

# February 2008

## 6-9 Class News

### *Happy 2008*

January has been a fantastic month for the 6-9 class. Each child came back from the holidays highly focused and excited to receive new lessons. It always amazes me how much the class grows between September and now. The third year students are engaging in more philosophical discussions about their work and ideas, while second year students are becoming aware of their future role as classroom leaders. All first year students have learned how to locate work areas and materials, and are making independent choices about their learning.

We have had a wide range of people, from the Montessori community to the local community, observing our class. Observers are regularly impressed by the motivation, passion for learning and independence they see from your children. Thank you to all who recommend Bayside out in the community.

### *Life Sciences*

We are currently focusing on the six kingdoms, the system of classification for living organisms. First year students received a brief history of classification, followed by work pertaining to the characteristics of living things, and how to classify organisms into living and nonliving groups. The next classification work distinguishes plants from animals. It prepares children to place organisms into one of the six kingdoms based on common traits.

Second year students reviewed the six kingdoms and are currently focusing on the fungi kingdom. They are experimenting with growing mold and learning the parts of fungi and identification.

Third year students are looking closely at some of the characteristics used to determine an organisms placement into a kingdom (cell type,

metabolism and reproduction). They are learning about the two primary types of cells, eukaryotic cells and prokaryote cells, and are preparing a six kingdom presentation for the class which includes a visual component of mobiles, posters, dioramas and/or student created books.

### *Jacob Lawrence*

Children worked in small groups to explore the works of Jacob Lawrence. Their task was to discover what influenced Lawrence's art, his subject matter, technique and color choice.

To begin the project, we looked at a variety of paintings by Georgia O'Keeffe and discussed that there are a multitude of ways to look at art and learn from art. We considered color, shape, line and movement. We also talked about time periods, environment and other such factors which might influence an artist. The class took what they learned from the discussion back to their own small groups and explored the art and life of Jacob Lawrence with a more critical eye.

Lawrence was largely influenced by his surroundings and told stories about the great migration, influential African Americans, and day to day life through his paintings. The class was instructed to think about their own lives and paint a part of their daily experiences. Some children have chosen to make several pieces that will be hung together as a visual narrative.

### *Extra Clothes*

Please check to make sure your child has an extra set of clothing at school. I'm noticing a shortage and hearing complaints about clothes being too small. I know several children have borrowed clothes from others, so if you happen to find a pair of mystery socks or pants, chances are they belong to someone in the class.

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