

Firefly Scientists' Garden



Environmental Education at The Lemberg Children's Center

WELCOMING WINTER!

The garden has been put to bed for the winter, and we're making the most of these cold and snowy months! There may not be any plants growing in the garden, aside from our famous garlic chives, but that's not going to stop our garden learning. Our hearts feel warm as we play and learn in our winter wonderland garden.

As we start to plan for the Spring, we want to hear more from Lemberg families about how they can get involved in the garden. Please take two minutes to fill out a survey about availability and interests [HERE](#).

LEARNING THIS MONTH

Rocks Rock!

We've talked lots about different animals this season, but what makes something *non-living*? This week we did just that- we talked about how rocks don't eat, drink water, or grow like plants and animals do! We learned about the different kinds of rocks (igneous, metamorphic, and sedimentary), where they come from, and even got to act out how they are formed. We thought about how rocks can help animals eat food and protect themselves, and how we have used rocks in our history to make art, tools, and shelter. Rocks can be very surprising! And of course, it wouldn't be a garden lesson without going out and looking for different kinds of

rocks in the garden. Like volcanoes forming igneous rocks, the kids had a blast!



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Hibernation Station

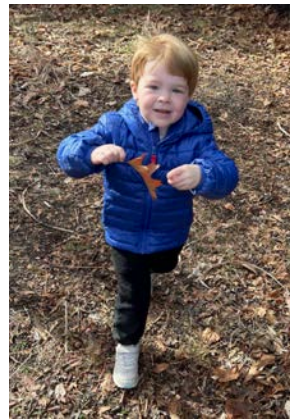
During the winter, we get to stay warm and cozy at Lemberg and at home. But what about the animals who can't come join us inside to warm up? This week, we read *Hibernation Station* by Michelle Meadows to learn more about how some animals hibernate throughout the winter. We thought about how sometimes we get sleepy after we eat a big meal, and that's what hibernating animals do too! We each got to make our own bear masks and pretend to get fed and snuggly for our long winter nap.



Winter is Coming!

During the week leading up to the first day of winter we thought a lot about the new season. As a special treat, we got to read both *Here Comes the Snow* by Angela Shelf Medearis and *The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack. As we read the stories, we paid attention to what winter looks like and what the characters experienced when

they were out in the snow. We then headed out to the garden where we used Winter Identification sheets to guide us in our observations as we looked for signs of winter!



Outer Space and Constellations

With the New Year having just started, we thought we'd do something a little bit different this week. We kicked off the lesson by reading *Our Stars* by Anne Rockwell, which had great explanations of what planets, meteors, constellations, moons, and shooting stars are. We pretended that our heads were the Earth and that our fists were the moon to act out the word "orbit," by moving our fists in a circle around our heads. Once we



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became outer-space experts, we were ready to make our very own constellations. We glued little stars onto a piece of paper and connected them with lines to tell the story of our stellar constellations. What's fun about constellations is that what we each see in the stars is up to interpretation. This encouraged us to be creative and abstract with our starry stories!



Recycling or Trash?

What do we do when we're all done with snacktime? Sometimes knowing whether to recycle or trash our scraps can be tricky. To learn more about what we can and can't recycle (and what happens when we do) we read *Read Why*



Should I Recycle? by Jen Green and Mike Gordon. Then, we played a sorting game, taking turns to put items into our makeshift trash and recycling bins! We even had our own pretend sink to wash out our plastic items before recycling them. Snack

wrappers, paper, styrofoam, glass bottles... we had a blast sorting out the mystery of trash!



There's sNOw Place Like the Garden!

This month, we've learned all about winter, hibernation, and the types of animals we see in the garden during this chilly season. We decided it was time to practice our scientist skills as we read *Snow* by Jill McDonald, which taught us how water vapor forms sticky ice crystals in the clouds that clump together to form a snowflake. When it gets heavy enough, the snowflake falls to the ground. One page of the book showed us different types of animal tracks that are left behind in



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the snow. We bundled up and looked through the garden for signs of animal life. We compared the tracks we found to the ones pictured in the book to determine what we saw; we even saw some poop near the footprints, which helped us confirm that lots of bunnies had been running around!



Tu BiSh'vat Tree Fair - All Are Welcome!

Lemberg's Environmental Education Team will be hosting an interactive station at Temple Beth Israel's Tu BiSh'vat Tree Fair on February 13th! The holiday encapsulates the values we hold here in the garden and teaches people the importance of caring for trees and our environment. A short Seder service will take place from 7:00pm-7:30pm followed by a walkthrough of eight interactive stations from different sustainability organizations in the Waltham community. All Lemberg families are welcome to attend! Please make sure to RSVP at

the link or QR code provided on the flyer. We hope to see you at our station!



Want to Learn More?

We learned about all sorts of exciting things this month! If you want to continue learning and getting involved, **check out these sources below!**

- Map of local recycling departments [HERE](#)
- Zero Waste Boston initiatives [HERE](#)
- Want to look for animal prints? Check out this guide [HERE](#)
- Mass Audubon's Monthly [Outdoor Almanac](#)

Thank you to our many wonderful alumni donors and friends!

