



UES NOIIE PROJECT:

GROWTH THROUGH PLAY - BUILDING CONNECTION, COMMUNICATION & LITERACY

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WHAT WE NOTICED

Through last year's project engaging in collaborative outdoor loose parts play, we noticed across both our classes, higher levels of self regulation, less social problems, and more engagement. Working creatively outside provided rich opportunities for students to collaborate, build confidence and communication skills.

We also noticed for many of our non-communicative, neurodivergent students, being outside gives them space to feel more regulated and comfortable connecting with their peers and learning compared to other opportunities happening in class.

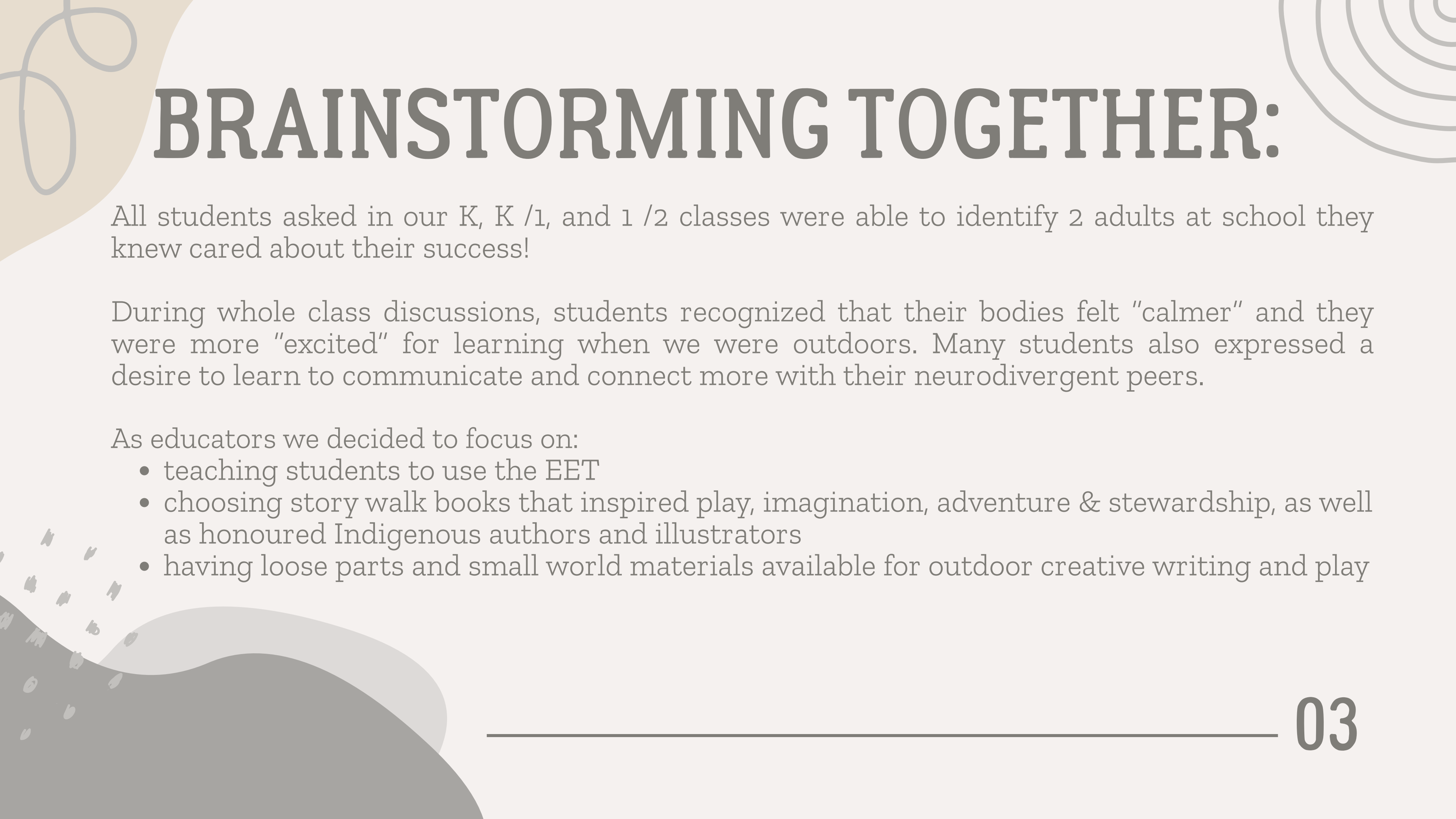
OUR WONDERS:

If we expand our outdoor learning to focus on building oral language and literacy skills, will all our students benefit and be able to connect more to stories and sharing ideas?

Will bringing aspects of literacy outdoors allow all students feel more connected to place? Will it increase stewardship in our students? Will we see more engagement from our neurodivergent as well as neurotypical students? Will we see an increase in literacy skills (oral language, listening to others, reading and writing) through this increased engagement?

Our plan included implementing:

- Story Walks in our school forest
- Story Workshop and writing outdoors
- Using the Expression Expansions Tool (EET) to increase language capacity



BRAINSTORMING TOGETHER:

All students asked in our K, K /1, and 1 /2 classes were able to identify 2 adults at school they knew cared about their success!

During whole class discussions, students recognized that their bodies felt “calmer” and they were more “excited” for learning when we were outdoors. Many students also expressed a desire to learn to communicate and connect more with their neurodivergent peers.

As educators we decided to focus on:

- teaching students to use the EET
- choosing story walk books that inspired play, imagination, adventure & stewardship, as well as honoured Indigenous authors and illustrators
- having loose parts and small world materials available for outdoor creative writing and play

TAKING ACTION:

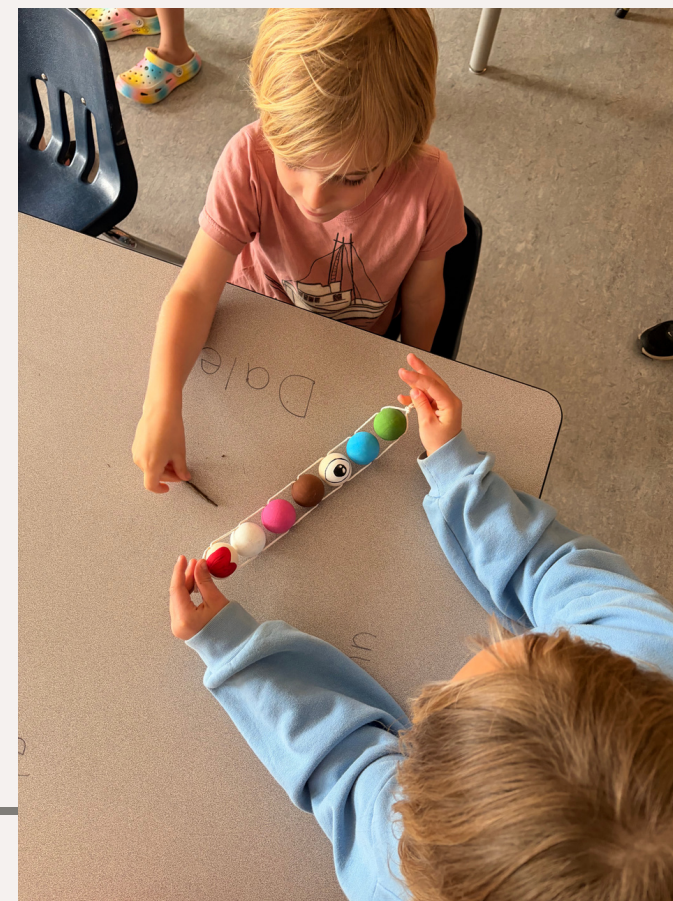
Using physical tools and talkers, students practiced using the EET to expand their oral language and communication skills. Students reflected they had much more to say using the tool and were eager to listen to each other.



"The EET helps us talk about things together. We have more to say."

"We are learning to talk with our friends so they can share their ideas too."

"I notice more things"



TAKING ACTION: A LESSON AT A GLANCE

"The forest helps me be
more creative."

We started our Story Walk series with "We All Play" by Julie Flett. Students chose an animal they connected with and used the EET to build vocabulary and ideas.

Students engaged in Story Workshop using inspiration from the book, loose parts, play materials, and items from nature to play out their stories with a partner or group. Students wrote their stories out afterwards.



"I have more ideas to share when I'm outside."

DOCUMENTATION:

"I have more peace and
quiet making stories
outside."



"Story walks help me feel free. At carpet it feels
like lots of people are around us."

NEXT STEPS:

- Continue with new Story Walk books to share with students and bringing book discussions and Story Workshop lessons outside and assess student growth.
- Continue to build our loose parts materials to find ways to further engage ALL students in learning and communicating together.
- Continue to honour the land and bring in more Nuu-chah-nulth language into our literacy learning.
- How can we use story and loose parts play to engage students in Numeracy?



THANK
YOU!

