

TREE

Today we talked about the letters in the word tree. We consider letters of the alphabet as elements of words and words components of sentences. The sentences represent thoughts and ideas to be shared with others. Our view of letters contrasts that of more traditional early childhood practice of viewing letters as weekly themes that are studied in relative isolation. When writing emerges from a desire to communicate, children are motivated to write and understand the elements of writing. We introduced the word tree to the children and had them identify the letters and letter sounds in the word. Ms. Jen then wrote the word on a piece of paper and modeled how each letter was written and the children used their invisible pencils (their fingers) to practice writing the letter in the air. Finally the children were given the opportunity to practice writing on of the letters from the word tree.



In addition to learning about the letters of the word tree, we also studied the different parts of the tree. We learned that trees have roots under the ground, a trunk, branches, and leaves. During our nature walk, we encouraged the children to notice the trees and all of their different parts and how the trees varied from each other. On the way



to the Highland State Recreational Area, we found a very interesting tree. The tree was interesting to the children because there was a hole in the bottom of the trunk. We posed the question “What do you think could live in this hole?” to the children. Abbi said, “a baby horse.” Kennedy said, “a raccoon.” Megan

V. said, “a rabbit.” Lucas said, “a squirrel or a donkey could live there.” Tristan said, “an owl.” Jade said, “a bunny.” Lindsey said, “a bear.” After talking about the hole, each child got an opportunity to look into the hole and feel the bark of the tree. We learned that trees have bark to protect the inside of the tree. After feeling the bark the children said that it felt “rough,” “scratchy”, and “bumpy.”



During our nature walk, we found a nice, tree-filled spot to sit and observe the trees around us. The children then drew pictures of trees in their nature journals. Several of the children wrote the word tree by their pictures. Some of these children needed help with writing the word and others were able to write it independently. This is an example of children having the desire to communicate their thoughts and ideas through writing. Talking about the word tree and its letters before the nature walk allowed the children to make the connection between the word and the object.

