Beginning the school year was a very exciting time for the students and teachers in the PM Class! It was a busy month of meeting familiar and new peers for the children and the teachers. Our main focus during the first month of school together was to become comfortable with the new spaces, new teachers, new routines, new rules and new transitions. This time helped provide our friends with the security of knowing what to expect every day acclimating.

Friendship and Community

Our Favorite Theme Books

Circle time is a great time to hear stories that help friends learn more about our theme. This month our favorite books were:

- Picnic, by John Burningham
- ishi, by Akiko Yabuki
- Hello My Name Is Ruby, by Linda Davick
- Friendshape, by Amy Krouse Rosenthal & Tom Lichtenheld
- The Story of My Feelings, by Laurie Berkner
- That Toad Is Mine, by Barbara Shook Hazen
- The Short Giraffe, by Neil Flory

Mango Monkey Says...

You may have heard your child talk about “Mango Monkey” and his friends, “Andy The Alligator,” “Shy Squirrel,” “Sal Snake,” and “Cool Confident Cat.” They are all puppets we have begun to use at circle time. Mango Monkey helps to teach young children that we are all friends at school and we can learn and play together. The teachers began with talking about and using pictures of how we can be kind to one another at school. We talked about three Friendship Rules; 1. Use kind words such as: Please, Hello, Thank You. 2. Keep your hands and feet in your own space. 3. Everyone can be a kind friend and play. The teachers asked the children in their circle groups, “What do you think a friend is?” All the children had thoughtful ideas to contribute to the discussion. The Green Room teachers will continue this theme throughout the year, using the different puppets in scenarios to help the children learn how to respond effectively in social situations.
All About the PM Preschool

During the first week of school, the children had the opportunity to discover the different centers in the Green Room. The **Dramatic Play Center** was popular for housekeeping, taking care of baby dolls in a doctor’s office and a post office. The **Discovery Area** is where we go to explore water, sand, light and magnets. These tables create opportunities for problem solving, cooperation, and collaboration. The children have also been painting at the easel and exploring various art materials on the tables. Puzzles, sorting by colors or shapes, and pegs are favorites in the **Math Center** and on the tables. At the **Science Center**, the children have compared a variety of sea shells, rocks and feathers with magnifying glasses. We graphed our favorite colors and our eye color. They have used mirrors with paper, pencils, and crayons for sketching themselves. The children have enjoyed learning group games such as *Candyland*, *PM Friends Bingo*, *a Green Room Scavenger Hunt*, *High Ho Cherrio* and *Snail’s Pace Race*. The **Library Center** is where we go to enjoy a story. All of these centers are for the children to experience joy, creativity and curiosity.

Week 2

All About Me

During the second week, we talked about one of the ways that we learn about each other is by exploring our faces to think about what all the different parts look like. We read *All About Faces*, by La Zoo, and explored our faces with mirrors. Each friend worked on a multi-step personal project. The first step was for each child to identify the first letter of their name and then use golf balls to roll paint colors on it in a box. For the next step, the children looked in a mirror and sketched the shape of their face with a pencil, followed by choosing a paint color to match their skin, after reading the book, *The Color of Us*, by Karen Katz. The next week when the paint was dry, we picked Crapas colors for our eyes, eyebrows and our lips. We glued googly eyes on our faces and yarn for our hair too. Finally, our portraits were done! Everyone then had an opportunity to tell what they liked best about school. The project will be displayed for everyone to see at our **Open House** on October 17th.
All About Families

The *family collage* pages began at home. Our friends worked on this project with their family by selecting photographs to include in their project. The children were proud to share their collages with their peers at circle time. These activities were beginning practice for public speaking! The collages will remain in a binder for everyone to review until the end of school when they will be sent home. Everyone also drew their family in a house. We also graphed and compared the number of people in our homes.

All About My Community

During the fourth week, our focus was how a *community* is a group of people living or working together in the same area. We talked about how people in the same communities might go to the same schools, shop in the same grocery stores and do the same things. They also help each other solve problems together. During Circle Time, we looked at a globe and a map of Pittsburgh to see where we live and are part of a community. We also learned about our Green Room community by playing the *PM Friends Bingo*. At circle time, we also discussed the many different jobs people have in our community. The children identified pictures of their friends, and educators when a picture was shown and their name was called. Next month, the children will have rotating *classroom jobs* such as the snack helper, weather helper and mat passer that help them become involved in our PM Preschool community to develop greater *self-esteem and responsibility*. We also discussed the many different jobs people have in our community.
Make Shop Experiences

The Make Shop is a space for hands-on building and tinkering. Here the children can play with ideas, making things, and experiment with tools, techniques and materials. They investigate how things are used and learn new processes and skills. The Wood Working Center is part of The Make Shop. Using LEGO bricks and putty was the perfect opportunity in September for building fine motor skills, cooperative play and having a sense of accomplishment by solving problems. The children also had Thera Putty, a flannel board, gears, 3-D magnets and stylus punching pointers to open up a new world of opportunities.

Music Experiences with Mrs. Hraber

Mrs. Lauren Hraber (pronounced like “Harbor”) comes to the Children’s School every other Thursday. This month’s music and movement concentration is learning how to keep a beat. The children were introduced to Pete the Metronome, a musical tool, and learned how to tap a beat by clapping, beating a drum, marching and jumping. We also participated in a clapping song and singing our names.

Center Spotlight:
The Dramatic Play Center

Dramatic play allows children to practice new situations or events. The PM Preschool friends are able to express themselves, be creative, develop their imaginations, and try new tools as they play. Dramatic play can also be used to introduce new concepts and reinforce others. It is a great way to build cooperation and communication between children while extending and building language arts, math, reading, writing, social skills, fine motor and gross motor skills. In September, the friends, took care of baby dolls by feeding them and preparing tasty meals in a housekeeping setting, pretended to be doctors, and worked as postal workers.
We enjoyed Ms. Debbie from the Carnegie Library Outreach Program. She read us books and taught us fun active movement songs. Ms. Debbie is scheduled to visit us every month.

Mango Monkey visited our circle to talk about how to be a kind friend and a good listener.

The Green Room Post Office workers were busy stamping envelopes and delivering mail to friends.

Lucy Jo, Sylas, Ryder, Shreya and Evelyn used scissors and glue to develop their fine motor skills and create pictures.
Our Month in Photos

Lucy Jo and Evelyn enjoyed pretending with a baby doll and building with the Imaginary Playground Blocks.

Moses and Zeynep painted with watercolors to design their September locker picture. Each month new locker tags will be made.

Shreya, Sylas, Henry and Satoshi organized community themed Loose Parts.

Satoshi looked at his name on the Eye Color graph.

Moses used his hands to make a silly face!

Cornelia and Zeynep experimented at the outdoor water table.

Satoshi mixed dirt and water to make a mud cake.

Sylas, Ryder and Evelyn played in the sandbox.
Carnegie Mellon University police officers came to school to visit the 4-year-old groups on the last Friday of our Friendship and Community Theme. The officers taught us how police help people. Officer Campbell read us a book, taught us how to ask for help and dial 911 number on a telephone. The officers showed us their reflective vests, radios, badges, flashlights, keys and handcuffs. Everyone had the opportunity to sit in the officer’s police car and see all of the equipment inside the vehicle!