

Docia Shares a Story: Compound Eyes

by Docia Zavitkovsky

At a North Bay AEYC meeting, my friend Marla Osband told me that when she and her three-year-old granddaughter Rachel were cooking one day, a fly flew into the kitchen. In talking about the fly, Marla explained to Rachel that flies have something called “compound eyes” and showed her through a prism how differently flies see things.

About two weeks later, Rachel’s mother and grandmother Marla were walking with Rachel, when Rachel spotted a dead bee on the pavement. Without breaking her stride, Rachel announced, “I think that bee has a compound eye.” Rachel’s mother was not only amazed that Rachel knew the word, but knew the meaning too. When she asked Rachel where she had learned the word, Rachel proudly pointed to Marla, her grandmother.

About this same time, a hummingbird flew into my kitchen; and it took quite a while to fly out. I wrote a note to Marla and asked her if hummingbirds had compound eyes. She replied that Rachel said, “Please tell that lady that only insects have compound eyes.”

Wowee! At 93, I not only had not known that flies and bees have compound eyes, but I was learning from a three year old that only insects have them! Talk about “don’t leave a child behind!” What about don’t leave grandmas and grandpas behind?!

Thanks Marla and Rachel.
We old folks can use all the help we can get!

Docia Zavitkovsky has furthered the cause of young children as a practitioner in the field for over 50 years and as past president of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Known far and wide for her storytelling, she has traveled extensively as an early childhood consultant, lecturer, and adventurer.



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