Play & Learning Newsletter

10th – 7th May 2021

**fee, fi, fo, fum, giant, growing, planting, seeds, seedling, germinate, sprouting**

Wonder words to use with your child:

Over the next few weeks we are focusing on the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. We have told the children the story using props instead of a book (something that they all sat and listened to completely transfixed!) and have also been sharing other versions and talking about the fact that this story has lots of different endings. The children have thought about how Jack could have got up to the Giant’s castle if his beanstalk hadn’t grown and have drawn some wonderful pictures of their ideas. This sort of ‘wonder’ encourages thinking and problem solving skills, plus creativity – great questions to pose when sharing stories with children.

We have also been using the story as starting point for thinking about what plants need to grow and how they change and develop. The children have all planted cress and are avidly watching for signs of change, plus are finding out what happens when seeds are left in the dark and not given any water. On Friday we received a letter from Jack explaining that his beanstalk had died because it hadn’t been watered enough. The children had to think of another plant that would grow really tall – and came up with a sunflower (thankfully as we had lots of sunflower seeds!). Together we planted sunflower seeds in the preschool garden and every child got to take a pot home with one in (those children who weren’t in on Friday will plant one next week and bring it home). We will be monitoring these seeds very carefully and, if successful with their growing, will be entering them into the Little Cornish Seed Company Tallest Sunflower competition. We will keep you updated on their progress!

Other highlights this week have been printing with leaves on the Creating table, pattern making with playdough, tiles and old pen lids, gardening play with pots, trowels, gardening gloves and different things to plant in the rice tray and a continuing theme of amazing wooden block building in the top room – inspired even further this week by the addition of some wooden circles (we are constantly in awe of the models that the children are creating!).

 **Out & About sessions:** A lovely week (bar Thursday where we caught in such a heavy rain shower!) of adventures at the little beach (by the Waterfront). The children enjoyed walking there via the harbour where we stopped to count boats, find out the names of them and talk about the seaweed and ladders. We had a maths focus whilst we were at the beach, introducing the children to a ’10 frame’ (a grid made up of 10 boxes) which we called a treasure chest. They had to fill their chests with treasures from the beach, one item in each box. Whilst they filled them they talked about how many boxes they had filled up, how many were left to fill and which was their favourite item. A really good activity to use mathematical language and explore the value of 10.

We also had lots of fun trying to climb up the stone ramp (the support that is against the gates of the harbour) – a very tricky challenge! Some amazing levels of determination and perseverance were witnessed – and such big smiles when they achieved some success!

 ***Sounds and Letters/language focus:***

Bingo has been played all week by the Flying Fish with a focus on initial letters sounds. We have also been practising writing our names and finding certain letters in our names.

 The Starfish have been developing their awareness of rhythm by beating instruments in time to the giant’s song and other rhymes. Being able to hear the beat of a song is a great listening skill to have and will aid their ability to ‘hear’ different sounds later on.

Ideas to support your child at home:

Get planting! The children are loving watching the seeds that we have planted start to come up and change – it always sparks interest in them and lots of excitement. Try planting some things at home – you don’t need to buy any seeds, just use the seeds inside fruit and vegetables. You can use empty toilet rolls for pots - just cut the bottom into three and bend them inwards. Cress is great to grow as it germinates so quickly and the children don’t have to wait long to see changes occur – plus it’s yummy to eat!

Let us know how their sunflowers get on – we will be asking for updates! 😊