to the entire family. Encourage everyone to make an entry to share.

■ **Parts of a Flower Scientist:**

- Magnifying glass, tweezers, piece of black or white paper, pencil. Taking conscious time and care to pick out a flower, pick a flower from the garden or outside the home that has others like it nearby. Using gentle science fingers and the tools, explore the parts of the flower and create a Parts-Of Flower science labeled book, poem or poster.
- With a pencil, gently try to For the final step, genly take apart the flower, saving and setting the Stamen-stigma (pollen) in a place to take back outside. Finding the same species of flower, rub the stamen on the stamen-stigma of its relative.

■ **Hummingbird Nest Art:**

- Sticks, mud, moss, lichen, bits of nature, clay, playdough. Research the ellipsoid and ovoid geometric wonders of hummingbird nests. Help your child collect and setup a space to create his-her own mini hummingbird nest and mini eggs.

- **Parts of a Butterfly Posters, Book:**
 - Head, thorax, abdomen, wings, antenna, six legs (attached to the thorax)

- **Research opportunities:**
 - Find videos of Dr. Wangari Maathai speaking about her work. Guardians make sure to preview for age appropriate content.
 - Videos of Spring and Nature--up close microscopic photos of flowers, pollinators.

March 2020 Reflection

Happy Spring and thank you for the amazing commitment of families transitioning together to this new school year of virtual connecting. Your kindness, connection availability have been deep inspirations to us teachers along this uncharted territory of new. Our hearts are full of gratitude and excitement to share on-going support to the children. The children's self-initiate outside imagination and extended duration of concentration has been abundant and nurtured during school hours and will undoubtedly serve rich and useful homeschool experiences when adapting to practice and implementation they share in home for concentration, order and independence in space. Many children were using the dress-up and Garden Stage to express self as well as showcasing varying art forms while in circle together. This has allowed wonderful practice of listening opportunities as well as initiative for talking-listening rock to figure out taking turns with spaces. The group is offering fantastic improv opportunities that we look forward to nurturing movement forward in our virtual circle daily experiences.

Please remember to sign up for a weekly spot or ask Emmy to do so for your child matching with a pod to have lessons, journal writing and small circle opportunities.

Happy Spring to all and huge virtual hugs!

Klahanie Teachers Emmy, Austin, Laura