

Class Project

Our Community, Our History, Our Heritage

Year after year the teachers welcome new children into our Preschool. We watch them laugh, learn and grow. They tell us stories about themselves, their favourite places, the people they love, their neighbours, friends, parks, gardens and homes - all of the things that make them feel special. The environment becomes the community which then becomes their home.

If given the opportunity to learn about their heritage, children can develop the interest and passion to study history. If they embrace history, they will learn more about the world in which they live and what contributions have been made in generations past.

Our Community Project

Britannia Preschool has been studying the history of our neighbourhood including architecture of the past and present. The process of learning about the community in which we live has been very exciting. The first discussion and the very "spark" of this project began with the documentation of how children defined the word "history":

What is History? What the Children Think



Etienne: If there is germs on you, you cough and then you don't cough anymore.

Nikko: It's a button on your computer!! When you love something on your computer you can bookmark it and go back.

Myles: Electricity and old houses.

Raven: If you love something you can find a map to find it on the printer.

R: When you love a toy, you can find it.

Judah: Old ships that have been sailing a long time, and then they crashed into a rock.

Sofia: Then there was a city called Fairland.

Miles: In my pirate movie, he gets stuck in snow, there is a giant bird...

Luka: It's the past. When the dinosaurs lived.

We expanded on their ideas by giving them an assignment to research the history of their homes with the help of their parents. They were then encouraged to bring photos/drawings of their homes along with information that they gathered from online sources that we provided them with. We developed a large map of our community that we then posted within our room. The photos and information were placed on the map according to address. We now proudly display the re-creation of our community for all to see. The children have gained a better understanding of their environment and that it takes a whole community to build a community.



As part of our research, we also discussed the history of settlers, indigenous peoples and aboriginal communities.



We connected with the Grandview Heritage Group www.grandviewheritagegroup.org (local historians working together to preserve and celebrate Grandview and Commercial Drive). They visited our Preschool to share photographs and information about our community's past and present.



We later went for a “walking tour” to visit some of this year’s homes displaying the 2013 Centenary signs.



Since we began this project with the question of “What is History”, we decided to find out how their understanding of history evolved after our research and classroom discussion. After the children had a circle time with the ‘Heritage Project’ Group, they were asked the same question they were asked prior to their project. These were their observations:

What is History and Heritage? Part II

Barrett: Time goes by.

Joe: A long time ago, there might have been things like tall ostriches.

Luka: Old houses that use to be different in the olden days.

Nola: I saw great pictures - The trees were huge. Old cars and lots of punch buggies.

Sorren: A long time ago when the dinosaurs were here.

Rowen: There were lots of flowers.

Mavis: When I was in my mummies belly and my house was yellow.