

Monthly Notes

November 2026

Ah the time of leaves. Colorful, falling, dancing in the wind.
"Fall snow!," Veda exclaimed recently.

We have played with leaves in SO MANY ways and keep coming up with new ideas! First we identified which trees different leaves come from and talked about evergreens (conifers) and deciduous trees, (all of the trees that change colors). We later pondered and learned about *how* and *why* leaves change color – or do they? … (See article on page 3).

Each month we include a different cutting activity to entice children to practice their cutting skills. In September we had symmetrical trees to cut and collage. In October, we cut more trees, then skeletons and pumpkins. We extended the fall art with tree painting and collage. leaf painting in relief, and then stamped with the leaf. We hammered leaves to try the chlorophyll prints we learned about. We have collaged leaves with other materials, used them in earth art designs, thrown them around, raked them, jumped on them in the pile, and even just laid down on the grass to soak the beauty of the tree canopies into our souls.



Words of wisdom from this morning…
"Don't judge a muffin by it's top!"
(All the blueberries may have settled at the bottom!)

Please let me know if there is something you'd like to see In our newsletter – In the meantime enjoy this month's pictures, and articles about gift giving, why leaves change color, cold weather reminders, WHE traditions and rituals, our meal blessing song (ask your child to sing it to you!) and of course, November curriculum...



November Dates

11/10 Lantern Walk
@ Ithaca Children's Garden
(celebrating Martinmas 11/11)

11/26-28 Thanksgiving Holidays

11/30 WHE2 4th Anniversary!

November				
M	T	W	Th	F
2	4	5	6	7
9	10	11	12	13
15	16	17	18	19
23	24	25	26	27
30				







Gifts for Kids

If gift giving is part of your holiday tradition, you might be starting to get slightly preoccupied with finding just the right thing for this year…



Sometimes it seems no matter what we *buy*, our children want to play with the pots and pans, or the box, or even the broom we are using instead. While this can be dumfounding, it is developmentally typical—toy or tool, *things look more fun when someone else is using them*.

Similarly, the experience of toys that entertain , versus toys that spark and demand engagement is different. In U.S. culture, there is a great emphasis on entertainment.

Many toys are made to entertain: wind up toys, electrical and battery-operated toys, toys that make sounds or flash or move... some night lights even have moving imagery to watch. When choosing between the electric train or the child-operated train, consider engagement. *Active toys are entertaining*: children watch the electric train move around the track. *Passive toys, on the other hand, require the child's play to activate them*. Passive toys give children more opportunity to create and discover.

Here are some things to consider when trying to figure out what makes a captivating toy that will hold your child's interest over time:

- Preschool children like real things. They want to learn about the world and be like the adults they have in their lives. Look for child-sized furniture and tools to build success. What do they like watching you do? *Feed that interest*.
- Containers.
Preschoolers still like to dump/fill and carry stuff. They are still figuring out what fits, how much fits and *how does this fit?* Containers could be boxes, bags, purses, an old lunch bag or box, maybe even a tent to fit oneself into.
- Instruments!
Rhythm instruments can be the best choice for young children, but accurately tuned keyboards, bells or glockenspiel can support accurate learning melody. (*Get something you'd like to hear!*)
- Flexible toys.
& flexibility with how toys are used…
Things that can be used in many ways; art materials, blocks, cooking tools, cars, dolls, balls. These days many things made for kids already have their own name or story. Consider generic dolls rather than dolls made of characters from children's shows who already have their stories.
- Toys that encourage activity!
Bikes, scoots and scooters
- and of course, **keep the box!**











Why Do Leaves Change Color?

Fall is such a beautiful season –
many flock to the northeast to enjoy our colorful hills.



But how do leaves change color?
And why? Do you know?
I didn't – so I made sure to look into it since the question finally became one I realized I didn't know the answer to!

The kids had many ideas about why leaf colors change:
* because it's fall
* because it's getting colder
* because the leaves are covered with little green insects, like microbes and when they go away, the colors show (Veda)...

In fact,
Veda's idea isn't far from what actually happens!



Really???

Truly.

"The answer involves sunlight, chlorophyll, and the different pigments hidden inside leaves." (littlebinsforlittlehands.com)

Did you know?
I did not.

Leaves changing color is actually leaves showing their colors?!

The reds, oranges and yellows are there all the time!

How cool is that?!
Even if you already know, Veda's hypothesis is pretty amazing, gotta say.

Cold Weather Reminders and Winter Clothing

Turn of the season is a good time to check your child's extra clothing bin. Sadly, we are beyond shorts weather now...
As it get's colder, you know we all still like to get outside!
Having appropriate clothing really helps.



We find that children this age are most comfortable going out in weather over 40º.
**** 40º - 60º a light coat, a hat, closed-toe shoes***
**** 20º - 39º a winter coat, a hat, mittens/ gloves***
Boots and snow clothing can be very restrictive. If you're still shopping for your child's winter wear, try to find mittens that open well - the snow stopper brand (pictured here) is great because the mittens cover the wrist and help keep snow from going up the sleeves. Please look for boots that your child can put on independently. Thank you!

NOVEMBER Curriculum

- **Gratitude**
- **Holidays/Rituals**
- **Family**
- **Family Trees**
- **Flags of Countries of Origin for our Families**
- **Community**
  - making our wampum
- **Manners**
- **Wants vs. Needs**

Songs

· I Celebrate My Family
· From You I Receive
· Grey Squirrel
(or Brown, or any color!)
· Little Blue Ball
· Continent Song
· This Little Light of Mine
· Driving in the Car
· To Grandmother's House We Go!

Books

· Feeling Thankful
by Shelley Rotner & Sheila Kelly
· Giving Thanks
by Chief Jake Swamp
· Feast for 10
by Cathryn Falwell
· Families Can
by Dan Saks
· The Doorbell Rang
by Pat Hutchins
· My Family Plays Music
by Judy Cox & Elbright Brown
· Wants vs. Needs Robots
by Michael Rex



WHE Blessing Song

Earth, that gives to us this food -
Sun, that makes it ripe and good -
Dearest Earth and dearest Sun -
We will not forget what you have done…
Blessings on the meal!



WHE Traditions/Rituals

- **Daily circle**
  opportunity for community building and group problem solving
- **Reading of *I Offer You Peace* and a Peace Pass on Fridays**—we sometimes include *making silence*
- **Birthdays** are celebrated with a walk around the sun and muffins of the child's choice – family invited!
- **Summer and Winter Solstice** are recognized, also **Day of the Dead**





Overheard

"That's how old I'll be when I grow up – 5!" (Hazel)



"We listened to Hawaii music… We asked Mr. Google." (Ansel)





What Did You Learn at School Today?

"The bubbles just got sucked up there!" (Ansel)









My Family

I ce-le-brate my fa-mi-ly, peo-ple close to me.

There are ma-ny branch-es in my fam'-ly tree.

Lov-ing, car-ing, lov-ing, car-ing, help-ing, shar-ing, help-ing, shar-ing,

I ce-le-brate my fa-mi-ly, peo-ple close to me.

