

Last Thursday at the YCP

November 2011



Mrs. Guerrier's Class



Thursday Morning Edition



We Made Pumpkin Pancakes!

As many of you parents may have heard and seen, last Thursday each child made their very own pumpkin pancake for snack. The long table between the water room and kitchen was set up with instruction cards, utensils, ingredients, mixing bowls, measuring cups, the skillet, and anything else needed for this cooking activity. A pocket chart was placed beside the table and used as a waiting list for each child who wanted to participate in making a pancake. The children put their name in the pocket chart and as space became available, I called over the next name in the order it was listed. I worked with one child at a time to assist and guide them through the steps of the activity. Together, we referred to the instruction cards for the steps to making the pancake. Each child measured a scoop of dry pancake mix, a scoop of pumpkin purée, and measured a small amount of the water into a measuring cup using a squeeze bottle. Then they stirred and poured their batter (with help from an adult) into the skillet at the end of the table.

During this activity, I had three objectives I wanted each child to learn and/or demonstrate. The first objective involved using fine motor skills to

measure liquid and dry ingredients for their own pancake batter. The majority of the children were able to do these things on their own, but if they needed a little extra help I was there to assist them. The second objective took place at the skillet. As children waited near the skillet for their pancake to cook, I asked them questions like, "what would happen if I turned off the skillet? Would this batter be a pancake if we didn't put it in the skillet to cook?" These questions dealt with the relationship between heat and the change in the batter. My final objective took place throughout the entire activity. The children were to refer to the instruction cards to help them through the cooking activity with minimal assistance. There were five cards with simple print instructions, as well as pictures that illustrated the text on the cards. As I worked with the children, I referred them to each card for instructions on the necessary step to be completed. I had them follow along

as I pointed to- and read every word on the cards. Though the majority of them didn't know more than a few words on the instruction cards, *everyone* knew, "Hot! STOP! Don't Touch!" at the end of the table located near the skillet. ☺

Cooking activities, like this one, are not only wonderful opportunities for children to find out exactly what it is they're eating, but also, it builds self-confidence and gives them a sense of accomplishment. Successful cooking activities serve as meaningful learning experiences for children while also covering a variety of curricula and standards of learning. Beginning concepts of energy, literacy, and measurement were rooted in this cooking activity, while also working on the development and/or refinement of language, fine motor skills, and several other developmental milestones.

Almost all of the children appeared excited and eager to participate in this activity. We had some interesting shaped pancakes, and some full tummies after snack time.

