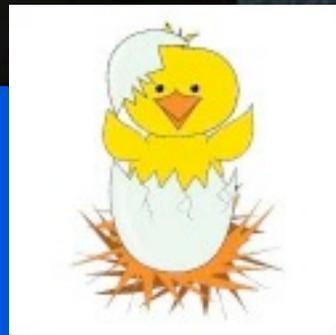




Real Life Learning







Lucille Aranzullo-Northrup's Pre-Kindergarten pupils at Perkins School got a rare treat April 6 & 7 as they got to see 11 adorable chicks come into the world.

Their long-awaited arrival was met with awe and wonder by the excited children, culminating more than three weeks of waiting for the furry little creatures to emerge from their shells.

After getting the eggs from Newark Middle School special education teacher Rebecca Moon, the eggs were put into an incubator in the classroom.

Students used a calendar to show it generally takes 21 days for chicks to hatch and marked off each day as they awaited the big reveal.

Aranzullo-Northrup said they also occasionally "candled" the eggs with a flashlight to see if the chicks were developing properly.

The teacher said her students were also amazed to hear the chicks' heartbeat as they listened with a stethoscope.

A few days from their recent hatch date, candling revealed the chick's air sacs in the top of the egg.

Aranzullo-Northrup told her students the chicks would pop their air sacs just before they would begin pipping or pecking a hole through the eggshell to come out.

"Once they hatched some of them asked, 'where did he come from and I told them 'he lives inside the egg,'" Aranzullo-Northrup said.

Throughout the egg-incubating/hatching project, students chronicled their experiences through writing, reading, math, art and music.

The project was part of a unit of study on farms, what lives on them and what happens there in the spring.

"Beyond the math, science, literacy and other lessons learned there is something to be learned about observation," Aranzullo-Northrup said. "In this technological time, when we push a button and information pops up immediately, the children learned that even when it seemed nothing was happening on the outside, lots was happening on the inside. When we candled the eggs and listened to the heartbeat with a stethoscope, children began to understand that something was happening. When the chicks pipped and hatched, children were in stunned wonder about what was happening. Certainly we can see that process on YouTube, but it is poor replacement for the actual process."

As for the chicks, Aranzullo said Moon will take six of them and Perkins teacher assistant Traci Carr will take the other five, as her son would like to have his own little flock.

