



Music Circle Update...



Miss Nicole's Music Circle's continue to be an activity that many of the students truly look forward to! Miss Nicole says it best;

“Music can be a great outlet for children. Whether they're hyper or calm, need to focus, or let loose, music can encourage them. Every week during our special music circles, we increase their musical knowledge and simultaneously strengthen their self-expression”.

From the beginning of the school year through the winter, the children focused on *building rhythm and basic music theory* such as note recognition and tempo vocabulary. As we move into the New Year, we are focusing on **instruments**. Through the month of January we explored brass instruments, and currently the students are learning about the family of string instruments. Percussion instruments will be a student favorite, and will make an appearance in the coming weeks.

Each lesson brings to life a new instrument. The children listen to music excerpts to display the variety of sounds one instrument can make. For example, when we studied the trumpet, the students heard Trumpet Voluntary (**classical**) and St. Louis Blues (**jazz**). Each week, the students also learn about a particular artist or composer. For our trumpet lesson, they learned about Louis Armstrong. For our most recent lesson on the violin, we experienced Bach.

In addition, every class works on strengthening the children's **rhythm and coordination**. Throughout the fall term, we marched around the school, tapping on our homemade tambourines. In January and for Mardi Gras, we learned about a popular New Orleans tradition, the Second Line. Currently, we are stomping and clapping to We Will Rock You by Queen. Because the children love it, it is an easy way to have them follow the beat and learn to keep time (*it also integrates what we've learned previously about quarter notes and rests*).

Another valuable lesson we have begun exploring is the *connection between music and emotional expression*. Recently we heard the brass instruments create a sinister **Darth Vader** in John Williams' Star Wars. Last week we heard a gentle, almost sad **Swan Lake** clip, Beethoven's angry-sounding **5th Symphony**, and happy, bouncy fiddle tunes.

We hope your children have enjoyed these Music Circle's as much as we have! Miss Nicole truly has a passion for educating young students in the many ways that music can and should be a part of their lives!

