

Young Pilgrims Bring Thanksgiving To Life

For immediate release: November 23, 2009

Tampa, FL

Dressed in Pilgrim vests, aprons, and collars, and with cardboard telescopes in hand, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students from Independent Day School-Corbett Campus (IDS-CC) set sail aboard the Mayflower a week and a half before Thanksgiving. After delving into homemade satchels for pennies to pay their fare, they each signed the ship's parchment log with a quill, and eagerly ran up the gangplank.

The young Pilgrims made landfall in America a.k.a. part of the IDS-CC playground the next day. They then began the arduous task of surviving the winter (well, at least the rest of the week) in a new and barren land.

On their first day in the New World, these modern day Pilgrims focused on thatching a roof, making brooms and pillows, searching for nuts, and washing clothes in a stream, which closely resembled a plastic wading pool.

As the week progressed, they continued their struggle to create a new life by planting crops, grinding corn, weaving fabric, and making other household supplies. Squanto visited the Pilgrims and demonstrated how to plant fish with corn to improve their harvest. Regular chores continued throughout the week, such as the washing of dishes and clothes, in addition to candle making, with time reserved for traditional early American games.

"The weeklong *Living Thanksgiving* for the youngest IDS students is a traditional event at the school. It is typical of the IDS hands-on approach to learning, and belief in creating memorable experiences, which enable students to make real-life connections to curriculum-based studies," said kindergarten teacher and division leader Jessica Moore.

Early primary teachers started the program as a way to teach their young students about this period of history by using all of the multiple intelligences. For example, to involve the verbal linguistic intelligence, they read stories each day about Pilgrim life, and wrote in journals. Working with wood, planting a garden, and learning Thanksgiving songs appealed to the naturalist and musical rhythm intelligences. And all outdoor activities such as building, sawing, fishing, and washing involved the bodily/kinesthetic intelligence.

"Our goal was to provide the children with an opportunity to experience Pilgrim life while allowing for the uniqueness of every child," said kindergarten teacher Ande Felder.

"Children this age love this program because they are able to do a wide variety of new and different things," said Marla Vildostegui, also a kindergarten teacher. "Watching their faces as they experience each chore is so special, because their natural excitement, kindness and curiosity shine through."

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The study concluded with the harvesting of real veggies that literally sprang up over the weekend, thanks to Squanto's fish fertilizer (and the teachers visit to a local market). The children happily scrubbed the veggies with their handmade scrubbers and now look forward to the Thanksgiving Feast that will utilize all of their harvested crops.

Founded in 1968, Independent Day School-Corbett Campus is a fully accredited, independent school located on Orange Grove Drive in northwest Hillsborough County. The school serves students in PreK3 through 8th grade and offers the International Baccalaureate program of study for both elementary and middle school students (PYP and MYP). IDS-CC balances a nurturing learning environment with high standards and high expectations.

Read our book: ***It's All About Kids: Every Child Deserves A Teacher Of The Year***

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Caption with attached photos:

Independent Day School primary students sail on The Mayflower and sight land with their handmade telescopes.