

February

## TEACHERS' BLOCKS

**Murnie Leary**

Director

Visiting the 4-5 year-old classrooms at this time of year, and listening to the teachers reading fairy tales and nursery rhymes, I am reminded about the importance of reading out loud. Repetition and rhyming in stories and poetry enhance children's phonemic awareness, fluency and sense of humor. All build a solid foundation for developing pre-reading and literacy skills. Outside our classrooms, take time each day to share a book at home. It is a pleasing experience for you and your child, and yields long-term benefits. Indeed, reading aloud to a child is one of the single most important factors in raising a reader. This special time can be a pleasurable time to share conversation, thoughts, and feelings – plus convey a sense of love of reading as an important part of a child's life. Enjoying books together is a gift!

**Mrs. Young & Ms. Drew**

5 day 4-year-olds

We are looking forward to Valentine's Day stories, projects and fun! Lot of heart-shaped animals, collages, paintings and cards will be made. We will read The Valentine Bears by Jan Brett as well as Love, Splat, by Rob Scotton. Discussing our feelings and caring for others will be a focus for this month. We also have been counting the days until our 100 day celebration. We are getting close, so it looks like in the first week of March we will reach 100!! Please make sure your child brings the "red bag" every day with snow pants and boots. The weather can change rapidly, or the playground can be wet and muddy. Thank you for your help.

**Mrs. Warren & Mrs. Ross**

4 day 4-year-olds

We had so much fun on Pajama Day! We ate pancakes, played with our stuffed animals, decorated crowns, listened to the book "The Practically Perfect Pajamas" while sitting on a big cozy quilt. We loved eating pancakes for snack! We spread butter, poured syrup and cut our own pancakes independently. Most of us even ate two big pancakes! Our study of Fairy Tales will end this week with a culminating activity of writing a fairy tale together at group time and illustrating it independently the next day. We will start to think about Valentine's Day and themes of love, kindness and sharing. We will decorate mail bags for our valentines, trace and cut folded hearts, paint a watercolor heart, print with heart shapes and read Valentine stories. We will be delivering our own valentines to each of our friends during class time. At the end of the day, we will have the opportunity to open them together. It is exciting as each child reads their valentines and thanks their friends! A detailed letter about Valentine's Day was sent home on Monday. After February vacation, we will be "blasting off" to start our "exploration" of space. We will be very busy!

**Mrs. Carroll & Mrs. Christino**

3 day 4-year-olds

During the month of February, we will continue to think and talk about, as well as perform, acts of kindness. *The theme of kindness is the ongoing prevailing theme in our classroom.* The *Kindness Counts* poster in our room acts as a reminder and a catalyst. Whenever a teacher “catches” a child performing an act of kindness, that child is asked to place a sticker inside the large heart on the poster to represent his or her act. Our goal is to fill the heart and already, more than half the heart is filled! Conversations about how to make others feel happy and loved are also ongoing. The children put kindness into practice by giving compliments, using respectful body language (e.g., facial expressions and eye contact, giving personal space, sharing), and of course their actions. This month one of those actions will be in the form of creating several Valentine projects. These include cards, heart-shaped water colors, friendship jewelry, and a very special item that will remain a surprise. For our Valentine Day celebration, the children will be able to use their growing awareness of print by distributing their Valentine cards to classmates. This activity emphasizes and supports the children’s ability to recognize and write the letters in their own name and perhaps those of some of their friends. It’s just one of the many opportunities in our room where they can practice letter skills in addition to the writing corner, the easel, the book corner, during story time, in the hallway at the coat hooks, reading the names from the light person bag and much more. The most important message we hope to convey to the children this month is that while February is the month where love is officially celebrated with a holiday, we should try to act like **every day** is Valentine’s Day! When we return from the February vacation, we will begin a unit on fairy tales. During this unit, we will learn what common threads they share and even write our own class story.

**Mrs. Murphy & Mrs. Laine**

3 day 3-year-olds

We have been on the move with our “Things That Go” unit! The children have enjoyed making transportation projects such as alphabet trains and airplanes. They have been engaged in learning new songs and hearing classic stories about modes of transportation. We will celebrate Valentine’s Day on Friday, February 15. We invite the children to bring in a valentine for each of their classmates (no candy or food please). After February break we will embark on a post office unit. The children will learn about organizing and running their own mail system while exploring letter writing and communication.

**Mrs. Fox & Mrs. Sweeney**

2 day 3-year-olds

January was a great month for us! Everyone came to school ready to learn, play and be with friends. We kept busy with studying winter and things that go! We sang winter songs and made some snowmen that will come home soon. They are really special! The “things that go” theme is always a crowd pleaser. Everyone shared about bus, plane or train rides they have taken. The children loved playing in the classroom school bus. They are sharing more at meeting time about the different books we read. We can really notice them growing up. They are also becoming more self-sufficient and reaching out more often to classmates to play and chat. We had a lot of fun on pajama day! We made banana muffins and everyone ate them and wanted seconds. February will be a fun month. Everyone will enjoy delivering valentines. We will set up a post office in our classroom as the kids come back from vacation to build on the idea of “writing” notes to others! Ask your child to sing “skidamarink” to you. It's a class favorite right now.

**Mrs. Carroll & Mrs. Read-Brown**  
2 day 3-year-olds

For the past few weeks, the children have had a wonderful time learning how to care for others, specifically animals, when our house corner was transformed into the HNS animal hospital. This month, we are going to turn our focus to caring for people and how to show kindness and love. *The theme of kindness is the ongoing prevailing theme in our classroom.* The *Kindness Counts* poster in our room serves as a reminder (and hopefully inspiration) to the children about being kind. Whenever a teacher “catches” a child performing an act of kindness, that child is asked to place a sticker inside the large heart on the poster to represent his or her act. Our goal is to fill the heart and already, half the heart is filled! Conversations about how to make others feel happy and loved are also ongoing. The children put kindness into practice by giving compliments, using respectful body language (e.g., facial expressions and eye contact, giving personal space, sharing), and of course their actions. They will also get to express their kindness through various projects this month including cards, pictures, necklaces, and a very special item that will remain a surprise. We will have a celebration in honor of Valentine’s Day and the children will be able to use their growing awareness of print by distributing their Valentine cards to classmates. This activity emphasizes and supports the children’s ability to recognize and write the letters in their own name and perhaps those of some of their friends. It’s just one of the many opportunities in our room where they can practice letter skills. When we return from the February vacation, we will begin a unit on fairy tales. Not only will we learn what common threads they share as we read them, we will also incorporate some real science that will take us into this imaginary world.

