

December 2015

Wednesday, December 16	3 Day Classes Holiday Sing-along
Thursday, December 17	4 Day Classes Holiday Sing-along
Friday, December 18	Beginners, 2 Day & 5 Day Classes Holiday Sing-along
December 21 - January 4	Holiday Break
Monday, January 5	2016-2017 Enrollment begins
Monday, January 18	Martin Luther King Day, No School



Notes from the Head of School

Simple Gifts

'Tis the gift to be simple,	And when we find ourselves
'Tis the gift to be free,	In the place just right,
'Tis the gift to come down	'Twill be in the valley
Where we ought to be,	Of love and delight.

At Berrybrook, teachers give simple gifts to children throughout the year. One gift that is very important, but sometimes overlooked, is the gift of time. Teachers give children enough time to finish work, time to make a choice, time to respond. Teachers patiently listen to children for as long as it takes for children to say what's on their mind. If you visit a Berrybrook classroom you will notice that children are very busy, but they are not rushed. The gift of time is especially important this time of year when things get so hectic. Another gift that Berrybrook teachers give children is their respect. They respect each child as an individual and encourage respectful interactions in the classroom. Teachers help children understand that the more they respect others, the more rewards they will receive from socializing and making friends. These gifts are only two of the many gifts delivered daily by teachers at Berrybrook - and teachers thrive on the gifts they receive from families and children in return. All of the wonderful things available at Berrybrook have been made possible by a gift from Berrybrook's founder, Katharine Mann. Our beautiful natural setting, our philosophy and our supportive community were all part of Mrs. Mann's vision when she started the school in 1954. When we think about giving during the holiday season, it is important to remember that the most precious gifts do not come in a box, they come from love, compassion and understanding. We have an abundance of those gifts at Berrybrook, and they happen 365 days a year.

Best wishes for joyful holidays, Mrs. Keeley

The Gift Of Understanding

Joanne LaForest

This holiday season when you're searching for that perfect gift, why not give the gift of understanding to your child? It's a simple gift to give that no doubt will benefit the giver as well as the receiver. It doesn't cost a thing; except your time and ability to seek out and find clues that tell you who your child is, to ultimately discover their true essence.

At the core of this essence is your child's temperament. As Karr-Morse and Wiley state, a child's temperament "is (their) basic orientation to emotions...and shapes how (they) respond to learning experiences." In Jeanine Fitzgerald's book, *The Dance of Interaction*, she explains that "temperament is thought of as the single most powerful influence on behavior, (therefore) we are best advised to spend time discovering this natural style."

Fitzgerald speaks of the DISC Model of Human Behavior in her book. This one model describes "behavioral tendencies" and becomes very interesting when you recognize characteristics you see in your child as well as yourself. When we discover our own personality styles and those of our children "we can meet (our) children where they are...we can work with...their style, instead of trying to make them into something they were never intended to become," Fitzgerald writes. She goes on to explain that no one is ever 100% of any one type, there are often blends of different styles.

The four temperaments are as follows with only some of the personality characteristics listed under each:

"D" types are often times dominant, decisive, determined and a "doer".
"D" types typically want *results*.

"I" types are often times inspiring, interested, imaginative and impulsive.
"I" types typically want *affection, fun and excitement*.

"S" types are often times supportive, steady, sweet and sentimental.
"S" types typically want *peace and stability*.

"C" types - are often cautious, competent, critical thinkers and conscientious.
"C" types typically want *information and quality answers*.

By understanding your child's temperament more fully you can become better equipped to navigate your interactions with them during times of fun and laughter, playing and learning and times when they are under stress or are frustrated. Your child will thank you for this gift by demonstrating that they feel understood by you. They are asking for this gift every day, why not give them what they want? After all, if you were an avid tennis player and were hoping for the gift of a new tennis racket and received a baseball bat instead, wouldn't you feel a bit misunderstood? As Stephen Covey always says from his book *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, "seek first to understand, then to be understood".

Happy Holidays!

Fitzgerald, Jeanine, *The Dance of Interaction* (Personality Insights Press, 2005), 79-80.

Karr-Morse, Robin and Meredith S. Wiley, *Ghosts From The Nursery* (New York: The Atlantic Monthly Press, 1997) 129.

Covey, Stephen, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* (Free Press, 1989), 122.

Beginners Program

Last month, the Beginners learned about family, just in time for Thanksgiving. Our class projects began with houses and the people that make them into homes. The children worked together to make a turkey for our classroom, and our most recent project was making a collage of healthy food onto a class "plate", as well as individual student plates.

With the beautiful, warm weather we had in November, the Beginners were able to spend extra time outdoors. The rocket ship area has become a favorite spot to play. The group has become expert at moving safely from place to place, and they love to demonstrate their knowledge when teachers ask them before leaving the classroom -

Teachers - "Who is at the front?"

Children - "A teacher!"

Teachers- "Who is in the middle?"

Children - "The kids!"

Teachers - "Who is at the end?"

Children - "A teacher!"

The children are also becoming proficient at classroom routines, and able to predict with accuracy what will happen next in our daily schedule.

Music is very popular during group time and this month we will be adding holiday tunes to our repertoire. We are looking forward to December and holiday preparations. Please remember our Holiday Sing-a-Long and gathering will be December 18, the last day of school before break. All families are welcome to join us at 9:00 for merriment and refreshments!

Happy Holidays!

Mrs. Fosdick, Mrs. LaForest,
Mrs. Piccuito and Mrs. Rosen



First Year Program News

It is hard to believe that December is upon us. The air is colder. The leaves have turned from vibrant reds, golds and oranges to a deeper brown. They have fallen from trees, along with acorns and pinecones, which we collected and used to create nature collages.

Each class enjoyed a special Thanksgiving Feast. We baked cornbread and even made our own butter. This was a nice time talk about families and what we are thankful for.

With the colder weather here, we request children come to school with a winter coat, hat, gloves, snow pants and winter boots. We try our best to get out daily, and even if there is no snow, snow pants add a layer of warmth. Because children share cubbies, we ask parents to label all items.

December is a busy month at Berrybrook! We will start by learning about Hanukkah. For a special snack, we will even make our own Latkes! These are always a popular snack. The children enjoy learning and singing our traditional Berrybrook holiday songs throughout the month. Be sure to watch for our Berrybrook Tree. Children in each class will decorate a different shaped candle to place on the tree. It surely will be a lovely tree! The children will be busy creating holiday projects and gifts for their families. Did we mention glitter? You may be seeing quite a lot of glitter!

Each first year class begins the holiday break with a Sing-along. Please watch for an invitation from your child soon! Sing-along day is a shortened day. Once the Sing-along is over, we invite you to join us for cookies that the children have made. After enjoying

some cookies and conversation you may sign your child out to begin the holiday break.

2 Day-Rm 1 Friday, 12/18, at 9:15.
We begin as soon as everyone arrives.

3 Day-Rm 1 Wednesday, 12/16 at 9:15.
We begin as soon as everyone arrives.

3 Day-Rm 3 Wednesday, 12/16, 10:30.
Children arrive at 9:00, parents return at 10:30 for our Sing-along.

The children will be practicing for our holiday Sing-along. It is not unusual for preschool children to become anxious about performing in front of people. If children express any anxiety about participating, please reassure them that it is their choice.

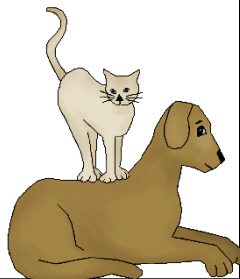
We wish all of our Berrybrook families a happy, healthy holiday season. We look forward to 2016!

Mrs. Barlow, Mrs. Capasso,
Mrs. Delano, Mrs. Dunn,
Mrs. McDonough, Mrs. Piccuito,
Mrs. Savoy



Thank you so much to all of the families who donated items for the Kingston Animal Shelter. Mrs. O'Neil will be bringing your generous gifts to the animals. There will still be a box and a jar for pennies through December.

Thank you again for making the animals very happy!



Enrollment 2016-2017

During the holiday break, all current Berrybrook parents will receive re-enrollment information for 2016-2017. January is the month reserved for current and alumni families to submit an application. Starting February 1 we begin enrolling new-to-Berrybrook families.

Tuition Assistance 2016-2017

The Berrybrook Board of Directors sets aside funds for tuition assistance through the Helen Wheeler Scholarship Fund. Families should not be prevented from attending Berrybrook because of financial constraints. The FACTS Grant and Aid Assessment system is available for families to apply for tuition assistance. Families may apply online quickly and easily on the FACTS web site that is completely safe and secure. More information about tuition assistance procedures will be included in the re-enrollment mailing. Families with any questions about tuition assistance are encouraged to speak to Mrs. Keeley.

Cold Weather Tips

Now is the time to locate all snow pants, boots, hats, and mittens that have been packed away. One of these mornings we will wake up to a snowfall!

Children should come prepared for the outdoors. Please remember to have your child arrive with boots, hat, mittens, jacket, and snowpants. We know that some days it is hard to tell what the weather conditions will be at the end of the session, so when in doubt, you could pack snowpants and boots in a tote bag to have in the cubby. Please mark each item with your child's name.

Second Year Program News

The four and five day teachers would like to start off the November recap with a thank you to all the chaperones who took part in our Plimoth Plantation field trip at the beginning of the month. The temperature that day was mild - a perfect day to explore the grounds at the plantation. Throughout the month the classes reflected on their trip and created their own personal Plimoth Plantation, which required many days of hard work!

The month of November also was busy for the students with the creation of musical instruments such as drums and shakers. They created headbands which they could wear on the last day before Thanksgiving break. The classes ended the month with a Thanksgiving feast. The children helped to make the feast by baking some traditional holiday items.

Heading into December, the classes will be learning about many holiday songs and traditions. Different classes will be working on different projects, so it will vary from room to room. Although children will be busy, the teachers also strive to let them have time to relax. The pressure of the holidays can be felt by children as well!

Also in December, children will be working on special gifts to give their families and they will also be practicing their holiday program to which all the families are invited to join on the last day of school. Please keep a look out for your invitation in your child's cubbie! We hope to see everyone there!

The holiday get-togethers will be at the following times:

5 Day Room 2 - Friday, December 18th
Children arrive at 9:00 and parents return at 10:30 for our Sing-along

4 Day Room 2 -
Thursday, December 17th at 1:00
Our sing-along will begin as soon as everyone arrives.

4 Day Room 1 -
Thursday, December 17th at 2:30
Children arrive at 1:00. Parents return at 2:30 for our sing-along.

At the conclusion of the sing-along, we will gather in classrooms for a holiday snack which the children have prepared. After we have enjoyed our snack our day will end and the holiday break will begin.

Happy Holidays!
Mrs. Caddle, Mrs. Fosdick,
Mrs. LaForest, Miss McNulty, Mrs.
Neal, Mrs. O'Neil, Mrs. Piccuito,
Mrs. Rosen, and Mrs. Richardson

Lunch Bunch

Thank you to all of the families who enrolled in our Session 1 Lunch Bunch Program this fall. The last day of the current session will be January 28, 2016.

Current Lunch Bunch families have priority for the second session which begins on Tuesday, February 2, 2016 and ends on Thursday, June 2. Currently enrolled families will be asked to re-enroll by January 5. After that date, enrollment information for the second session will be open to all families.

Thank you!

Parents Association News

We hope all of you and your families had a Happy Thanksgiving! We hope you find this month's update helpful, and as always please let any member of the BPA know if you have comments, suggestions, or areas where you would like to become more involved! The holiday season is a very busy time of year for everyone and there is no exception for our Berrybrook students and families. There are lots of fun activities and traditions planned at Berrybrook this month for everyone to look forward to.

HOLIDAY CHARITY

Thank you to everyone who brought in donations for the Duxbury Interfaith Council. Their mission is "Together, We can fill baskets." More than 100 Duxbury families look to the Interfaith Council to fill their baskets during the holiday season and all our donations will certainly help.

Each year the BPA sponsors a charity drive to help celebrate the holidays. Berrybrook School, along with Wicked Good Cause's Do-Gooders Committee, is happy to announce our holiday gift drive. Wicked Good Cause is a non-profit organization whose mission is to provide support to local families that have been affected by unforeseen illness, accident or tragedy. Do-Gooders, a sub-section of WGC, was created to assist members of our community who meet this criteria but may have smaller or more immediate needs. This year, the Berrybrook School community along with the Do-Gooders will be providing gifts for four local families, seven children in all, ranging in age from 4-13. If you are interested in making a child in your community's holiday a little brighter, please take a tag with a gift request from the giving tree

placed on the BPA table in the lobby of the school. Once you have purchased a gift, you can bring the unwrapped gift to school and place it in the drop box. We ask that all gifts be dropped off by December 14th so that we can distribute them to the families. For more information about Wicked Good Cause visit wickedgoodcause.org and please feel free to contact Julie Materna at julieladd@hotmail.com if you have any questions. Thank you so much in advance for your support!

ENRICHMENT

Now that the children are settled in to their new Berrybrook schedule and routines, enrichment activities will begin for all students after the New Year. All classes will now participate in Inspire Kids Yoga. This program consists of monthly sessions with a certified yoga instructor, who will focus on yoga that encourages self-esteem and body awareness. We are also working on additional fun enrichment activities for the children later in the school year.

FAMILY FUN FRIDAY!

Thanks to all the families who came out to see Lindsay and her Puppet Pals in November. The children (and parents) seemed to really enjoy the show and have fun! Please join us for our December Family Fun Friday on **December 11th at Challenge Rocks** (www.challengerocks.com) in Hingham **from 1:30-3:30 pm**. The gym provides rock climbing opportunities for children as young as 18 months through teenagers. The cost is \$7.50/child and you can sign up at the BPA table. Siblings are always welcome at all our Family Fun Friday events. Please note that this event at Challenge Rocks is limited to 30 children so be sure to sign up to reserve your spot!

BPA DUES!

Thank you to everyone who has already paid their BPA dues! If you have yet to do so, it's not too late! We ask for a \$30 contribution per family, which goes directly toward student enrichment in and out of the classroom. Forms are available at the BPA table. A big thank you to our Berrybrook families for your continued support and participation!

Thank you and Happy Holidays,

Jill Cooney & Danielle MacKinnon

berrybrookparentsassociation@gmail.com

Reducing Holiday Stress for Families and Children

“December is a month filled with holidays – including Christmas, Chanukah and Kwanza. These holidays have in common a sense of joy and excitement, and as adults we want to share these feelings with our children. In our enthusiasm, however we have to be careful to recognize that children view the holidays differently from adults. First the activities surrounding the holidays can simply overwhelm a child. Their meal schedule is different, the foods they eat are different, there are many visits from family and friends, parties to attend and in general the pace is much faster than any other time of the year. Second, since adults are caught up in these activities, they may not focus their usual levels of attention on their children's emotional needs.”

Mary Ucci, Educational Director of the Child Study Center of Wellesley College

Helpful Strategies:

- Keeping emotionally and physically healthy is a gift we all deserve.

- Stay in your family routine. Adults as well as children thrive best with structure.
- Avoid the “everything must be perfect” attitude. Be realistic with your ideas.
- Avoid living up to children's, society or relatives expectations.
- Set priorities for your family. Ask family members what is most important to them.
- Evaluate past years. What worked, what needs revising or eliminating.

Traditions – It's a wonderful time of year to begin or continue family traditions-baking, singing, reading, decorating, cards, events, etc.

Gift giving – Remember gifts may be time, talent or tangible. Children can set the table, sing a song, draw a picture, etc.

Remember those in need – Homeless shelters, Senior citizens, Animal Rescue League.

Wishing you and yours a safe, happy and healthy Holiday Season! Mrs. Delano

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Savoy!



They welcomed Lyla Carolin on November 12, 2015.



Snow Cancellation

Berrybrook will cancel school if **Duxbury Schools** close due to a snow emergency. Please watch channel 7 for cancellation notices, sign up for "WHDH Closing Bell," or call the school for information about a snow cancellation.



Jingle Bells

Dashing through the snow,
In a one-horse open sleigh,
Over the fields we go,
Laughing all the way!
Bells on bobtail ring,
Making spirits bright,
What fun it is to laugh and sing
A sleighing song tonight!

Oh, Jingle bells, Jingle Bells
Jingle all the way
Oh what fun it is to ride
In a one horse open sleigh!

Jingle bells, Jingle Bells
Jingle all the way
Oh what fun it is to ride
In a one horse open sleigh!

This little light of mine

This little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine.
This little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine.
This little light of mine,
I'm gonna let it shine.
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!

Hannukah, Hannukah

Hannukah, Hannukah
Festival of lights
Candles glow in a row,
Seven days, eight nights.

Hannukah, Hannukah
Make your dreidel spin,
Round and round,
Round and round,
Everyone join in!

Hannukah Latkes

Take a potato, fat, fat, fat.
Grate it and make it flat, flat, flat
Fry in a pan with fat, fat, fat,
Hannukah Latkes, clap, clap, clap!

We wish you a Merry Christmas

We wish you a Merry Christmas,
We wish you a Merry Christmas,
We wish you a Merry Christmas,
And a happy New Year.

Shutterfly

If you are looking for an activity over vacation, log on to your classroom's Shutterfly site and view the photographs with your family. Your Berrybrook child will be able to provide commentary to accompany the images!