

Utter Chaos – The Good Kind

The school year is winding down... my third-grader's last day of third grade is today! When I was a kid, we always went to school into the month of June – never ended in May. Well, except senior year when we graduated on May 31 – but the seniors always finished early. I don't understand Ohio and their strange school schedules (what with fog days and stuff, which are unheard of in Chicagoland where I went to school), but I do like them. My third-grader is a HUGE help around the house, and I'm excited to have another pair of hands and someone to talk to during the day.

So anyway, yesterday was my 4 5-year-old's end of the year picnic for her school, rain or shine. And rain it did. Even though we arrived right on time, all of the sheltered picnic tables were taken. So, we had to slosh the double-stroller through the puddles and the mud to sit in the rain with 3 little kids and eat our lunch. Luckily it was only drizzling, but the picnic table and bench were all wet – note to self to start keeping a towel in the car. After lunch, they started to set up the large bouncy castles and my husband wisely took our 5 and 2-year-olds (Sammie and Disney) over to get in line. Judging by the huge turnout for this event, we didn't want to wait in line all day, especially if the drizzle turned into a downpour. My kids were first in line, but Disney chickened out, so Sammie bounced without her sister on the regular bouncy castle. Then it was time to check out the MEGA-bouncy! It began with a crawl-thru maze, followed by a ladder up a vertical wall and finished with a steep slide, and it was total chaos! There were kids everywhere! The adults were scrambling to regulate how many kids went inside, but somehow kids were getting stuck... next thing you know, there were kids crying and yelling and adults couldn't get to them because they were in the crazy maze of this gigantic bouncy! My daughter Sammie emerged from the maze, and she climbed the

steep ladder like a pro. Matter of fact, Sammie was thru the entire boucy obstacle course 3 times before most kids got through once – she is a very good climber and couldn't care less about the pile of kids at the beginning which is where most of them freaked out for their parents. Disney kept saying she wanted to try it, and noramlly we like our kids to try new things, but the huge bouncy was littered with kids of all types and sizes: crying kids, climbing kids, big kids, screaming kids – I was sure my sweet little 2-year-old would get eaten alive in there. So she watched for awhile and decided she still wanted to go in it, and we found a side entrance that bypassed the crazy maze of kid-doom. To our surprise, Disney climbed the ladder (with help from big sis Sammie) and went down the slide – and she had fun! And Sammie loved seeing all her friends and her teachers and having fun with them. Chaotic as it was, it was all worth it because it was for Sammie – and she loved it! This is Sammie helping Disney up that huge ladder:



Motivation

I am having some motivation problems with this blog- lately I just don't feel like writing about work. It seems like the

things I go through are either just too uninteresting to write about when I think about it, or it is similar to something I already wrote. Sometimes I just don't get around to it and am too tired by the time I think about it. These past few days have really all been similar. I really only got to teach math for the last three days, and today we didn't even do that so I didn't do much of anything except help out like a teaching assistant. Not that there's really anything wrong with that but it is rather unexciting to write about. The most tedious part I think was during the morning today, and again at the start of the afternoon when the third graders just played educational games on their laptops (only 4th-6th did testing today, and the other half of the multiage rooms were fourth grade). I of course had to walk around and make *sure* they were playing only educational games. They are not as devious as middle-schoolers, but fun will still win out over education if left unwatched, even with third graders.

Today was actually a very easy teaching day overall, even for the other teacher. In fact, the only subject actually taught/worked on was reading. The rest of the day was spend on laptops, read-alouds, silent reading, down-time packets, and classroom games. Sub + already messed up schedules due to testing = even even worse schedules. From the last four days, I would say the teacher I was subbing for really owes the other teacher big time for getting sick and leaving her pretty much all of the planning work and team teaching.

Hmm... This was actually going to be very short due to my lack of motivation, but turned out to be quite reasonable in length. Goes to show that once one gets started, the writing can just keep going.