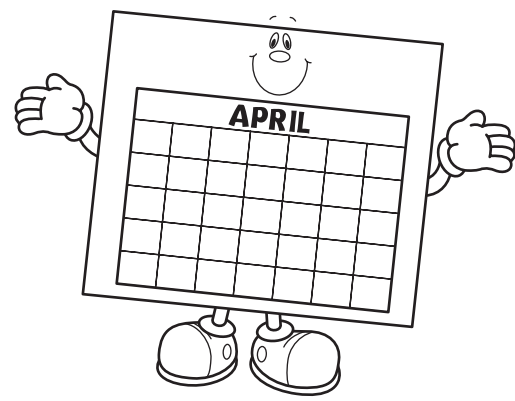
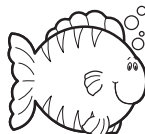
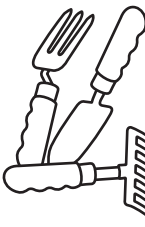


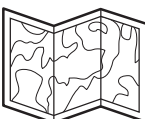
Celebrate April!


Dear Family Members,
Here are a few quick-and-easy activities to help you and your child celebrate special days throughout the month of April.




 **April is Zoo and Aquarium Month**
- Visit a local zoo or aquarium with your child. Take pictures during the outing and compile the photos into a scrapbook. Encourage your child to draw or write about the animals he or she saw and include the descriptions with the photos.

 **April is National Lawn and Garden Month**
- Plant a special garden with your child and watch it, and your child's excitement, bloom! Dig a small flower bed in your yard, or fill a large container (with a drainage hole) with soil. Visit a garden center with your child and choose easy-to-grow vegetable or flower seeds. Plant the seeds together and encourage your child to water and maintain the garden, observing and enjoying it grow.


 **Reading a Road Map Week is April 4-10**
- Road trip! Plan a day trip with your child using a road map. Use a highlighter to trace the route you will take. Have your child read the map to navigate the journey.

 **Leonardo da Vinci's Birthday is April 15**
- Celebrate this famous scientist and painter of the Mona Lisa. Visit a library or a bookstore with your child and look at some of da Vinci's paintings and drawings. At home, paint pictures with your child. Frame the works of art with colorful construction paper and display them on the refrigerator or on a wall.

 **First Hershey's bar was sold on April 17**
- Commemorate this delicious date in 1895 with s'mores!

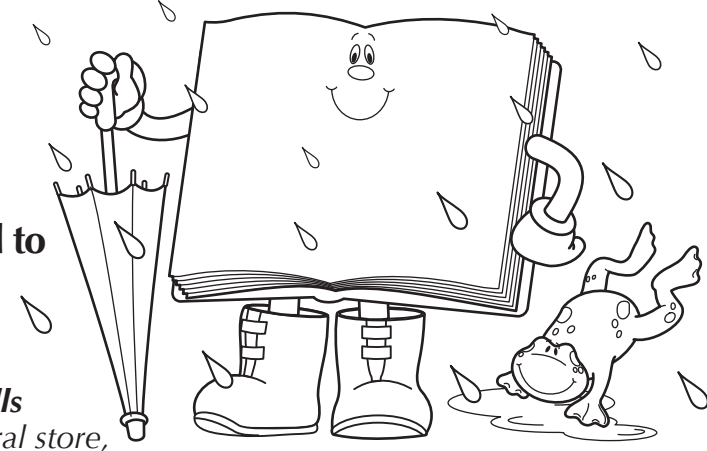
- 2 Hershey's bars
- 4 marshmallows
- 8 graham cracker squares

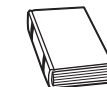
Break each Hershey's bar in half and stack each half on top of a graham cracker. Toast the marshmallows carefully over a flame on a fork. (Use a pot holder to hold the fork.) Place a toasted marshmallow on top of the graham cracker and chocolate and top with another graham cracker. Press down on the top cracker and let the heat of the marshmallow partially melt the chocolate bar, then enjoy! Makes four s'mores.

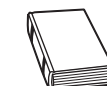
 **John James Audubon's Birthday is April 26**
- This naturalist and artist painted many realistic pictures of wild birds. Go bird watching with your child, and take binoculars along, if they are available. Count the number of birds you see and sketch them, if desired. Check out a field guide of wild birds from the library and try to identify the birds you see.

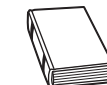
Read In April!

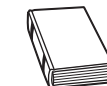
Dear Family Members,
Here are some books to share with your child to enhance the enjoyment of reading in April.



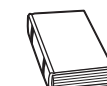
 **I Bought a Baby Chicken by Kelly Milner Halls**
- A little girl buys a baby chicken at the general store, inspiring each family member to also buy baby chicks. Each buys one more than the last until the family has over 50 chicks!
- After reading the story, challenge your child to count the total number of chicks the family buys.

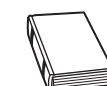
 **Cat and Mouse in the Rain by Tomek Bogacki**
- Cat and Mouse are disappointed when they meet in the meadow only to discover it's raining.
- Read the story and let your child tell about a rainy day adventure with a friend.

 **The Egg Tree by Katherine Milhous**
- A Caldecott Medal book about an Easter egg hunt and the rediscovery of an Egg Tree tradition.
- Start an Egg Tree Tradition with your child. Make a small hole with a pin in each end of an egg and blow out the insides. Paint or dye the egg and tie a ribbon in the top. Hang the decorated eggs on a branch affixed in plaster. (Fill a large plant pot ³/₄ full with plaster of paris. Place a tree branch in the center and let the plaster harden.)

 **Chicken Sunday by Patricia Polacco**
- Children make and sell traditional Pysanky eggs to buy a special Easter hat.
- Make a variation of Pysanky eggs. Draw designs on hard-boiled eggs with a white crayon. Dye the eggs in a mixture of a few drops food coloring, one teaspoon white vinegar, and ¹/₂ cup warm water. Once dry, add an additional crayon design and dip the eggs in another color.

 **Miz Fannie Mae's Fine New Easter Hat by Melissa Milich**
- Tandy and her Daddy buy Mama a fancy Easter hat with flowers and fruit and four specked eggs.
- Let your child decorate a special Easter hat. Glue a paper bowl on top of a paper plate to make the base. Then, let your child color or paint it and glue on flowers, twigs, etc.

 **Dora's Eggs by Julie Sykes**
- Dora is proud of her eggs until she sees the other farm animals with their cute and cuddly babies. In comparison, her eggs do not seem as wonderful—until they finally hatch.
- Help your child draw pictures of different animals on the fronts of index cards and their babies on the backs. Place the cards face down on a table and play a memory matching game.

 **Rain Song by Lezlie Evans**
- Simple rhyming verse tells about two girls' excitement as a thunderstorm approaches.
- Read the story together with your child. After you read the narrative aloud, let your child read the rain sounds.

