

CULTURAL NEWSLETTER

February 2019

Dear Parents,

We have concluded our invertebrate studies and we are now observing the final stages of metamorphosis. Three of our caterpillars have already moved into the pupa stage and have wrapped a strong cocoon around their bodies as they continue to metamorphose until they emerge as adult butterflies. We are hoping that the remaining two will soon join them in the pupa stage so our Painted Lady Family will be complete before we release them to lay their eggs and continue on with their life cycles. When this happens we will compile the pages the children have been working on, bind them and prepare them for a place in your home library.

Next, we will peek into our botany studies to begin exploring the seeds that will in the weeks ahead blossom into Spring beauty all around us. We will dissect seeds and identify which parts contribute to the plant life cycle. As you remember, plants are distinguished by the ability to create their own food. (Leaves = Food Factory) ... but how is the plant kept alive before the seed produces the leaves that make the food? Ask your child!

When we return to zoology we will focus on the star of the show: THE SPINE! which includes exercising, making models of the spine and viewing an x-ray of the spine. We will also watch an entertaining movie that will reveal more fascinating facts about our skeletons. Did you ever wonder how our legs are strong enough to support and move our bodies? Ask your child how! By the end of the week he/she will also be able to *show* you!

Our zoology work for the remainder of the year will focus on **the mechanics and benefits of having a spine for fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals**. As with each invertebrate phylum, we will study exactly how each of these very different animals stays alive by:

- **Moving**
- **Breathing**
- **Eating**
- **Excreting**
- **Growing**
- **Sensing**
- **Reproducing**

Is is truly amazing what members of each phylum do to stay alive!

To kick off the Fish Unit, we'll have a whole fresh fish in the classroom which the children can touch (a first-time experience for many of them!). Those who are "brave" enough can hold the fish and observe how the spine helps the fish swim. We will also see a movie about fish with their spines, scales and fins, and then - of course - we will make models, posters and books ... Lots to do!

Happy February Weeks Ahead to All!

"Don't worry that children never listen to you. Worry that they are always watching you."

~ Robert Fulghum, American author (b.1937)