Through our classroom mystery tin, we introduced the story *Mooncake* by Frank Asch. The mystery tin is a way that we share items through clues that help the students guess what is inside the tin. Here are the clues the children heard...

- You find me in the sky.
- Sometimes I change shapes.
- I glow in the night sky.

It’s a moon!
After looking at the cover students made observations about what they saw...

“"They are going to eat cake."”  -Jack

“"Its about a bear."”  -Matt

“"Its in the nighttime."”  -Gabriela

“"Eating moon cake."”  -Biagio

“"Its eating a cake out of sand."”  -Alexandra

“"It has a candle."”  -Sonny .....  ""It might be somebodies birthday."”  ‘Gabriela

“"A bird is next to it."”  -Ivy

“"Eating the moon."”  -Bobby

“"The bear has a spoon."”  -Reid

“"The bird is wearing a hat."”  -Eddie

“"The stars, a candle in a pot and a plate."”  -Bella

“"The stars."”  -Violet

“"It’s night."”  -Giuliana
We learned that the setting is the place where the story happens. We noticed the details of the setting in the book and decided what we need in our setting. Here are our ideas:

“Its Summer.”

“Under a tree, it needs leaves, trunk, branches, stump.”

“Looking at outer space. We need a moon and stars.”

“We need a bird to go in the setting.”

“A bear.”

“Grass, water and mountains.”
Mrs. Wise shared the beginning of Mooncake a second time, but this time she was wearing a tiny hat. Students immediately noticed her hat and some students wondered if she was acting as the bird in the story. Mrs. Wise posed the question, “If I am the bird in the story, who are you?”

“THE BEAR!!” students replied.

First, each student painted the body of their bear. Next, they used pom-poms to add arms, legs and a head. Finally, each child personalized their bear with a sticker representing the first letter of their name!!
Next the bear in Mooncake makes a bow and arrow with a spoon attached to it to try to get a taste of the moon. We read these pages and a flurry of ideas were shared among PK3 students.

“He’s going to shoot it to the moon and reel it up.”

“Now can we make a bow and arrow?”

“How will we shoot it?”

“We have a moon in our classroom!”

“We could hang our moon from a tree.”

“We need to get a ladder and put it up there.”

“We could tie it to the structure with the twisty slide.”

“We need a spoon.”

We went outside to collect sticks for our bows and arrows. Next we painted them, wrapped a spoon on the arrow using purple yarn and tested our creations outside.
Our bows and arrows did not make it to the moon...
So we asked, “How do you think we could get to the moon?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flying in a rocket ship</th>
<th>Jump</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Space car</td>
<td>Use a rocket</td>
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<td>A ladder</td>
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<tr>
<th>Rocket</th>
<th>Helicopter</th>
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<tr>
<td>Airplane: (Hope, Sonny and Bobby)</td>
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<tr>
<td>to get closer to the moon and shoot a bow and arrow</td>
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<tr>
<th>Rocket ship</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yanker: climb up to the moon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jump</td>
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<th>Build a giant statue and climb up</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bounce up (Reid, Bella and Eddie)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Spaceship</th>
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<tr>
<td>Climb up</td>
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<td>Booster on your back</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rocket boosters</td>
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| Biggest ladder in the world |
| Jet packs |
| A giant wall (Ivy, Jack, Matt, Violet) |
We drew our ideas to answer the question- “How do you think we could get to the moon?”
Just like bear, we set to work to build our own rockets. First we needed to gather supplies at the junkyard. Students looked through a variety of items including CD’s, toilet paper tubes, old boxes, foam pieces, beads, buttons and nuts and bolts. They collected the items needed for their design!

“I knew that wouldn’t work,” said Little Bird. “The moon is just too far away. What you need is a rocket ship.” “Then I shall build one!” said Bear.
“I knew that wouldn’t work,” said Little Bird.
“The moon is just too far away. What you need is a rocket ship.”
“Then I shall build one!” said Bear.

Overheard while collecting supplies:

“This can be the steering wheel.”
“I will use these for the windows.”
“I need something for the fire.”
“I want to use beads for decorations.”
“These are the rocket boosters.”
“Can I have a triangle of gold paper?”
We went to the Science Center to learn more about rockets. Then, we spent all week creating our own rockets. Our rockets are tall, short, fancy, round and carefully balanced.
After bear built his rocket, he began to get very sleepy! It was time for him to hibernate. Before he could count back from 10, Bear was fast asleep. We took some time to learn about hibernation and we had some fun counting down before shooting off stomp rockets.

PK3 defined hibernation as “sleeping through the winter.”

We asked the question, “Why do you think animals HIBERNATE?”

“That’s how God and mother nature made them.”

“To not be cold.”

“To camouflage.”

“To save their food.”

“Because they are tired.”

“So they don’t get cold at winter.”

“Bears might get sick.”

“They need food and water and all the berries are gone.”
Students were asked to notice what changed in the Mooncake setting as they walked into the classroom. Many changes were noticed including, “No leaves,” “Snow,” “White snow,” “The rockets flipped around,” and “The ships aren’t straight up.”

Students wrote collaborative stories about what happened to cause the snowy scene. Read on to find out what they wrote...
In two groups the class wrote collaborative stories about what happened to the setting of Mooncake.

“One day by the bear’s tree.... It was summer and leaves were falling from the trees. Then it was snowing. The bear hibernated. The rockets tipped over because of the snow and the wind.”

“One day by the bear’s tree.... The wind blew all the leaves off the tree. The wind blew the rocket ships down and snow got into the engine. The bear turned into a snowman in his rocket. He hibernated. The snow came down.

He slept and slept and slept, until one night the wind knocked over his rocket ship.
Our rockets tipped over and we found ourselves on THE MOON!

On the moon, we ate ice cream, marshmallows and whipped cream; explored moon sand and flour; covered our hands in whipped cream; and drew with moon chalk on black paper.

“It’s SPACETASTIC!”
As we read about Bear’s exploration of the moon we noticed that he carried a small candle with him. Each student made small candles to match bear’s. Bear also left footprints on the moon as he walked. We painted our feet white and made our own moon footprints.
One morning we walked in and noticed GIANT footprints on our black paper. Students made lots of predictions about what creature could have created such enormous footprints.

“We have to find the clues!”

“I need to get to the bottom of this!”
We learned, by reading Mooncake, that Bear thought his own footprints were a Moon Monster! We created our own Moon Monsters. First we had to cut out the body and head, then we added details like a face, arms and legs, finally we named our Moon Monster and told a story about him or her.
Bear prepared for blast off again, falling asleep in his rocket ship until Spring. The snow and ice in our setting disappeared and flowers and buds appeared all around.

The students noticed...

“There’s Flowers!”

“The ice is melted.”

“It’s Springtime!

Little Bird returns at the end of the book, wondering if Bear made it to the moon. Bear wakes up from his winter slumber and tells Little Bird that the moon tasted, “DELICIOUS!”

Students will culminate the Mooncake Storyline, by writing their own versions of the book Mooncake.