

Independent Day School-Corbett Campus Early Primary Students Experience Many Aspects Of Farm Life

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If Old MacDonald held a fall festival on his farm, he might have *do-si-doed*.

Maybe he would have hopped on a hay ride with a load of kids, eager to count the number of barnyard animals hidden along the trail.

He could have done that and more if he celebrated Fall Fun on the Farm day at Independent Day School – Corbett Campus - where farm life came alive on a patch of suburban green space.

The celebration culminated a month long farm unit for children in the PreK3, PreK4 and Kindergarten classes. While the classroom lessons centered on teaching how food gets from the farm to the kitchen table, the outdoor activities allowed kids to get up-close to barnyard friends such as sheep, chickens, goats, and a horse named Moses.

“We really wanted to bring the farm to IDS,” said Kindergarten teacher Marla Vildostegui. “We try for the end of our thematic units to do something that will really “wow” our students and give them something to remember.”

The fall fun day offered a variety of interactive and hands-on activities for students to experience the many aspects of farm life.

Children groomed the small collection of penned animals in Uncle Mike’s Hug n Farm. They dressed in their best farm attire, sporting boots, cowboy hats and overalls, and competed in horse races on homemade wooden ponies.

Youngsters “rode” to the farm by galloping on the yardstick ponies and parked them on a railing. They snacked on caramel apples while sitting on blankets and listened to books beside Lake Lipsey. Children also got their hands slimy and splattered with pumpkin seeds while carving jack-o-lanterns with their parents on the picnic benches. And some students showed off their fancy footwork learning some basic hoedown steps.

Kindergarten teacher Jessica Moore said the day was a powerful way to reinforce the classroom lessons while giving all the early primary children a chance to interact with each other within the farm-like setting.

Mrs. Moore said it was important for youngsters to understand where foods come from. By using the farm theme, teachers were able to incorporate agriculture-related lessons in geography, math, science, art and history.

For example, children learned which countries import and export food and graphed the different products. They painted murals with day and night farm scenes and learned about nocturnal animals.

Even a lesson about pumpkins offered an opportunity to weave in other disciplines. Children measured and weighed the gourds and lined them up from smallest to largest to practice sequencing. Teachers talked about the pumpkin and its progress from seed to vine to flower and to the roadside pumpkin patch.

Parent Lorraine Daniels said she was happy to bring Moses, her 35-year-old quarter horse. Most students live in subdivisions, so few have encountered a retired show horse, she said. Children took turns feeding Moses bits of hay and learned the best way to approach and pet him.

“It’s nice for them to be exposed to this stuff,” said Daniels, who has a child in Kindergarten and first-grade. “This is why this school is neat. They don’t just do classroom learning. They do these things, too.”