

Building a Classroom Community...
Using our favorite storybook characters, including James Deans’ Pete the Cat and Mo Willems’ Pigeon and Duckling.

We took this opportunity to work together with the children to create a strength- based, joyful children’s book, collectively deciding upon classroom expectations and outcomes. As part of the morning story, children learned about book handling, title and dedication pages, front and back covers, authors, and illustrators. This piqued the children's interest, and some asked if they could be authors and illustrators too!



The students made a connection to a book we read, *What Do You Do With An Idea* (Kobi Yamada) and asked the children the following: if you were to be an author what might your story be about? If you were an illustrator, what pictures might you add to your story? Some children wrote their own words and others dictated their stories.

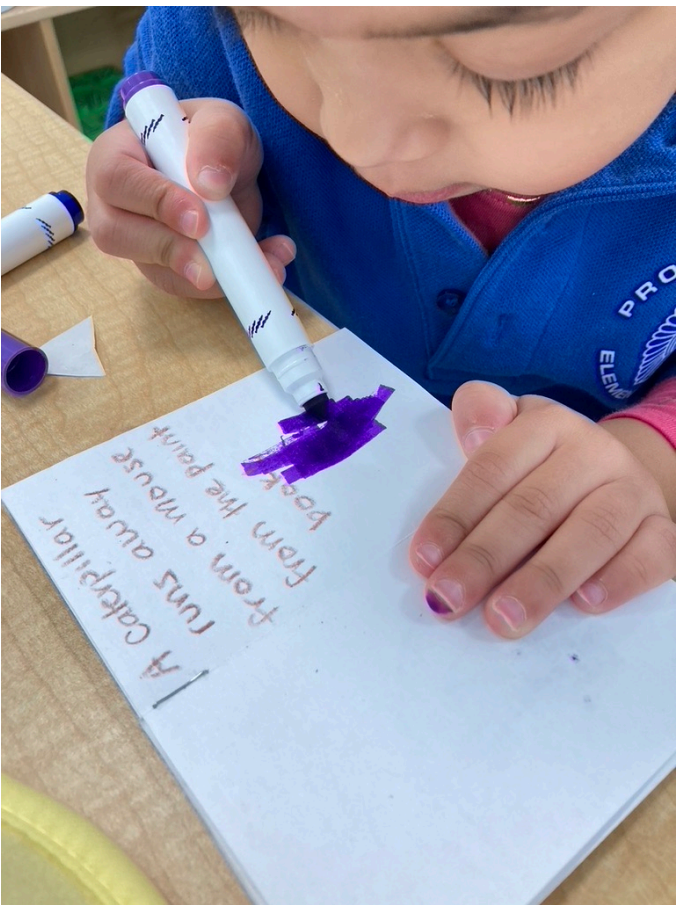
When we are in the art center:

How can we use art materials?
Only our paper, not on friends' paper.
We sit.
We draw on paper, not the table.
Close your marker cap until it clicks.

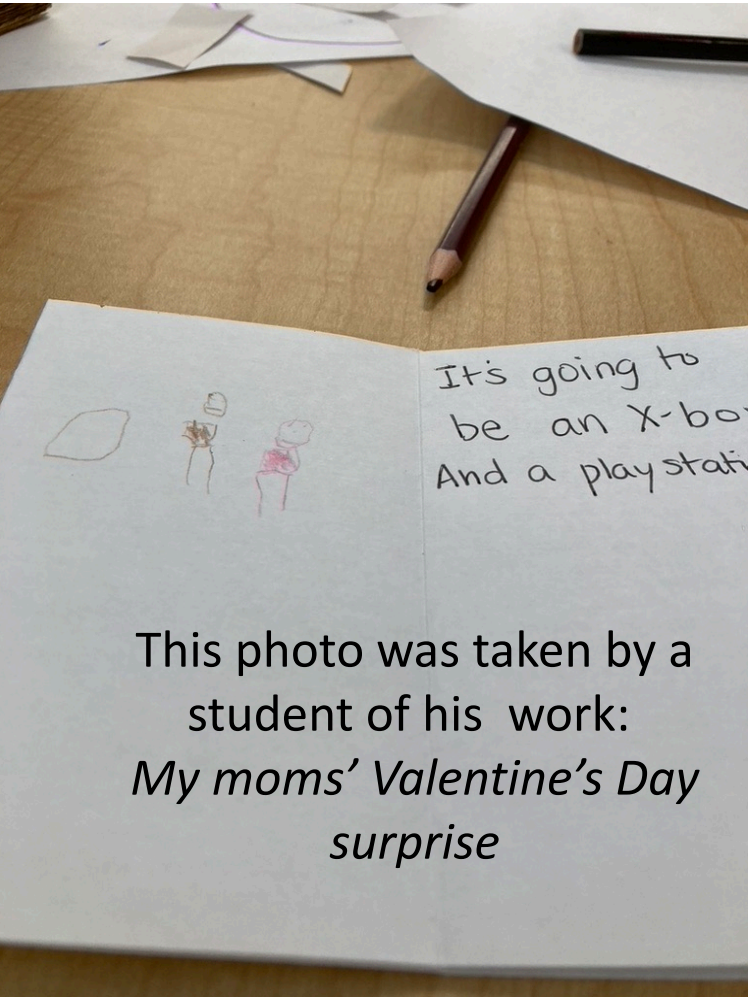
What might we say to our friends if they need help remembering the expectations?
We say "Not on mine please! Be careful with scissors! Here, do this my friend."



The children were excited to read their books to the teachers, as well as with the classroom characters that inspired their books!

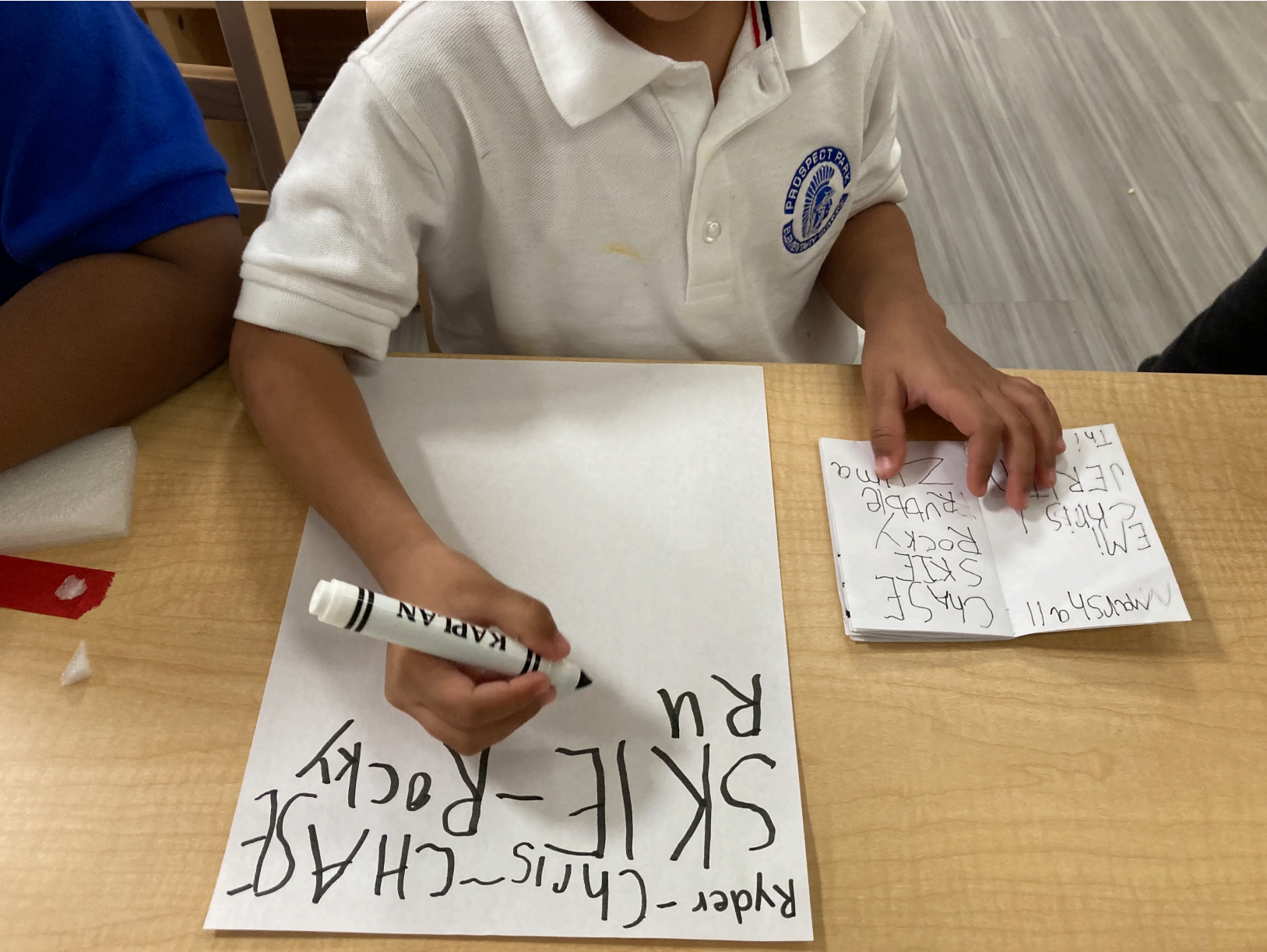


This student used the caterpillar as a visual prompt to reference his colors as she illustrated a book about him traveling. She made a text connection between two favorite stories we had read earlier in the month *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Eric Carle) and *Mouse Paint* (Ellen Stoll Walsh). She dictated the words and is reading them back as seen here in the photo.

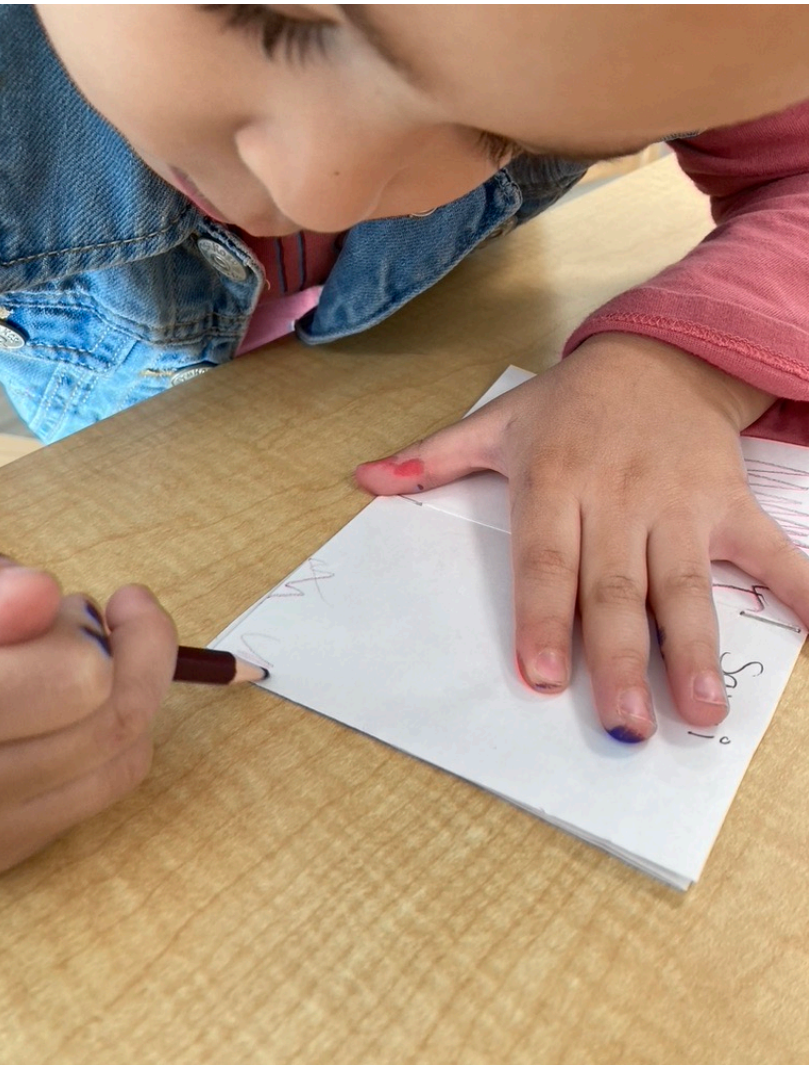


Teacher:
Who draws the pictures?

Child:
Me! I do!



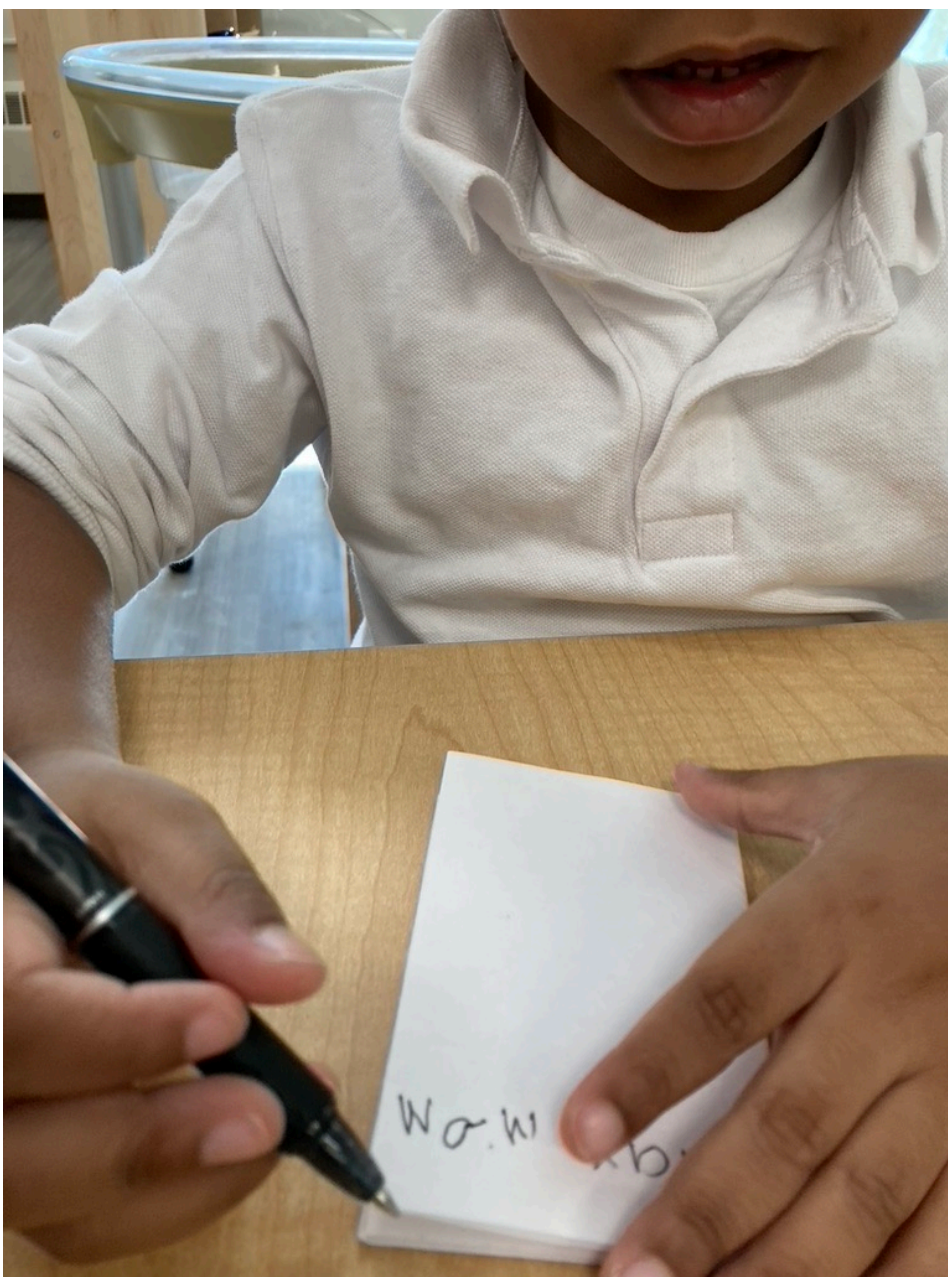
After carefully transcribing some of his favorite characters into his book, this child revisited his book again and again to use as a reference to write the names on other projects.



One child included her name on each page and focused on illustrating herself. Another made his book into a guessing game, sharing details about his favorite character on each page before revealing who it was!
Child: I’m blue! I have yellow eye and yellow eye. I have mouth too! I have this arm and this arm and this leg and this leg. And tail! I Pete the Cat!



Child: Book about families. And my school friends. And you!



Here we see children working side by side while making two different styles of texts.
Child 1: Book for my mommy, for my sisters, for my daddy, for my home!
Child 2: *My Paw Patrol Book, nombre*