

LFS Kindergarten News



Friday October 17, 2008

The Magic of Worktime

I always tell the kids, “Worktime is my favorite time of the day” and I truly mean it. When kids ask (as they inevitably do) *why is it called worktime, when that’s when we play?*, I usually explain, “Worktime is when you do **your** work.” Worktime is when the students make their own choices about what to do; they have to monitor their choices, their materials, their time, and their interactions with each other. Worktime can be truly magical; Thursday’s worktime was one of those magical days.

The magic began when Madeline pulled out the box of recycled objects that we keep in the classroom. She immediately set about creating a flute. From somewhere, a plan was hatched: “**Let’s make a band!**” The idea quickly echoed around the room. Almost instantly a group of the children was busy constructing instruments. Guitars, drums, a banjo, microphones, and the initial flute; the instruments emerged. The children helped each other, shared ideas and materials, and supported others when faced with a challenging problem. More and more children joined in, drawn by the energy and excitement. The fervor culminated in a performance, complete with stage and the band’s very own paparazzi. (Charles made a camera that he used to *take photos* of the whole show.) The teachers (including Tr. Susan and Tr. Nancy) and other students gathered to watch and listen to the show.



Cooperation, mutual help and respect, creativity, inclusivity, and joy flowed freely. Even the students who didn’t become involved with the band were caught up in the excitement. Some students also tried out the recycled objects, designing their own creations (a few children experimented with making boats, testing out each design in the sink to determine the sea-worthiness). Others were content to sit back and enjoy the show. Regardless of the level of participation, the magic flowed throughout everyone. Kindergarten classes need to make room for periods of uninterrupted play. At LFS, we work hard to balance our academic instruction and social instruction. Worktime often allows us to explore that balance. I’m looking forward to seeing what emerges in many other magical worktimes throughout this year.

