

THE PARK VISIT.....



We believe that when children connect, learn and grow with the nature around them the experience and the learning outcomes they get are very, very different. It also stays with them forever. In order to attain this we take children for a lot of visits that help them connect to nature better.

One such visit was to the park nearby and Anika, Aliyah, Zohar and Het were in one such group that went to explore the park. As we started from our school we came across a tree which had a hole in it. Upon seeing it Zohar said, “Ma’am caterpillar lives in it” and to this Anika added her perspective she said, “I can see many ants in it they have made a big hole and they are living in it”. Aliyah said, “The spiders also make their home like this and they make sure that no one comes in”. (Children are beginning to relate to the need of basic shelter and what purpose it serves in the lives of different living things.)

Then as we started moving further we saw another tree which was bent and upon seeing that Anika said, “The rain came and splashed a lot of water on the tree that has

made the tree to bend”. She also connected the bend with the mountain and said that it also looked like a mountain. (Explaining and understanding causality for natural phenomena is the beginning of scientific inquiry in a child and visualizing and connecting the shape to things not present in the immediate surroundings displays the child’s ability to make creative connections)

Zohar touched the tree with his little finger and said it is too rough. (Beautifully connecting his learning back in class to the real life and using the right kind of vocabulary to describe it)

As we moved forward they started to speak about the rain. Hearing the conversation the facilitator asked the children, “Where does the rain come from?” to which Anika said, “It comes from the plants.” The other children were observing the trees around them. Zohar who saw a coconut tree near a house said, “Coconuts”. On hearing this Aliyah connected her previous trip and said “Yes, when I came with Priya Ma’am we saw a coconut which was on the road it had an oval hole in it.” (It is amazing what children remember and take away in trips and the amount of detail they tend to process when they are totally involved in a learning journey.)

We continued to walk and as the children walked they made sure they did not stamp on the leaves when asked why they were walking carefully, Aliyah said “They will get hurt if we stamp them”.

As we continued our journey we saw a tree which was cut down and the leaves had turned brown, seeing that a conversation erupted between three of them.

Anika: Someone has cut it down

Aliyah: Yes, Anika that is why the leaves have turned brown and they are sad

Het: “No, no they are crying”.

Connecting to and learning through nature helps children to look at learning in different and more meaningful ways. It also enables them to apply their learning practically and develop deeper empathy for their surroundings.

Finally, as we reached the park. Anika saw big stones which looked like pumpkin on the ground and said, “I can see pumpkins on the ground.” Then we came across a big white tree Zohar said, “Ma’am the branches are also white in colour” the children were asked why this tree alone looks white and Anika responded saying, “Someone took a big scissor and they have cut the brown part away”. While returning to our school Zohar saw a lot of leaves which were fallen down and said, “Oh, no Ma’am look there someone shook the tree and all the flowers have fallen down”. It was a sad moment for all of them when they realized that loss and change are such an integral part of Mother Nature.

Children tend to look at the nature around them and extend metaphors from their lives and how they feel onto nature. Every trip we make is an experience for us and children to look at the world with a new pair of eyes and see what others might have missed and to feel what only we can feel for who we are!