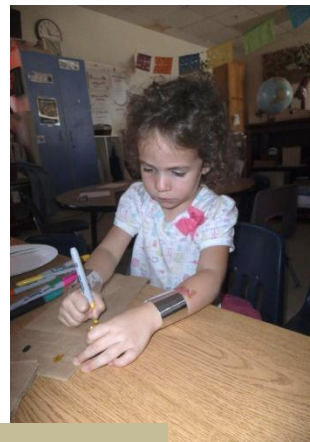




Making knight costumes and shields from paper bags and butcher paper.

Children work together to build a dragon using blocks and duct tape. Pandora made the dragon's wings from a hinged box.



Making dragon puppets.



Avelina and the children looked at non-fiction books about castles and designed their own castles.

September 2013

The children have been learning about dragons. The topic of dragons and knights is rich with dramatic play possibilities. Young children learn the best through play. In fact, longitudinal research (Miller and Almon, 2009) shows that children's engagement in pretend play is significantly and positively correlated with text comprehension, meta-linguistic awareness, and understanding of the purpose of reading and writing.

One of my goals in learning about dragons was to introduce children to the dramatic play possibilities in our classroom. When we work together blocks can become a dragon. Paper bags become armor. This type of play not only allows magic to happen in our classroom, it helps children become strong problem-solvers, better collaborators, and more flexible thinkers.