



WITH THEIR INSTRUMENTS in hand Melody Koerperich (above left) and Dustin Quakenbush played to the song during music class in preschool. Calista Isbell (below)

smashed her peanut butter and jelly sandwich in the shape of a pumpkin during snack time.

Students learn colors, letters and much more during preschool

Little hands reached into the large crate carefully to pick the right one.

There were ones with bells, sand paper, those made of metal and some of plastic.

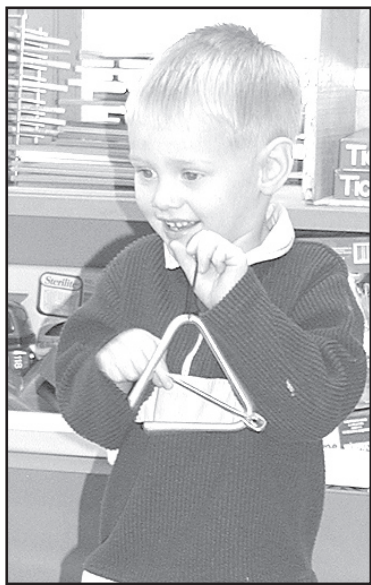
It was music time and the students in Cheryl Soderlund's preschool class at Oberlin Elementary School were taking turns picking out an instrument. Several chose bright silver triangles, one two pieces of wood with sand paper on either side, one a long plastic piece with bells and another a tambourine.

As the music started, the students stood in a circle waiting until Barb Berry, who helps in the class, took the lead and walked in a zig zag motion around the classroom to the music as the students played their instruments.

Mrs. Soderlund and Mary McEvoy, who also helps, fell into line too.

Mrs. Soderlund said she has eight students in the integrated preschool program which takes place afternoons Tuesday through Friday.

Half of the students, ages 3 to 5, are on an individual educational



EZRAMCDONALD played the triangle during music time.

plan and the rest are peer models. The students learn about the alphabet, numbers, shapes and social skills. All are things that help them get ready for kindergarten.

A typical day in preschool in-

cludes table time, play time, art, calendar time, gym class, music, recess, snacks, show and tell and reading.

Normally the students are learning about a color or a letter during the week so the activities center around that, said Mrs. Soderlund. For example, this week the students are learning about the letter "i" so the students will bring something for show and tell that starts with that letter.

During gym class, she said, they work on fine and gross motor skills. During art the students usually have themes that often center around the holiday.

Lots of learning, she said, is done to music.

Music helps when the students transition from one activity to another and also helps them remember things.

Right before they are picked up by a parent, they do "drop everything and read" time, which helps the students recognize words, learn to turn the pages and even hold the book.

Mrs. Soderlund said her theme in the classroom is "Learning is fun."



— Herald photos and story by Kimberly Davis