

## Power and Change: Supporting Students as Environmental Stewards

Dr. Christine Lee and Primary Demonstration Teachers have been collaborating on a research project investigating how play and art can support students' growing identities as changemakers and environmental stewards. The purpose of our ethnographic work is to document and investigate the importance of play and the arts within a multidisciplinary approach to environmental education.



*Students created a classroom hive after researching bee hive colonies.*

Art can be a powerful tool to communicate meaning to the world (e.g. Banksy's anti-war *CND Soldiers*), and with ongoing climate issues and a need for environmental literacy, we investigated how play and art can become critical or meaningful communicative tools for learning. This year, students have been investigating the interdependent relationships of people, pollinators, and plants. Our research aims to understand *how* and *in what ways* play and the arts can support a deeper understanding of the systems and the complex and dynamic mechanisms that make up our ecosystem.



*Students choreographed a dance to show their knowledge of the structure and function of flowers, and the dynamic ways each part worked within a system to reproduce and attract pollinators.*

This project is also supported by undergraduate research assistants Laila Shaaban, Curren Mandon, Gayeon Koh, and Darwin Hernandez.