

This morning we looked at a book called Michigan Snakes. Ms. Jen showed the children the cover of the book and asked the children what they thought the book was about. Tristan shouted out “Michigan Snakes!” Ms. Jen asked him why he thought that and he said, “because I saw a M and a S.” We looked at a picture of each snake and talked about where it lives, what it eats, and how long each one is. Ms. Jen used a tape measure to show the children how long each snake is.



There are 17 species of snakes that are native to the state of Michigan. When we were talking about the Copper-Bellied Water Snake Ms. Jen asked “if the snake lives by the water, what do you think it eats?” Kennedy said, “Things that live by the water.” Megan said, “Small fish.” The Brown Snake is very small and ranges in size from 9” to 18”. Ms. Jen used the tape measure to show the children how big this snake is, Kennedy said, “It’s not that big.” When we looked at the picture of the Eastern Garter Snake, Ms. Jen asked the children if anybody knew what kind of snake it was. Devon thought for a minute before calling out, “A garter snake!” Kennedy noticed the next snake we looked at, a Northern Ribbon Snake looked like the Garter Snake.” We also learned that the only venomous snake that is native to Michigan is the Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake.



Mia brought in a rattle from a rattlesnake today to show her friends. The children listened to the sound the rattle makes and touched it very carefully. We learned that every time a rattlesnake sheds its skin a new rattle is added to the existing rattle. We also learned that old rattles sometimes fall off and that the number of rattles a rattlesnake has does not correspond with the age of the snake, as is sometimes believed.

After circle time we went outside. We brought the Michigan Snakes book, a tape measure, scissors, crayons and markers, and a roll of receipt paper with us. The children had the opportunity to pick a snake out of the book, measure its length with the tape measure and then cut a piece of paper that long. After they had cut their paper, they colored the snake and then wrote the name of the snake on a separate piece of paper. This activity combines many different skills and academic areas; it combines components of science, math, and literacy as well as giving the children an opportunity to use their fine motor and visual discrimination skills.



Tristan looked through the book and decided to measure the Black Rat Snake, which length frequently exceeds 6' with a record length over 8'. Tristan measured his snake to be 7' long.

Tristan consulted the snake book and discovered that the Black Rat Snake is most always black so he began coloring his snake black. Tristan followed his task through to the end and colored all 7' of his paper black. After he was done, using the book as a guide, he wrote the words Black Rat Snake on another piece of paper.



Devon looked in the book and picked out the Blue Racer snake to measure. The Blue Racer is usually between 4' and 6', so Devon measured out 5' of snake. Devon consulted then book and learned that the Blue Racer Snake is typically a grayish, bluish, or greenish color. Devon decided to color his snake gray (although he added some other colors after he had been coloring for a while.)





By looking at the book and Ms. Jen modeling some of the letters for him, Devon was able to write the words Blue Racer on another sheet of paper. While he was writing it, Tristan was watching and said, "Hey! My snake and Devon's snake both start with a B and a L."



Jayden looked at the book and decided to make a Northern Water Snake. He measured it out and cut the paper and then consulted the book and began coloring his snake black and gray. As he continued to color he added some more colors to it. After he finished coloring his snake, he was able to write the word snake with a little bit of teacher assistance. Jayden was so excited about this activity that he made two snakes!





Mia decided to measure out the Eastern Garter Snake. She measured her paper and then looked at the picture of the snake and decided she had to give her snake yellow and black stripes. Mia then used the yellow and black crayons to draw the stripes on her snake. Our outside time ended before Mia had the opportunity to write the words Garter Snake. We will be doing this activity again tomorrow so she will be able to finish and the people that did not get a chance to do this activity will have an opportunity to.

