Little PEEPS was held for 7 sessions (Nov. 25, Dec. 9, Jan. 13, Jan. 27, Feb. 10, Feb. 24, and Mar. 23) from 4:00 to 4:45 pm. Families were initially contacted through emails and posters sent out by teachers within Riverheights School. Shannon Vogel hosted each session in her grade 1/2 classroom with the average attendance of 15 children and their parents. Jan Pilling (MS. CCC-SLP) stressed within each session that all children need training and practice to develop strong phonological awareness. Two children were referred to speech and language services through this program.

The goal was to invite three to five-year-olds with a parent to attend sessions that incorporated multiple intelligences and UDL strategies. Each session provided activities for language development, phonological awareness, and literacy and numeracy concepts. After an initial group story, children moved through stations with their parents, promoting listening, hearing, speaking, representing, and viewing skills. Preschoolers were supported in exploring their thoughts, ideas, and feelings, and in collaborating with same-age peers. Families were also supported in responding personally and critically to oral and literacy texts. Sessions typically ended with a music component related to the session’s theme. Resource packages were provided for parents to enhance learning in the home setting and to prepare their children for kindergarten. Take-home “lit kits” were created to send home for each child and parent to continue the concepts learned during group sessions.

The highly structured learning stations, lessons plans, Universal Design for Learning strategies, and infusion of Aboriginal perspectives created dynamic and engaging learning opportunities for future Brandon School Division students. Vicki Lamb, Shannon Vogel, and Jan Pilling encouraged the clarity and artistry of communication skills and pre-literacy skills for families with young children. Little PEEPS will continue to run during the 2016-2017 school year.
About the Presenters

Shannon Vogel teaches grade one at Riverheights School in Brandon. She plans to use her M.Ed. in special education to pursue special education programming that will improve equity, rigour, and student achievement for exceptional learners. Shannon is happily married to her husband Curtis, and loves being a mother to her two grown sons, Brayden and Tyler.

Vicki Lamb teaches grades 2/3 and Reading Recovery at George Fitton School in Brandon. She recently completed her M.Ed. in special education at Brandon University. Her graduate research focused on the low literacy achievement of Manitoba students and obstacles that interfere with literacy growth. Vicki has worked as an educator in a northern community and in a variety of multi-age classrooms, and has taught numeracy support in her 17 years of teaching.