



**Elmhurst Academy
~ PRAIRIE CLASSROOM ~
“Riflessione”**

September 23-October 4, 2019
Mrs. Pike, Mrs. Atkinson, Ms. Allison & Ms. Nowicki

*A private, independent Reggio Emilia inspired
early childhood school.*

Project: Entomology

Entomology: the scientific study of insects. Entomology studies how insects interact with their environment, other species and humans.



Throughout the month of September, the Prairie students have taken interest in the cicadas, crickets and other insects that they have discovered while exploring outdoors. The children began to inquire about the insect's physical characteristics and wondered how they communicated. They began to collect and observe the

exoskeleton under magnifying glasses and allowed their curiosity to guide them back outside to find living cicadas and other insects.

The children viewed a short video presentation about the job of an Entomologist: An Entomologist is a scientist who studies insects and their lives: how they behave, live, and help discover new species.



After observing pictures of different types of insects: We started to complete a KWL chart to find out what we already know and what we want to know further about insects.

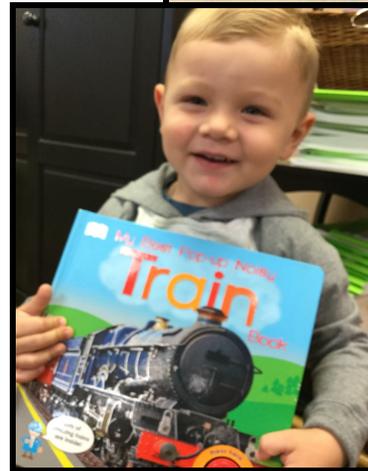


K	W	L
Bees have wings. -Della	I want to know more about cicadas- Emi	Bugs are not insects
Bees have stripes and make honey.- Della	Why cicadas live in trees?- Ellie	
Bees, dragonflies and cicadas fly.- Noah	There are cicadas and insects, why don't they look the same?- Brody	
Cicadas are up in the trees.- Ellie		

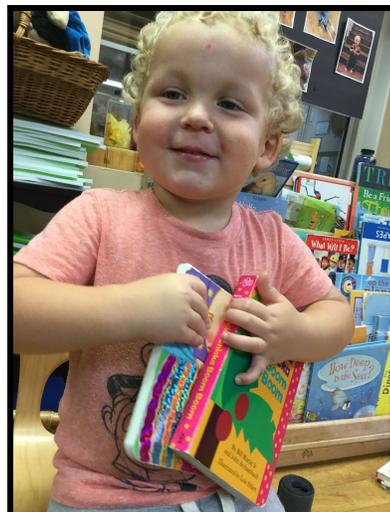
Ladybugs are black and red with big eyes.- Asher		
I pull cicadas off trees.- Noah		
Dragonflies have wings.- Declan		
Grasshoppers hop.- Elliott		
Insects have 6 legs.- Brooklyn		
Cicada shells are not real or alive.- Skylar		
Cicadas come out of the shell and fly.- Harvey		
Grasshoppers hop.- Emily		
Some insects fly.- Sena		
Praying Mantis have claws.- Harvey		

Star Student

The week of September 23 , **Logan** shared with his classmates his firsts, his weekend with Athena, and his favorite book. Logan was also snack helper and brought in 10 animals in his estimation jar.



The week of September 30-October 4, **Noah** shared with his classmates his firsts, his weekend with Athena, and his favorite book. Noah was also snack helper and brought 24 Peppa Pig characters in his estimation jar.



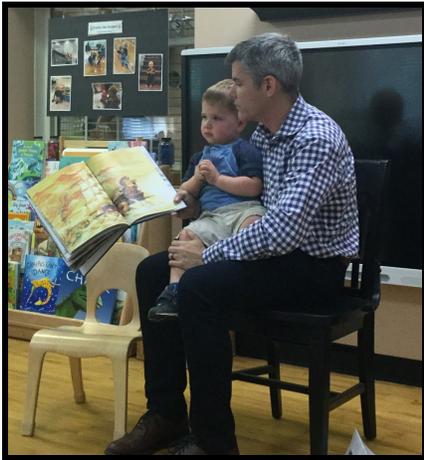


Mystery Reader:

On September 20, we welcomed Mrs. Hansen who share some of Henry's favorite books. On September 24, Logan's Nana read Logan's favorite book- the Little Blue Truck. On September 27, we enjoyed two mystery readers by having Mr. Hansen and Mrs Connolly share Henry's and Logan's books. Thank you so much for reading to us. We loved all the stories!



On October 1, we welcomed Mr. Sheehan, who read us some of Declan's favorite books and on October 3, Mrs. Dasso came in to share some of Noah's favorite books. Thank you all we loved the stories!

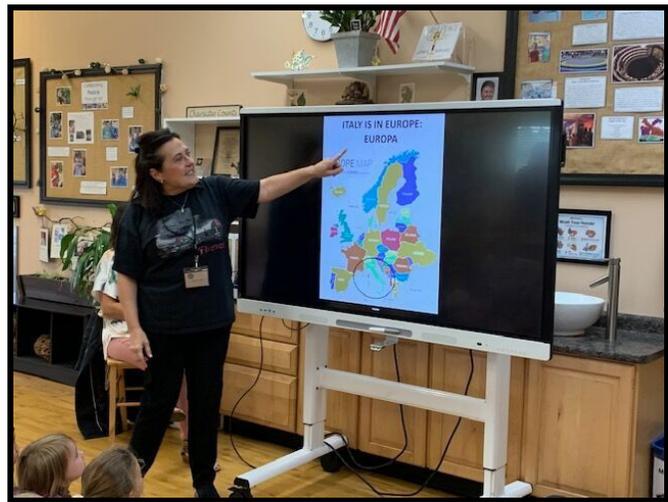


Global Studies: Italy and Reggio Emilia

During the week of September 23, the Prairie students discovered that Italy is a volcanically active country, containing the only active volcanoes on mainland Europe. Italy currently has 13 active volcanoes! The students watched in anticipation as a mixture of baking soda and red colored vinegar were poured into our volcano mold. Excitedly erupted along with the fizzy "lava" that streamed down the sides of the volcano.



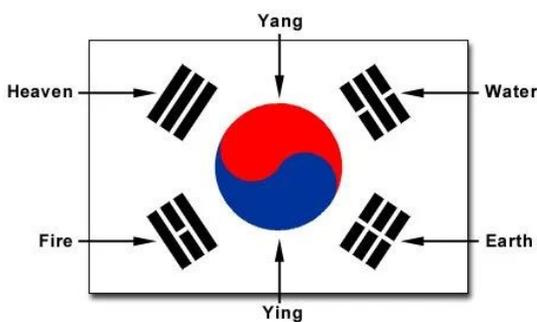
On September 25, Elmhurst Academy welcomed Lara Meoni from *insieme a Chicago*, an Italian language school located in the west loop neighborhood of Chicago. Lara took the Elmhurst Academy students on a tour of Italy through language, movement and song as part of our cultural study of Italy, the home of the Reggio Emilia Approach.



Introduction of South Korea

During the week of September 30, the Prairie students were introduced to our new country of study- South Korea. The children took a close look at the flag and geography of South Korea via the global and youtube.

The Children discovered that the South Korean flag displays a white background to symbolize the nation, the circle represents the people and The upper half circle, red, of **Taeguk** means **yang** and the lower half circle, blue, means **yin**. They stand for the state of harmony of **yin** and **yang**. The symbols, called **Kwae**, in the four corners, mean the principle of movement and harmony of Water, Earth, Fire and Heaven.





Math:

During the week of September 23, the Prairie students learned about primary colors and secondary colors, by mixing primary colors together to create secondary colors. Some of the students were very excited to see the colors change before their very eyes as they mixed the colors together.



During the week of September 30, the Prairie students began our new topic of patterns and classification. With our project of Entomology in mind the children created patterns with different bug images. The students also worked with natural materials to create AB patterns.



Author Study:

Students learned about how important it is to take care of our Prairie classroom library. We read "Mr. Wiggle's Book" and discussed how important it is to be kind to our books. Each student made a pinky promise to take care of all the different books we will be bringing into the classroom this school year. We also learned different songs about what authors and illustrators important jobs are when making a book.



During the week of September 30th, we introduced our new Author Lois Ehlert. We read the book "Chicka Chicka Boom Boom" illustrated by Lois Ehlert. We then used trays with the letters of the alphabet and tried to identify the first letter of our name or spell out our names on the tree. Becoming familiar and excited about letter recognition is a core part of our curriculum this school year.

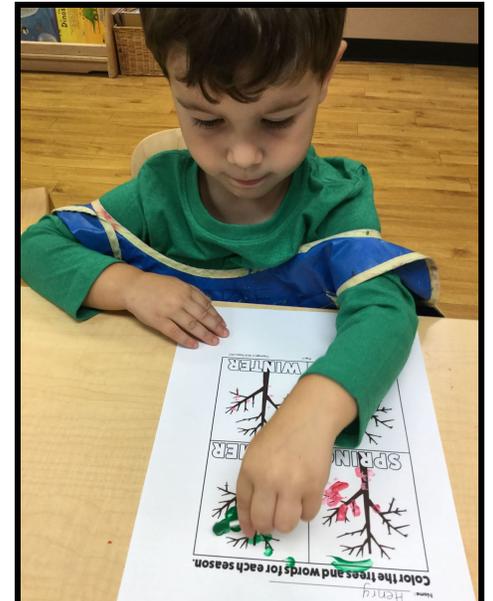


Science:

In science we learned how important trees are and how to be respectful to the trees around us outside. We did a tree bark rubbing and colored a picture for our trees at Elmhurst Academy. We also did a science experiment with the leaves from trees to see how they breath from tiny bubbles forming around them when left under water for a couple hours in the sunlight.



During the week of September 30th we learned about the four seasons. We read different books about the seasons and engaged in discussion about what we see in the environment during different times of the year. The class created a dot painting with Q-tips for the different colors we see on trees during the seasons.



Yoga:

Throughout the month of October the Prairie students will be developing balance and posture with standing poses. The children meet on their yoga mats and practiced warrior I, warrior II, mountain, dancer and triangle poses.

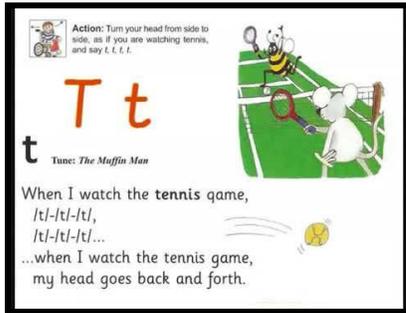


Handwriting:

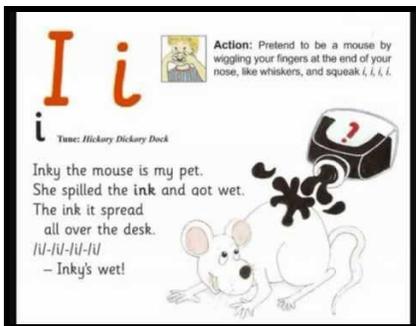
We began our time with working on letter identification. The students familiarize themselves with their new wooden pieces that they will use to check-in to the classroom in the morning. Our younger students "built" their names while the older students worked on writing the letters of their name.



Jolly Phonics:



I- Harvery moved his head from side to side, to watch the tennis game, while making the t/t/t sound.



I- Elloit wiggled his fingers to make whiskers as he said i/i/i.

Healthy Hero: How Physical Activity Helps Our Bodies Stay Healthy

The Prairie Explorers learned how physical activity such as exercise can help their bodies stay healthy. The children learned about the three key parts of exercising which are; endurance, strength, and flexibility. They then participated in an obstacle course which involved these three key parts starting with running, making a basket, and ending with some yoga to build our flexibility.

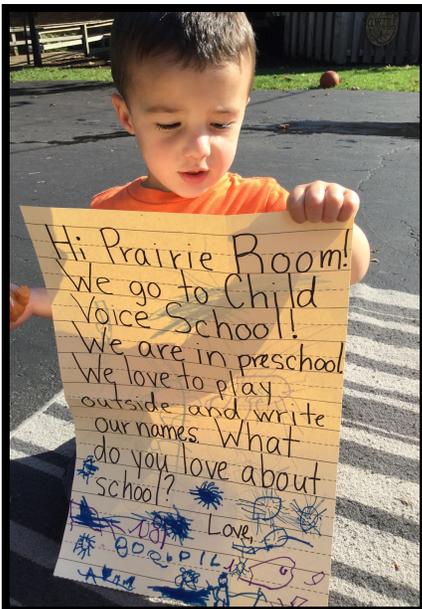


**Our super H.E.R.O for the week of September 23 is
Henery!**



A Child's Voice Pen Pals:

Child's Voice is a listening and spoken language program for children with hearing loss. They are located in Wood Dale and Chicago. Founded by a group of dedicated and determined parents, Child's Voice provides children with hearing loss the opportunity to learn to listen and talk. The Prairie students received a letter from our pen pals. After listening to one of their teachers read the letter, they responded back with a letter to their new friends.



Food Drive:

The Prairie students participated in a food drive supporting Elmhurst Yorkfield Food Pantry.



Elmhurst Yorkfield Food Pantry supplied over 650,000 pounds of food to families in need in our local community. In an effort to promote continued service learning, Elmhurst Yorkfield Food Pantry is a partner philanthropic organization with our school.

The students placed their items in the basket upon arrival and discussed this cause with their teachers. We then made our way to the front of the school to place our items in the collection boxes. Students also wore the color orange in support of Hunger Action



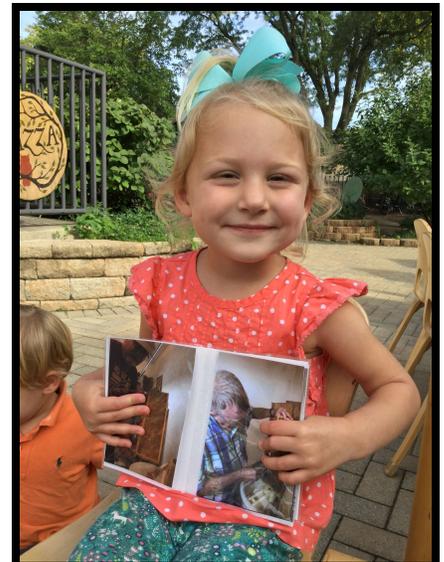
Month.

Thank you for all of your support and meeting Global Goal #2- No Hunger!



Project/ Family Connection:

One of our Prairie friends, Della, had the opportunity to visit her grandfather in Iowa where he has an ongoing harvest of beehives! Della and her family helped them extract over 70 pounds of honey from the honeycomb. She was able to bring her curiosity of insects and how they interact to her grandfather's and see first hand how honey is collected. She shared her experience and photos with her friends. Some of the photos from her trip are displayed in the classroom.



Self and Family Portraits:

The Prairie students were introduced to matman. The children used wooden pieces to help them identify the parts of their body as they put mat man together and to draw their self portraits.



Spanish:

The students have been learning about colors and numbers while reading the authors of the month in translation. They practiced the Spanish names of the colors as we read *El Baile de dinosaurios* by Sandra Boynton and *Cómo plantar un arco iris* by Lois Ehlert. Colors and numbers were further reinforced as they watched the musical video *Colorín Colorado* (It can be found here: [Colorín Colorado](#))



<https://rockalingua.com/videos/colors-and-numbers>). Finally, they played a game of colored cans in which they matched their colored sticks to the appropriate can and practiced fine motor skills and counting as they dropped the sticks into the cans and counted them in Spanish. ~Mrs. Lardin

Environmental Education:

In celebration of the Fall Equinox, the Prairie students did an investigation of the trees and their leaves on our Discovery Play Garden. Students collected leaves of different shapes, sizes, and colors and noted their differences. Students then



created a large leaf rubbing mosaic to document their findings. Students also read "Tap the Magic Tree" by Christie Matheson that takes children on a journey through the seasons. The students then created a tree of their own, painting the fall leaves on the tree with their fingers. ~Ms. Schaller

Art Enrichment: Creating our Peace Table~

The Prairie artists created their peace table. It began with a painting of a prairie that was missing all of the flowers. One by one, as each student made his or her mark, the prairie came alive with color, filled with life and a promise of peace.

The Potter's Wheel ~

The Prairie students also explored clay, a natural resource, which means it is not made by humans. Rather clay comes from the earth. Clay is in fact all around us, it is part of the earth's crust and the





surface on which we tread. It is usually found in little pockets that appear a couple of feet below the ground. Using clay they explored hand building and were introduced to our potter's wheel. A potter's wheel is a piece of equipment with a flat disk that spins around, on which a potter puts soft clay in order to shape it into a pot. The prairie artists experienced the the smooth clay as it rotated on the wheel. Artists pushed a hole in the center for the beginning of a bowl or pot and pulled and pushed the rotating clay, transforming it. The sensory experiences they encounter at the pottery wheel are numerous as they experience the texture and feel of the clay. ~Mrs. Flynn

Creative Movement: ~Mrs. Burdi



Technology:

Prairie students learned about the parts of a computer like the desktop, screen, mouse, and keyboard and identified its functions. Students then practiced by labeling the parts of a computer using their teacher's computer! On Friday October 4th prairie students recalled the parts of a computer by playing a digital parts of a computer matching game on the smartboard!

~Ms. Cleasen



School Reminders

- EA will be sponsoring the **NIFB food** drive on September 30th-October 1st for Hunger Action Month this September. (Please see attachment for more information.)
- **Box Tops contest going on now!** The family that turns in the most Box Tops by October 11, 2019, will win **25 free raffle tickets to the Fall Festival** on Friday, October 18, 2019.. Going forward, instead of clipping from packages and checking expiration dates, all Box Tops will be earned digitally by scanning your receipt. The Box Tops for Education team has worked hard to build a NEW-and-improved, user-friendly **Box Tops mobile app**, available now. The new app features state-of-the-art technology that allows you to scan your store receipt, find participating products and instantly add Box Tops to our school's earnings online. Elmhurst Academy is already registered so all you need to do is download the Box Tops app and designate Elmhurst Academy as your school of choice. While the app is continuing to develop through updates, your family can still submit your cut-out box tops and place in a zip-lock bag and drop it off in the marked baskets in your child's classroom Please be sure that the family name is on the bag. You can also take a screen shot in the "My Earnings" in the app and send the information to me directly. Learn more about these changes at: www.btfе.com. Any questions, please email Mrs. Webber at mwewebber@elmhurstacademy.com

- **Holiday Wreath Fundraiser** has begun! Think ahead to the upcoming holiday season and order evergreen decor for your home early! Order forms can be found in your child's mail folder. Funds raised benefit the growth and enhancement of the outdoor campus and school gardens. Orders are due Friday, October 18th, 2019 and will be delivered the week of the Thanksgiving holiday.
- New **Family Connection Forms!** Did you do something special with your child over the weekend that they would like to share with their classmates? Did you celebrate a special Holiday? Partake in a cultural or heritage tradition that you would like to share? Please fill out a Family Connection Form. Click on link for Family Connection, or downloaded off Elmhurst Academy's Website. Family fills out form; child shares form in classroom and once shared, teacher and child hangs up leaf up front. Our goal is to bridge home and school community, and share cultural practices.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/17feohQKsTjpAGPcjpWCazKoUy5ldqoQ8SRqcHdEBobU/edit?usp=sharing>

Classroom Reminders:

- As the weather becomes cooler, please bring in weather appropriate attire labeled with your child's name.
- Elmhurst Academy will close early at 3:00pm on Friday, October 18 for our annual Fall Faest.



Mrs. Pike, Mrs. Atkinson, Ms. Allison & Ms. Nowicki