



Newsletter

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"Nothing Without Joy"

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Gaining STEAM: the Arts in Education

By Brit Eagan

The shift in American education toward STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) began in 2011 when then-president Barack Obama encouraged the nation to foster 21st century skills in our youth during his State of the Union Address. In an attempt to remain competitive on the global stage in those fields, millions of dollars were put toward research, grants, trainings, and programs which promoted the study of STEM subjects. It wasn't until around 2014 that the "A" was added to the acronym, which stands for the **arts**, giving us STEAM (Gunn, 2017).



This addition was crucial. Rather than being strictly subject-oriented, STEAM is people-oriented and utilizes project-based teaching. With the individual in mind teachers holistically foster design thinking, creativity, collaboration, and problem solving, setting students up

for *success* in STEM. Research shows that this is particularly true for those who may not strike us as "naturally gifted" in the more technical subjects, but who are drawn to the integrative arts approach STEAM offers.

While the nation at large is only a few years into discovering the benefits of arts-integrated curricula, there is something to be said for educational pioneers, like Lucy Chaille, who have been teaching this way for over 35

years. Under her direction, Constructivist education is embraced at Creative Children's Center while simultaneously incorporating the Reggio Approach to projects and learning, acknowledging that constructivism is not a "method" of teaching, but rather a theory regarding how we learn.



Process is everything, and understanding "how best to learn" is the ever-evolving mission of CCC's dynamic teaching team. They know that it's the well-rounded learners that will bring us innovation and progress as a nation. Young people, gaining steam with creativity and divergent thinking, will undoubtedly create a future that is beyond our wildest dreams.

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DATES TO REMEMBER

Dec 20	CCC Family Feast - <i>Evening Event</i> Details in December Newsletter
Dec 21	No School - Teacher Professional Development Day - <i>No Creativity Club</i>
Dec 24 to Jan 4	Winter Break

What's a Grownup?

A grownup is a big person who helps their kids do stuff and learn stuff. Grownups clean the car. The kids *could* clean up if there were no grownups, but they would not know how to drive. Grownups like to go places, like to a fun place with their kids. Like a birthday place if they have a birthday, or a place they like to eat.



Grownups don't like to get sweets. They like to eat vegetables and fruits. Kids like candy, that's what they like to do. *What I don't like to get is salad!* You have to be about nine or ten to be a grownup. When I am a grownup, I would like to go to school with my mom and be a doctor. No, I would like to be a teacher. I would be nice for the whole day.

Even, age 5

Grownups are big kids. Everybody has numbers, so they



can grow up. Like six. Yeah, you are grownup when you are six. Grownups are adults and kids. The adults can cook food and the kids can play. The adults like koshary, with raisins and

french fries. The kids favorite food is yogurt, strawberry yogurt, like fruit yogurt. Kids hate to eat *cats*. (Zane smiles and giggles) Adults hate to eat chicken. (Zane laughs). I'd like to do something good when I grow up, like wrap up wire and put it into a drawer. When I put it into the drawer it will do magic. The drawer will fly away. It will make foods with chickens!

Zane, age 4.9

Grownups get to run! Kids don't get computers. Kids get naps. When I am grownup I will play games, like games I have at my home. Like Candyland! If a grownup was a kid they would like to run around and play a lot. They would like to play tag! What does it mean to be a grownup? A grownup is something like your Dad or Mom. You are big.

Walker, age 5

A grownup is an adult. You are a grownup at 20 or 19. What do grownups like to do? Well, it depends...on who is the adult. I will go with my own parent. She often likes to play my games even though she has to work. Grownups have different jobs, sometime they are

happy...sometimes yes, sometimes no. What makes my mom happy is to see me happy, to hear about good things, to do stuff that makes me happy. What makes my Dad happy is to....pretty much all the same stuff really. My parents like to look at cute pictures of puppies, kitties, cute hamsters and stuff. They call me and my brother over to see the pictures and videos. Grownups like to eat...it depends on how good the food is. It could be a really good steak that she loves, or it could be mediocre. But all grownups like to eat FOOD!

Corbin, age 8

A grownup takes care of kids.

Kids are tinnier and they are not older then grownups. Kids like to play with stuffies. Grownups like chores. Cleaning dishes is their favorite chore. If you don't clean the dishes then you would not have any plates to put food on. They

hate to clean the whole house because you have to clean up the kids rooms, to vacuum and do the dishes. DO EVERYTHING! The kids don't like to help because they get bored. I think being kids is good because you don't have to go to work. I think being a grownup is good because you can have CANDY! But kids are better then grownups because they get to cuddle with their parents!

Liam, age 7



Sing-Alongs at CCC: Why Music Matters

By Brit Eagan

Here at CCC, music is an integral part of every day in all of our classrooms. At circle-times we come together to sing, dance, match rhythm, and practice call-and-response songs with teachers and classmates. This



year, we made it our intention to host more schoolwide sing-alongs, as an opportunity to become familiar with our community, grow our repertoire of songs, and

share in the joy that is making music together.

The benefits of having focused time for music in early childhood education go far beyond being fun and engaging. At the start of the 21st Century, research began to emerge that suggested a correlation between IQ and musical ability (Spray 2015). Studies found that musical training lead to improvements in literacy, spatial learning, and memory. Music



strengthens the brain-body connection, accelerating maturation which allows for the two parts to work more seamlessly as a team. Rhythm matching and dance aid in the development of motor skills, and when this takes place in a group we create a culture of camaraderie, collaboration, and shared joy.



Time Magazine's 2014 publication, "This is How Music Can Change Your Brain," highlighted groundbreaking



neuroscience which found that "music training has a biological effect on children's developing nervous systems" (Locker, 2014). This publication went on to boast astounding results from a study that observed high-school seniors from low income Los Angeles neighborhoods involved in The Harmony Project (THP), "a community music program serving low-income children" that provides opportunities from Kindergarten and up to

learn an instrument (Locker, 2014). They found that despite an overall 50% drop-out rate for high-school Seniors there, 93% of those Seniors engaged in THP went on to college (Locker, 2014).

The Harmony Project beautifully states its' vision on the website: "Music takes commitment. Learning to play an instrument takes



patience, persistence, and focus — the same qualities students need to excel in school and in their future career.

We support our students every step of the way, helping them achieve their goals throughout their childhood" (The Harmony Project).



Every child has musical potential and the capacity to interact meaningfully with music, and we are proud to provide our students with ample opportunity to enjoy exploring and expanding those skills.

No School? No Problem!

By Brit Eagan

CCC's daytime Creativity Clubs are an exciting offering on days when regular classes are not in session (excluding Holidays and extended breaks). Families can opt to send their students for half or full-day activities, uniquely planned by our amazing teachers to be relevant, engaging, and (most importantly) **fun!**



During parent-teacher conferences, as well as an in-service day last month, club attendees enjoyed a plethora of seasonal crafts, spooky songs, and silly dances. Teachers Olya, Vivien, & Brit worked with students to bring their visions of fun monsters, wacky witches, and wild Halloween cats to life through expressive arts.

We are constantly blown away by the creativity and thoughtfulness of the works created by students within our community, and are thrilled to be hosting Creativity Clubs again during November. We hope to see you there!



Fun Times in Rainbow Rascals

By Niki Patrick

October was a lovely month full of sunshine, Halloween fun, and conversations about our feelings. The children were particularly interested in the story, "When Sophie Gets Angry" by Molly Bang. They enjoyed brainstorming all the ways that they can safely let out their big, mad feelings so they can get back to feeling calm. An important step in being able to problem solve collaboratively!

We have continued our forays into cooking meals together. Last week, the children enjoyed a true farm to fork experience as



we chopped up our pumpkin from Plumper's Pumpkin Patch to roast the seeds and make pumpkin soup. We also read the story "Pumpkin Soup" by Helen Cooper.



Moving into November, we will continue to celebrate the fall harvest through cooking - by making applesauce, corn bread, roasted root vegetables, and even our own butter! We will read the story "Pancakes, Pancakes" by Eric Carle and observe how the boy in the story mills the flour and gets an egg from a

chicken and milk from a cow to make his pancakes. Not only does preparing food from scratch deepen our understanding of the process of our food's travel from farm to table, it is also a wonderful opportunity to share in the fruits of our labor as we enjoy the feast together — making a connection for the Thanksgiving holiday.



Play Pals: The Language of Paint

By Brit Eagan

This year in Play Pals, our 2 and 3 year-olds have exhibited a lot of curiosity and interest in the language of paint. Some of them prefer painting with brushes while others enjoy the sensory experience that comes with using



only their fingers. Students enjoy collaborating on large easel paintings, and it is through this shared language that many bonds have been formed. Our small classroom community is a diverse one, with children from Mandarin, Thai, English, and Spanish speaking homes, and we cherish the many opportunities we have to learn from one another. We have been blessed with amazing parents who bring their

diverse skills into the classroom, from serenading us with acoustic guitar to translating precious conversations between friends making art.

One of our parents, Xiuming, recently dictated some dialogue between two friends as they crisscrossed paintbrushes and giggled. As you can see, what might strike an outsider as random colors and lines often was produced by a child with specific intention and meaning. All we have to do is listen.



Albert: (spreading green left to right) Walking, walking, walking. Drawing a road song.

Adam: From here to there.

Albert: Where are we going to?

Adam: Battle airplane!

Albert: Go here?

Adam: The battle airplane changing into this.

Albert: This is my drawing of a smiling face!

Adam: This is Adam.

Albert: This is Albert.

Both: Nose!

Albert: Putting flower in box.



Sunshine Kids, Pumpkins, & Monsters, Oh My!

By Brit Eagan

October provided so many great opportunities to explore our understanding of big feelings, like fear, anger, surprise, and sadness. Our studio arts table was often the birthplace of seasonal creatures and designs such as fun Monsters and pumpkin prints. These creations sparked great conversations about



the big feelings our characters experience, which naturally lead to discussion about how we can relate to those same feelings and how we cope, calm down, and move forward.

Jeremy: "It's the fuzziest monster ever! It's always nice, but people think it's a bad monster and run away from it. Every time it gets grumpy it turns all red."

Zane: "That pumpkin gets angry because somebody hit it."

Akash: "My pumpkin was very sad."



Best Wishes to Brit! By Lucy Chaille

I have some "just off the press" news regarding Teacher Brit Eagan. As

some of you know Brit recently graduated with a degree in communications. Her ultimate goal has been to get a position in her field and her dream job just came through! Brit's last day of work will be on Friday, November 30th. It has been great fun to have Brit on our team, and we all wish her the very best in her new endeavors. Bon Voyage! (See letter below)

Dear CCC Families,

I have accepted a job as a Project Manager supporting Intel events worldwide. The offer came as a surprise; I had previously been turned down for the same role, and can't pass up the opportunity.

I have enjoyed being a member of this amazing community, and I know that CCC's great staff will keep being awesome. I will greatly miss my students, and encourage anyone who would like to stay in touch to do so!

Best Wishes, Brit Eagan

November comes
And November goes,
With the last red berries
And the first white snows.

With night coming early,
And dawn coming late,
And ice in the bucket
And frost by the gate.

The fires burn
And the kettles sing,
And earth sinks to rest
Until next spring.

- Elizabeth Coatsworth

Research Links

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