

Dear Families,

We've settled into the school year. It's wonderful to watch first year children become comfortable at school and establish friendships and to see 2nd year students develop more confidence within the school environment, help younger students & deepen existing friendships.



This group of students loves story time. Young children learn by moving so we retell stories by acting them out using whole-body creative movement. We pretend to be characters in the story. Acting out the story deepens children's understanding of plot, characters, emotions, and vocabulary words which increase children's reading comprehension.



Top left photo: acting out the life cycle of the pumpkin from the story "Pumpkin Jack." Top left photo: Nathaniel retells "Five Little Monkeys" with flannel board pieces. On Halloween, we made a broom out of tape on the floor and played "Room on the Broom."

rents of young child often hear that reading books to your child is one of the best things you can do to help them develop language skills. Having conversations with your child is another good way to prepare them for school because rich conversation is the foundation of literacy skills. In fact, the reading curriculum we use “Opening Worlds of Learning” emphasizes conversation. We are taught to “strive for five” conversational turns when talking to young children. For example, a child might initiate a conversation: “Look at my shirt.” I then try to extend that conversation so it lasted five turns. I might say: “Your shirt is brown & my shirt is my favorite color: green. Do you have a favorite color?” Then I pause to encourage the child to continue the conversation by answering the open-ended question.



Adults get down at children’s level so we can have face-to-face conversations with them. **Picture on the left:** Jessica, our U of A intern and next semester’s student teacher talks with Lena about the pizza Lena is making. **Picture on the left:** Rehanna and Erin talk together.

Sharing true stories about your own life is another good way to help your child develop language & literacy skills. Studies have shown that telling family stories boosts children’s language skills while improving their resilience, self-esteem, self-control, & making children feel closer to family members. One way to help you share family stories is to look at photos with your child and talk about them.



Josiah, Christopher, & Daniel enjoy looking at their learning portfolios & talking about the pictures. Children can & do view their portfolios at any time. Families are welcome to borrow portfolios to take home to view. Just let me know and I can send it home.