

# Kindergarten: Please Read this January 8th Newsletter

Friday, Jan 8 at 9:41 PM • **Kindergarten - Monica**

Dear Rainbow Sunflower Families,

Happy New Year to all of you! After a long rejuvenating break, it was such a pleasure to spend time with your children back in the Zoom room this week. They had many stories and memories to share with us from their time away. We could have spent a whole week just catching up with all of their news!

With that, the Rainbow Sunflowers dove into our Family Study this week. We wanted to provide an opportunity to talk about what makes a family and present diverse family structures that exist within and outside of our classroom community. Through picture books, family interviews, and videos the students engaged in thinking about the idea that 'Love makes a family.' Students shared ways that idea rang true to them, saying: "My family shows me love when I get hurt because they comfort me and give me a bandaid," or "When I get upset my mom gives me a hug," or "My dad and I play soccer together and he cheers me on."

We had the wonderful opportunity to have [REDACTED]'s mom, come in to share about adoptive families. She and [REDACTED] read *My New Mom and Me* by Renata Galindo, shared some of their personal stories about adoption, and answered questions from the class. It was informative and beyond heartwarming! Thank you, [REDACTED]! We look forward to welcoming [REDACTED]'s mom, to our Morning Circle on Monday to share as well. It is such a gift to the class to have parents share ideas, experiences, and

perspectives. If you see an opportunity to teach us something connected to our units or even want to read us a story, please don't hesitate to reach out!

The Rainbow Sunflowers worked on writing personal narrative stories about their families. We are learning about family celebrations and traditions, ways that their families spend time together, and sweet family moments that reflect love and connection. They are working on planning their stories orally, stretching out letter sounds to write words, forming the letters on their papers, putting in finger spaces, and adding punctuation--not at all an easy feat! We are so proud of all their hard work and determination to build their skills!

On Tuesday, the class delighted in watching the puppet show, Mr. Froggy's Clean Up Club. Mr. Froggy met many animals on his journey from a storm drain, to a creek, the bay, and then the ocean. Along the way the animals talked about the different types of trash and pollution that are in the water and are hurting them. On Thursday, we were fortunate to have the puppeteer and creator of the show, Joe Leon, join our class for a little Q&A. The Rainbow Sunflowers asked thoughtful questions of our guest, both about different aspects of puppetry and clean up clubs. This connected directly to our watershed learning. The Rainbow Sunflowers are also really motivated to continue making puppets and thinking about their own puppet show next week during project times.

Our Friday Morning Circle centered around the question, "What makes you feel safe and loved when something unexpected happens?" Students shared from the heart, some bringing up the ongoing pandemic. Some of the ways they shared that bring comfort include hugging a loved one or a stuffed animal and talking with a parent or teacher about it. Monica and I then opened space to discuss the insurrection at the US Capitol on Wednesday in a way that we hope felt both supportive and reassuring to your young

children. Students asked questions, shared their understanding of some of the events, and agreed that it was not okay for these adults to act this way. We circled back to reinforcing that each of them is safe and loved. We encouraged them to seek out ways that help them feel safe and loved when something unexpected or challenging occurs. We know how hard it can be to find the words to have such discussions with children. If you are seeking resources, here are a few compiled by our colleagues that you may find helpful:

- **How to Talk to Kids about the Riots at the US Capitol** article from NPR
- **How to Talk to Your Child About the News** by KidsHealth
- **Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Parents and Teachers** by The National Association of School Psychologists
- **<https://www.facinghistory.org>**
- **<https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/when-bad-things-are-happening>**
- **Now is a Good Time to Talk to Kids about Civics:** article from NPR

### **Important Requests and Reminders:**

**If you received an email from Kerry about having your child do a Literably assessment, please make sure to help them log on this weekend to complete, by Monday evening at the very latest.** This reading assessment will likely take your child approximately 10 minutes and really helps inform our instruction.

**Please print these attached items: the Alphabet Chart as well as the Oakland-Recycle/Trash/Compost pages for use next week. Put in your child's work folder for easy access each day.** If you don't have access to

a printer, please reach out to Kerry so we can strategize. Although a color print is preferred if you have the ink, black and white will work.

**-Reminder: next week is another Distance Learning week.**

