



# Full Circle Newsletter



Welcome to the December 2021 edition of the Full Circle Newsletter! Here you will find a glimpse of the many creative projects, team adventures, and scientific discoveries that students have engaged in this season. We wish all our families health and happiness in the New Year!

## Special Guests & Teachers

**Julienne Guillaume, M.Ed.** inspires the creative minds of budding authors as our new Reading & Writing teacher for 2nd and 3rd year students. Both of Julienne's children, Skylar and Sylvia, attended Full Circle so she is well versed in the rhythms and vision of our learning community. Julienne taught elementary school writing and math locally at The Village School and Warwick Elementary, as well as internationally in Senegal and Indonesia. She is also a published author with several of her stories appearing in LADYBUG, a delightful children's magazine.



Recently, Julienne's Reading & Writing students had great fun creating their Book Memory Mobile. For this project, students reflected upon meaningful moments that stood out for them in books they have read. Each student designed a square that included both written word and illustrations to share their book memory. The squares were then displayed as an impressive, beautiful, and thought-provoking mobile.



# Outdoor Exploration

## Gifts from a Tree: Adventure, Teamwork, & Kindness

The First Friday of December brings a special Full Circle tradition—the choosing and decorating of the school tree.

The day begins with a whole-school hike out beyond the Mossy Classroom and into the forest, lugging a ladder the whole way. With great care, the tree is chosen. However, have no fear: no tree is killed in this process. Instead, the top of a tree is cut off 10 feet up. Through this coppicing technique, the tree is then able to continue to grow.



Next, it is up to the children to work together as a team to carry this magnificent, very tall, unwieldily tree back to the school. They strategize, revise their plan, group problem solve, support each other, persist, encourage, fall down, and get back up again and again. This adventure in joyful teamwork is a true gift from the tree.

Once the tree arrives at the school, the crafting and decorating begin. This year the tree is set up outside with homemade all-weather ornaments such as wooden snowmen and pinecone gnomes. Children also make

edible decorations as gifts for the animal friends: cranberry-popcorn wreaths and golden walnuts. The animals certainly appreciate this kindness. Last year it was such fun to discover the shells of golden walnuts hidden by squirrels all over campus.

Full Circle has no religious affiliation. We welcome and learn about celebrations from around the world. Through the geography board (right), stories, food, and song we see the winter holiday season as an opportunity to expand children’s learning and awareness of the many holidays people celebrate including Hanukkah, Kwanza, Chinese New Year, Solstice, Christmas, and more. If there is a tradition you would like to share with our students, please reach out!



# Discovery & Learning

## Julian's Science Goal: Fire



"For my science goal, I chose to study fire. My first experiment was to see if I could start a fire making sparks with the hand generator. So, you would crank the handle and then you would rub the two wires together and that would make a spark of fire. The fire didn't light but the sparks did go right into the birch bark.

My second experiment was with flint and steel. I rubbed the flint and steel together making friction and it made sparks. I got some string. I took it apart and made flammable fluffy stuff. I put it in the fire pit. I struck it once and it didn't light. The second time it lit. Then it burned all the birch bark.

I learned that fire is made up of hydrogen and carbon. You have to have oxygen to make a fire. When you strike flint and steel it is a chemical reaction. Another word for burning is combustion."

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## Ella's Colorful Experiment

Ella chose to study flowers for her science goal. As a hands-on activity she conducted a split-stem carnation experiment. The lower part of a white carnation's stem was split lengthwise. Then, one half-stem was placed in a cup of water with blue food coloring and the other half-stem was placed in a cup of water with green food coloring. The next morning a thrilling discovery awaited: half of the flower petals had turned blue and the other half had turned green! Excited students of all ages gathered around to observe the phenomena.



*What is happening? How does the food coloring get up into the petals? Why are the colors divided?* As is often the case in science, results can inspire further questions, investigation, analysis, and learning. Ella reflected, "If someone in my study group was looking for a science goal to do, I would recommend it because it was really fun and a lot of work."

# Kindergarten Corner



## Literacy & Levers in Action

This fall the Kindergarten program has been taking the learning outside! The roots of the spaceship proved to be an ideal setting for our literacy enrichment activity of reading and acting out the book, *Caps for Sale*. Children took turns being the peddler and the monkeys. This dramatic play was an exciting way to engage with the story by actively stepping into different characters.

We also had a special guest teacher, Micheal Muir, co-founder of Full Circle School. The children loved this opportunity to connect with Micheal and experience his magical sense of adventure. They climbed trees, went on a Hobbit walk, and toured the tools in the barn. Together, they explored levers by using pry bars to dig rocks out of the kindergarten fort. Micheal even put a row boat in our tiny vernal pool so the children could try rowing—more levers in action! When Michael visits, anything is possible.



## Upcoming Events

**Thursday, Dec. 16: Goal Party & Holiday Event.** Students celebrate their learning and achievements from the semester and participate in special holiday activities.

**Friday, Dec. 17 - Sunday, Jan. 2: Winter Break.** Happy New Year!

**Monday, Jan. 3: Classes resume.** Welcome back!

**Friday, Jan 7, 14, 21, & 28:** Extra-Curricular Ski Program at Berkshire East. Keep an eye on the bulletin board for sign-ups.

**Monday, Jan 17: Martin Luther King Jr. Day:** No school. Enjoy a long weekend!