

The Helicopter



When Mackenzie arrived today he had a plan to build a helicopter. After waving to Mum we went straight to the Tinkering Shed to get started. Mackenzie told me that the helicopter would need a place for the man to sit and blades that turned around. This was going to be a very challenging build!

We searched around and Mackenzie chose a piece of wood for the cab of the helicopter and another piece for the bottom. Then we looked around for something that would make a great blade. Guess what we found! The demolition of our old piano has provided us a whole load of interesting spare parts and Mackenzie decided that the 'hammer' was just the thing to use as a blade. Just as Lorraine had suggested in a story she wrote for Mackenzie about his work deconstructing the piano, sometimes the end of something old becomes the start of something new. How right she was!

First Mackenzie tried to hammer a nail through the old 'hammer' (this is what the part is actually called). Alas, the piece was so small that the nail split the wood. What to do next! The only solution was to drill through the wood to create a hole. With no working power drills we had to get back to basics and use a rickety old hand drill. The work was hard, but Mackenzie was determined! He drilled, brushed away the dust and drilled again until he had gone all the way through the 'hammer'. "I can do it by myself", he told me anytime my hands edged near him assuming they could help. "My Grandad is a builder you know", he told me proudly. Nearly two hours later he told me he needed some food (how wise is that to know when you need to re-fuel), and when Mackenzie returned we finished off the last blade. By now the old drill was even more rickety so he asked me to help just a little bit.

At last we were ready to attach the blades to the cab. Once they were attached Mackenzie gave them a twirl and beamed a smile. They turned just how he wanted them too.

The next day he was back with his helicopter and we worked on attaching the tail which will also now need a rotor blade.

Mackenzie's Learning

"Making links, questioning, capitalising, imagining and reasoning"... All the ingredients Guy Claxton lists as being essential in a Resourceful learner. These are also all of the attributes I saw in Mackenzie as he went about his work over the past two days. It started with his imagination and continued as he questioned the resources around him. Mackenzie made links between what he found and what he needed, analysed everything and found reasoning in his analysis, then capitalised on each possibility. Then he worked hard, really, really hard! Mackenzie knows that hard work is the magic ingredient that has to be added if you are to see your plan come to life. Mackenzie, this is truly something to be proud of!



Where might this learning lead?

Mackenzie and I have begun the discussions with the other teachers about buying a new electric drill for the centre. The plan is to buy a child sized drill that will help us see all of Mackenzie's, and of course all of the other children's, plans come to life. I think we have everyone's approval, so on Friday I would like to invite Mackenzie to help me research a drill on the iPad and perhaps we can order one online. I wonder what he will plan to make when it arrives??

Stay tuned Folks. the story will continue for sure!

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