

Dear Families,

Our class is beginning the Science Companion® Collecting and Examining Life Unit. This unit of study builds on the children's natural curiosity by increasing their awareness of living things in the world around them. As children observe and compare a variety of animals, plants, and fungi, they deepen their understanding of what makes something alive and of the similarities and differences among living things.

During the Collecting and Examining Life Unit, the children will:

- Explore the natural environment around the school for signs of living things.
- Establish and maintain classroom habitats for brine shrimp, snails, crickets, and fish.
- Compare the ways animals move, breathe, eat, and use their senses.
- Study the structure and function of different plant parts.
- Experiment with seed dispersal and the conditions necessary for sprouting and growth.
- Grow mold and observe its development.

In addition to the work your child will do in class, you and your child can explore this rich topic together at home in the following ways:

- Visit the library and search for books about living things to read together and share with the class. There are book suggestions on the Science Companion web site. This web site also features a list of recommended web sites about living things. The address is: **[www.sciencecompanion.com](http://www.sciencecompanion.com)**
- Work together on the Family Link activities that are sent home from time to time. Your child may also want to repeat and vary some of the activities we do in class, as well as explain what they discovered and learned. Try to encourage their independent experimentation at home.

Making sense of the living world is a satisfying and engaging process for children and adults. Hopefully, you will share some of your child's enthusiasm, thereby learning with them while helping them explore.

Sincerely,