

Dover Nursery School
Newsletter
November 2004

Theme: Hibernating

Learning Goals:

1. Learn what it means “to hibernate”
2. Which animals hibernate?
3. What signals an animal to hibernate?
4. How does *Mousekin* choose to hibernate?

**Theme:
Sharing/Thanksgiving**

Learning Goals:

1. Sharing is caring: being kind to others
2. Native Americans: how they helped Pilgrims; how they lived.
3. What were the Pilgrims thankful for?
4. What are we thankful for?

Hibernating

1. We introduced the concept of hibernating with a well known hibernating animal, the bear. The children learned that hibernating means “sleeping all winter long,” and it was reinforced with our skit of a sleeping bear and our song, “Who is Hibernating?” (sung to the tune of Frere Jacques):

Who is hibernating? Who is hibernating?
You can't see! You can't see!
Sleeping all winter long,
Let's be quiet with our song.
Snore, snore, snore!
Snore, snore snore!

See if your child can add the hand movements to the song!

2. The students wanted to know which specific animals hibernate. Our science table now lists names of animals (and illustrations of them) that hibernate. We talked about signals that send animals into hibernation: fewer hours of light in the days, colder weather, and a strong urge to collect and eat food.
3. Our tulip and daffodil bulbs never made it into the ground in October, so we took the opportunity to explain that they were going to “hibernate” all winter long

too—and we planted them along the fence in the playground. We read from *Planting a Rainbow* by Lois Ehlert to show how a bulb extends roots and a shoot in the spring time. We also planted paper white and amaryllis bulbs in the classroom and we will observe how high they grow. We made predictions about which ones will become flowers first and which ones will grow the tallest.

4. *Mousekin's Golden House* by Edna Miller is a sweet old favorite book here at DNS. Coming off of the hype of Halloween, *Mousekin* offers a quiet, slow-paced rhythm of a mouse that finds a Jack-o-lantern and explores it as a safe haven and possible winter house. After the children learned how Mousekin turned his pumpkin into his winter home, the students created their own version with a Jack-o-lantern project with Mousekin inside. This reinforced their memory skills about the story and gave them another tangible exercise in hibernation.

Sharing/Thanksgiving

1. Thanksgiving came in on the *Mayflower*, our Pilgrim's boat made from a large cardboard box and creative imaginations. The students learned that the Pilgrims came to Massachusetts from a faraway land over rough seas. Once the Pilgrims landed, they didn't have enough food and they didn't know how to grow crops here successfully. We then introduced the Native Americans (we also refer to them as Indians) who *shared* their food. The Pilgrims were so thankful that they invited the Native Americans to a "feast of thanks," later called, Thanksgiving.
2. Stone Soup was a tale told to the children in morning circle. It depicts a village with residents who respond to some hungry travelers with, "We don't care—we won't share!" The travelers commence making stone soup in the middle of the village square with a pot, water, and a stone. Curious villagers stroll over to ask what the men are making and they are told, "We're making stone soup! We're making stone soup! We're making stone soup today—hey! It will be delicious, nutritious, incredible!" But it would be all that tastier with some onions...carrots...potatoes....Soon the villagers are offering one or two items and stone soup is created and shared among everyone. The secret to stone soup is the stone and sharing hearts.
3. Tell me more about Indians. Native Americans knew how to grow and cook with corn, and they shared their knowledge with the Pilgrims. We had a Native American fireside dance to give thanks for corn. The children wore Indian vests and headpieces that they had made earlier in the day. Native Americans used birch bark to make canoes, baskets, and as an early form of paper. The students created art on birch bark.
4. Sharing! Students shared Halloween candy with us and hammered pieces into a 3-D turkey that will soon hang from our ceiling! They are also going to be asked to share ingredients for our own stone soup that we will be making for snack this week. Lastly, DNS will celebrate the idea of sharing next Monday and Tuesday when all the students share their cooking talents to make a feast!