

September 25, 2008

Dear Parents,

We've been talking about how things can be the same and yet be different. We all have hair, but it comes in different colors. Two shells are the same shape and color, but differ in size. We each have a family, but our families have different numbers of children and adults. We have 20 children in the class, but some are girls and some boys.

When school began, the children weren't sure how many boys and girls were in the class, so we graphed how many there were of each. First we made a 'real' graph on the floor using the wooden block boys and girls on a 3x10 foot graph 'sheet'. Then we did it again on paper so we could keep the information.

Our next 'real' graph was about the different ways we come to school. This time we used vehicles and people on our graph sheet. Our graph sheet had only 4 columns, but there were 5 ways of getting to school. After a long discussion of various options, the Ks decided that rather than create a 5th column, the cars and taxis would share one column. The reasoning was that both of them are cars.

Ks have to make lots of decisions every day. Some are relatively easy. Do I want to make a collage on white or black paper? What will we build in blocks? What shall I eat for lunch? Shall I first paint or draw at worktime? Some decisions are more difficult. Which is more important to me right now, choosing the activity I really want to do, or working with my friend? I don't feel like cleaning up blocks, but my classmates feel that if I don't help, then I can't build tomorrow. What should I do? We try to allow the children to participate in as many appropriate classroom decisions as possible. Being active participants in making decisions gives children a sense of control over their lives. We are also working on how it feels and how we react when most children have a different opinion from our own.

Sincerely,

Luise and Abby