

Roosevelt Island Living Library & Think Park

Working with Students from PS/IS 217, Beacon, Child School 2012-2013



During Spring and Summer of 2012, and beginning again in Fall 2012 through Spring 2013, Life Frames, Inc., non-profit sponsor of the Roosevelt Island Living Library & Think Park, provided hands-on, interdisciplinary, real-world learning sessions for hundreds of Roosevelt Island school children. Bonnie Ora Sherk, Founder & Director of Life Frames, Inc. & A Living Library, and Susan Benarcik, RI's Living Library & Think Park Garden/Ecology/Multi-Arts/Literacy/Nutrition Teacher, worked with hundreds of PS/IS 217 students, including all Kindergarten, 1st, 3rd, 4th, and 5th Grade classes, incorporating grade level, standards-based, common core curricula. Life Frames also worked with community residents, Beacon, and Child School students.

Overview Of What We Accomplished Together:

Spring/Summer Session 2012 with PS/IS 217 1st, 3rd, 4th grade classes and Beacon Afterschool students:

Mid-May through the end of school 2012:

- Children learned about garden design.
- Children reclaimed garden beds behind 504 Main Street by digging, digging, and more digging, learning about gardens, soil, seeds, and plants, and preparing for the RI Day planting and installation on June 9.
- Children planted diverse seeds and transplanted marigolds and cilantro that continued to live from prior seasons.
- Children then continued planting, creating A Living Library Garden Journals, making art labels, and learning about insects, pollination, and what makes healthy soil.
- Children learn new vocabulary words and their spelling, and make beautiful observational drawings of plants and insects, adding to their Living Library Journals.





Roosevelt Island Living Library & Think Park behind 504 Main Street
May, 2012

June 9, 2012 - Roosevelt Island Day:

- Children and adults worked together to plant the new gardens that had been prepared by the children from 217.





**Roosevelt Island Living
Library & Think Park**
behind 504 Main Street
RI Day; June 9, 2012

After Roosevelt Island Day through the end of the school year:

- Continuation of A Living Library Garden classes with PS 217 students.
- Children made their individual A Living Library Garden Journals to write, and draw in, created from found materials, like twigs, various papers and rubber bands, and added hole punches.
- Children studied plant parts, learned new vocabulary words, learned about pollination, made observational drawings, and wrote about what they were learning.





Roosevelt Island Living Library & Think Park behind 504 Main Street June, 2012

July 2012:

Summer Program begins with Child School and Beacon Students:

- *With everyone's help, we established additional beds along the fence, and planted sunflower and pumpkin seeds, painted colorful WELCOME signs for A Living Library Garden with canvas from Materials for the Arts Wish List.*
- *We started a Potato Tower with found fencing, straw from upstate work, wood stakes.*
- *Children made their individual A Living Library Journals to write, and draw in, using found materials, like twigs, various papers and rubber bands, and added hole punches.*
- *Children planted morning glories, carrots and radishes, staked cucumbers, pumpkins, tomatoes, and constructed Cucumber Alley- made with temporary barrier and string.*
- *Children continued to maintain their Roosevelt Island Living Library Garden, watering, weeding, dead heading, and turning compost.*
- *Children had a Garden Quiz, and were surprised to see how much they had learned!*
- *Children made bunches of herbs and vegetables for the community seniors and hand-delivered them to the RI Senior Center.*
- *Children learned a lot, had fun, and made a beautiful RI Living Library Garden & Think Park for the whole community to enjoy and learn from.*



August 2012:

- Maintenance, maintenance, maintenance... and harvest, harvest, harvest; delicious food!
- Children made 2nd WELCOME sign for A Living Library with more paints.
- Children studied insects through observations, identification, diagrams, and constructions.
- The 5th grade students made papier-mache insects!
- Younger children made giant Compost Collages.
- Children tended morning glories, carrots, radishes, cucumbers, pumpkins, and tried to keep squirrels away from the corn, sunflowers, and tomatoes, by making and applying a squirrel deterrent (cayenne, garlic, jalapeno). Even the wildlife enjoyed the Harvest!
- Children loved to eat salads made from the lettuces, tomatoes, cabbage, carrots, and bok choy, and learned about healthy eating, and good nutrition-for people, animals, plants, and soil.
- Children learned new vocabulary words, and made beautiful observational drawings of plants and insects.



September, October, November 2012:

- *Children are back at school!*
- *217 children begin again to work in the garden that is bursting at the seams, full of life and growth from the warm weather and care during the summer months.*
- *Children learn how to harvest and prepare many vegetables, and plant bulbs.*
- *Children learn about Soil Hierarchy and did several soil experiments.*
- *We rake leaves, make a scarecrow and Halloween mural, and learn about crows.*
- *Lots of kids stop with parents, sitters, and grandparents after school to help in their Living Library Garden.*
- *Students learn how to trim, prune, and dead-head diverse plants in order to save seed for next year's spring garden.*
- *Finally, children harvest the last of the crops; Cabbage, and they make Coleslaw!!*





Roosevelt Island Living Library & Think Park
behind 504 Main Street
Fall, 2012





Winter-Spring Interdisciplinary Classroom Series with PS 217 Students:

January, February, March, April 2013—Classes in Grades K, 1, 3, 4, 5 participate in diverse, interdisciplinary, common core lessons according to grade level:

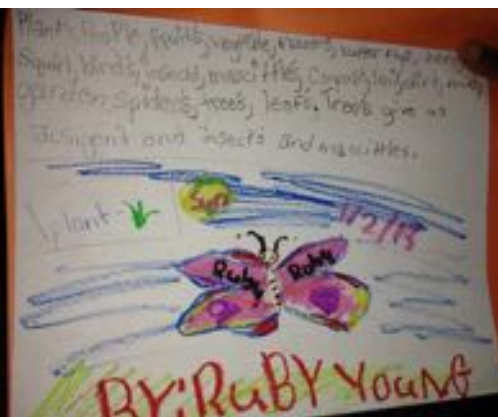
Focus: What are the Four aspects of A Living Library Garden?

1. **Where (in the world is it)? Common Core Geography, Social Studies, Science; Learning about local place and its resources**
 - “Where” took two sessions and focused on earth, soil and foundations of the Garden.
 - Introduction to A Living Library concepts of integrated systems: biological, cultural, technological.
 - Creating A Living Library Journal for writing and drawing.
 - Comparing Before and After pictures of last year’s garden and designing next year’s garden.
 - New Concepts and Vocabulary: Defining Earth, Dirt, and Soil.
 - Learning about diverse Types of Soil; Comparison of clay, sand, humus.

2. **Who (visits there)? Multi-Species, Social Studies, Science Lessons**
 - “Who” took two sessions, focused on the individual, the family, and the community, and how each contributes to A Living Library Garden on local and global levels, including multicultural nutrition, diets, customs, with particular emphasis on diversity of Roosevelt Island.
 - Producers, Consumers, Decomposers, and Cycles in the Garden.
 - Plant Anatomy.
 - Comparing trees, shrubs, and vines.
 - Insect Identification and defining anatomical parts.
 - Pollination: Importance; How it works; Who are the pollinators?

3. **What (happens there)? Interdisciplinary Science, Botany, Math, Social Studies, Literacy, Health, Nutrition, Multi-Arts Lessons**
 - “What” focused on diverse garden experiences.
 - Planting Seeds: Controlled Experiment.
 - Studying different kinds of seeds, sorting seeds, and creating seed packages.
 - Reading and Comprehension of information on seed package and Retelling the information by creating a “How-To Story.”
 - Diverse Plants: flower and vegetable names and anatomy.
 - Identification of edible roots, stems, and leaves.
 - Types of gardens; ie; Hey Hole, In the Ground, Raised Beds, Vertical Gardens.
 - Planning, Designing, and Scheduling diverse activities in a Garden.

4. **Why (is it good)? Interdisciplinary Science, Math, Literacy, Health, Nutrition, Multi-Arts Lessons**
 - “Why is it good” integrates and ends the series by reviewing all that has been learned, with lessons especially focused on what to look for and expect in the spring at the A.L.L. Garden.



Roosevelt Island Living Library & Think Park Learning Program
at PS/IS 217
All K, 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th Grades
Winter-Spring, 2012-13



March and April Lessons: All Classes, Grades K & 1- Interdisciplinary, Common Core Science, Social Studies, Literacy, Multi-Arts Lessons

- *Intro to A Living Library*
- *Review: What is a seed? And, how to plant a seed with diagram, worksheet, and activity.*
- *Learn Plant Anatomy with diagram, worksheet, and activity.*
- *Play Edible Plant Parts game.*
- *Children make giant Fruit, Flower, and Vegetable Rainbow Collages.*
- *Seed Types with diagram, worksheet, and activity.*
- *What is an ecosystem? With diagram, worksheet, and activity.*
- *How are we a part of the system? With diagram, worksheet, and activity.*

April, May, June through end of school year- Interdisciplinary Hands-On Common Core Science, Math, Social Studies, Literacy, Multi-Arts, Health Lessons- All Classes (K,1,3,4,5):

When the weather warms, during April, May, and June, all classes (K,1,3,4,5) can begin to work outside again with A Living Library, beginning to prepare the Gardens for the new growing season. We will continue to work on our Living Library Garden behind 504 Main Street and look forward to reclaiming and re-establishing our Living Library Garden in the School Yard at 217, once the scaffolding is removed. (A Living Library with 217 children began this garden in 2002 and worked on it each year until school construction began.) We are hopeful that the compost bins that we built with the children several years ago in the schoolyard, will also be replaced by the contractors as they are required to do. (See pictures directly below of prior Living Library Gardens and Compost Bins at school)



For more information:

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A Living Library with all sectors of community, incorporates local resources and transforms them to become vibrant, content-rich, ecological learning landscapes; each Branch linked to another.