

A Year in 4-Day

Fall

We learn about growing, from piglets on a farm to sunflowers, apples, pears, and pumpkins. We also learn how *they* are growing, and how we grow and becoming self-reliant too. We take a trip to Holy Cross Apple Orchard and Pumpkin Patch and enjoy cooking and crafting with these gifts from nature. Squirrels, raccoons, bats, and owls will be decorating your homes, and facts about them will fill your car and dinner table with conversation.

Winter

We go outside every day, so we'll learn about the changing temperatures, how rain turns into snow, and what different creatures do in the winter. We find different treasures outside - pinecones, feathers, and holly branches and check them out under magnifying glasses. We produce our own version of *The Nutcracker*, build The Great Wall of China, and write, illustrate and publish our Boo-Boo Books. We learn all about Advent and Christmas and make our own Baby Jesus to put in our homes. We learn that Christmas is a time to give, so our giving tree is decorated with hats and mittens for children who need our help.

Spring

We learn about Australia and construct our very own Great Barrier Reef, swim with sharks, sing opera, and have a walk-about. We learn about Africa and have our own African Safari, complete with a homemade airplane. We also learn about New Life at Easter time by planting seeds, learning about all the adorable spring animals. We prepare a Mother's Day Tea and a Father's Field Day that you will never forget. Your precious gifts made by their hands will be happy reminders of these special times shared.

A Year in 5-Day

Fall

Fall is a great time to learn about apples and pumpkins and their life cycles, from seed to harvested fruit and back to seed. We jump right into math with *Apples Up On Top* by Dr. Seuss and science with an apple cooking lesson. As children collect leaves in their own backyard they see how the chlorophyll has left the leave uncovering the yellows, oranges and reds underneath. This becomes a lesson in photosynthesis.

In our unit on transportation, we learn how trains, planes, cars and boats go: buoyancy, wind, and engines are different ways to power vehicles. We address the changing weather through our weather board, and we how animals adapt to weather with migration and hibernation. Halloween provides a background for the study of bats and spiders. We become zoologists learning about nocturnal behavior, echolocation and web spinning.

Winter

Winter is a great time for science! We watch ice crystals form under a microscope. We learn about the Arctic and Antarctic and the people and animals that make these places their homes: the Inuit people and their culture, musk oxen, snowy owl, walrus and penguins.

Valentine's Day provides the perfect lesson about the human heart. How does it function? How do we take care of our own hearts? It's also time to practice love of neighbors. We make Valentines for senior citizens to show them we care.

Books are the foundation of learning. We write, illustrate and publish our own Fairy Tale Book complete with a book signing and Knighting ceremony. We also spend time with our tech tablets solving puzzles and playing letter and number games.

Spring

We study the night sky: the phases of the moon, planets and stars. This leads into nocturnal animals and planting Moon Flowers which bloom at night. We end this unit with a classroom camp-in. Children learn some simple tools and techniques for wilderness survival.

At Easter we learn about New Life, from an egg to a bird and from a seed to a flower. We will also study marine biology as we explore under the sea creatures, and an end of the year trip to the beach brings it all to life.

Preparations for Mother's Day Tea and getting in shape for Father's Field Day keep us busy in May! Graduation is bittersweet as we say goodbye, but the many homemade treasures and books we proudly take home are wonderful keepsakes of this special time with our teachers and friends.