



Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Lesson

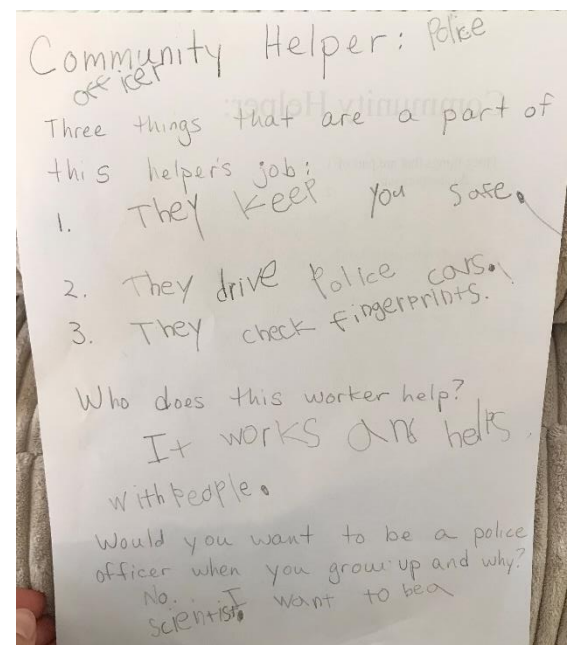
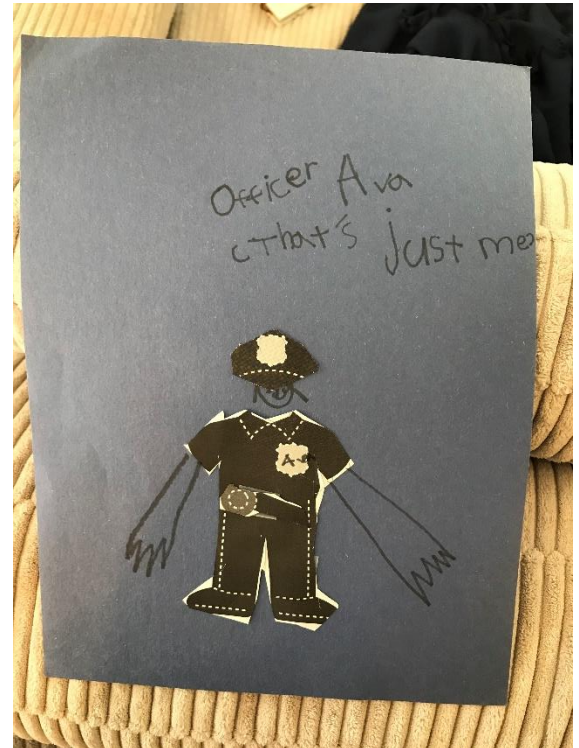
One of our early learning students' all-time favorite units of study is Community Helpers. Students think about who the helpers are in their community, and then teachers set up times for people in those helping roles to come into the classroom or for kids to go to meet and interview them in person. Moving to distance learning did not get in the way of Seabury's prekindergarten and kindergarten students studying community helpers this spring as we had planned – we just found a new way to do it.

The first week, children met their first community helper, Officer Grant Leavit from Seattle Police Department, in a Zoom meeting and were excited to get to talk with him. The second week, they met Dr. Tim Jenkins, a hospitalist and Seabury parent. Both meetings were filled with excited kids and fascinating discussions.

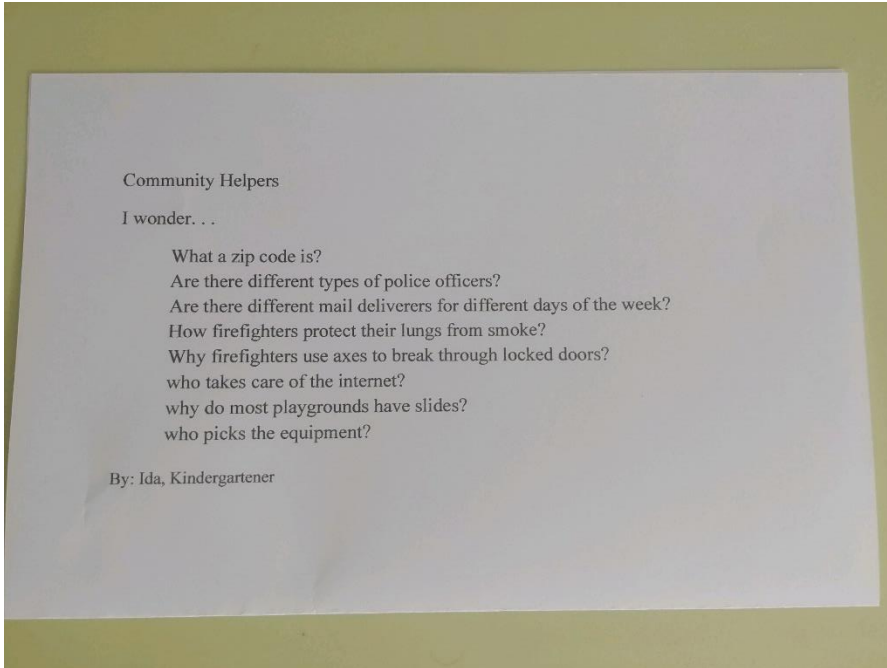
Learning at Seabury is an active and engaging process, and in our early learning program, as in all of our classrooms, we use the inquiry process to guide students from what they already know, to what they wonder about, to what their new discoveries are.

Prior to meeting with Officer Leavit and Dr. Jenkins, students brainstormed with their families what they already knew about police officers and doctors and how they help. Teachers refer to this as the "I Think" part of the inquiry process, because sometimes we find out that what we thought we knew was correct and sometimes it isn't. Students also brainstormed questions they wanted to ask each helper before their Zoom meeting. Their goal was to find out more about what they do and how they help the community. We call this the "I Wonder" part of the inquiry process.

With our kids' creative minds, we never know what they are going to come up with, and after using this process all year in all the things they have learned about, they have figured out that the more interesting questions they ask, the more interesting things they get to learn. In talking with Dr. Jenkins, one student asked how being a doctor compares to being a veterinarian. Dr. Jenkins told the student he thought vets have a really hard job because they have to know how to treat so many different kinds of animals -he only has to know about humans. They agreed and are already thinking about what



they are going to ask the veterinarian they are going to meet soon. Another student asked about the COVID-19 virus. He had some tough questions that showed how much he had been worrying about it, for example, “I heard that everyone who gets it dies.” Dr. Jenkins assured the student and his classmates that most people who get the virus get well, and that he has treated lots of patients who are now healthy and doing well. Another student asked, “Is it true that Helper T cells are what help our bodies fight the COVID virus?” Dr. Jenkins was impressed that the students knew about Helper T cells (something they had learned about earlier in the year) and said, “yes, they are exactly how the body fights the illness.”



The final stage of the inquiry process is, “I Discovered,” in which students share what they learned. In distance learning, this includes writing/dictating what they learned about each helper and drawing pictures of themselves as a police officer or a doctor. They also had opportunities to share what they learned in their own creative ways. Kindergarten students created art pieces, made videos and made 3D models that they were able to share with their teacher and talk about in their class Zoom meetings.

Inquiry learning is at the heart of Seabury’s program. It is especially important for gifted students, because it leads to more complex and higher-level thinking, giving students an active role in the learning process. And at Seabury, that

means inquiry learning is part of Distance Learning: Seabury Style.

<https://www.teachthought.com/critical-thinking/10-benefits-of-inquiry-based-learning/>

Seabury School challenges gifted children in a community that cherishes each individual and fosters a love of learning, discovery and creativity.

– Seabury Mission Statement