

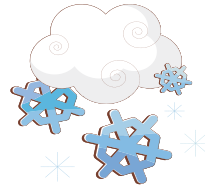
# MONTESSORI OF PLAINFIELD

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Volume 1, Issue 5

January 2012

## Key Dates in January

- **January 1st:** Tuition Due
- **January 9th:** School Resumes
- **January 13th:** Teacher Institute—NO SCHOOL
- **January 16th:** MLK Birthday—NO SCHOOL
- **January 18th:** Cold Blooded Creatures In-House Field Trip
- **January 20th:** Scholastic Book Orders Due
- **January 23rd:** Visit from Plainfield Library
- **January 26th:** Class Composite Orders Due
- **January 27th:** Registration forms for 2012-2013 School Year Due
- **January 30th:** Daddy Daughter Dance Forms and Money Due

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## Tidbits From The Teachers



This has to be all of your children's teachers' favorite time of the school year. Every January after everyone has settled back into school we observe a phenomenon that has been reported by Montessori schools across the world. An extreme change in focus and productivity by the students seems to take over in the environment.

We are all eager to get back and see our little learners. We are aware there may be some initial transition anxiety after the long break. Please be assured this is very normal and should subside after sleep schedules and daily routines are back to normal.

After a midyear meeting with the teachers there are a couple of reminders I've been asked to share.

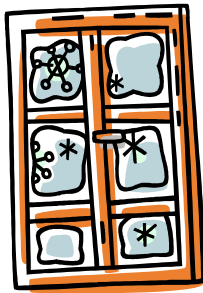
**Arrival time** – A few of our students are consistently arriving late for school. These late arrivals can be very disruptive and distracting to our students that have already begun their work cycle. We understand sometimes these situations can not be avoided due to doctor/dentist appointments, car trouble etc. We are referring to the children arriving late on a regular basis. Thank you for your cooperation on instilling the importance of being on time in our students.

**Reading books**- Every time a new reader emerges from our classrooms it is very exciting for everyone. The books are sent home with homework reading assignments to be completed and returned the following day. The young reader needs to be doing some kind of reading exercise daily to assist them in becoming strong independent readers. Please understand that we submerge your children in language and new vocabulary everyday. Sometimes it will be word building, sandpaper letters, word/picture matching, as well as many other language activities. We are having some issues with children telling us they have not done their reading homework to reading books not being sent back to school for days. Let's all work together to make this reading journey a steady and consistent learning experience.

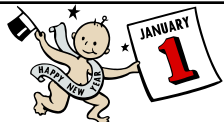
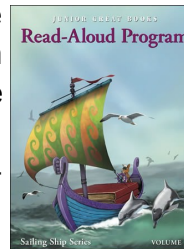
**Handwriting**- Every year we continue to see a drop in handwriting skills and pre-writing skills. It is so important to have your children working with play dough, clay, Lego's, crayons, and colored pencils (the thick kind for 2 and 3 year olds). As the age of touch screens and game styluses take over so goes the hand strength in our children's hands which makes learning to write a very difficult and frustrating process. Just the back to basics craft time can be so helpful to their muscle control.

We hope some of these suggestions and reminders help all of us to start the year off as true partners in the children's education.

# Miss Heather's Kindergarten News



Welcome back everyone!! I hope your holiday was wonderful, and your New Year has been peaceful so far. I always look forward to this time of year when the children are back from vacation, the snow is falling, the classroom is warm and FULL of little people working so diligently on discovering themselves. We will have a full month of new lessons in all of the areas of the classroom, and plenty of quiet work time so the students can discover what they are most interested in. We will reintroduce the Junior Great Books this month and spend some time on our discussion of literature. Stop in to visit anytime!



## HAPPY NEW YEAR

## Extended Day Updates

### Science Discoveries



The human body is so intriguing to our little ones. From their bones to their brains to their body functions, children really want to know how their bodies work. In our first lesson, we began by simulating different simple activities and made a chart of the various body parts required for completing each task. The children were very surprised at how many different parts of our bodies we use to do something as simple as eating to writing our name. Our last lesson we discussed resting heart rates verses our active heart rates. I gave the children different activities to perform for a determined amount of time and then we used stethoscopes to listen to how fast or slow our hearts were beating. We also took some time to review what types of things we need to do everyday to keep our bodies healthy and functioning properly. I am looking forward to continuing our journey through the human body.

### Art Appreciation



We took the month of December to learn a couple new painting techniques.

Monoprints are created by pressing a sheet of paper onto a surface where paint is smeared. The medium is then transferred to the paper, thereby creating a print. You would think we were performing magic tricks. Everyone was amazed at how the art work they painted on cookie sheets could be copied to their white paper. It's so fun to see those expressions on their faces when they experience something new like this.



Another magical technique we worked with was symmetrical butterfly prints. This activity allowed us to review our primary and secondary colors as well as a bit of color mixing surprises! We began by using blobs of red, blue and yellow paint on one half of our paper, then folded them in half, pressed down and reopened to reveal our prints. They were so beautiful and each one unique.

### Phonics Fun



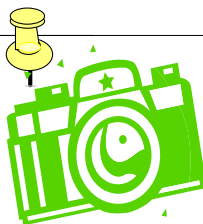
**M** is for mitten! The classic story "The Mitten" by author Jan Brett was a delightful addition to our lesson on letter sound mmmmm. The children created a large mitten and then filled them with the animal characters from the story.



**N** is for nifty nests we made! Everyone had a chance to be a bird for a day and create their own nest for the very colorful birds they colored. It was not as easy as it sounds. How do those real birds do it?



We continue to work on our letter sounds book each week in addition to our art projects.



## Class Composite Pictures

**Class Composite Photo Order Forms will be sent home soon. Please return your form and payment by January 26th. Composites take 4-6 weeks to arrive.**

## Reminders from the Office



- ✍️ **2012-2013 registration forms and fees** are due back to the office by Friday, January 27th. As always, first priority for registration is given to returning students and/or incoming siblings. We will open registration to the public at the end of January. Please note, registration fee is per family, not per child!
- ✍️ **Extended Day 2012-2013.** Space is limited in our Extended Day Programs. If you are interested in having your child in the program, please send in your completed form by January 27th. Programs run from 12:00 pm—2:00 pm and will include lunchtime and one special project each day. You have the option of attending 1, 2, or 3 days per week. Please refer to the Extended Day sign up sheet for more detailed information.
- ✍️ **Extended Day Kindergarten 2012-2013.** We are very excited to offer Extended Day Kindergarten again next Fall. This program allows our Kindergarten students to come together as a group and offers many wonderful, unique learning experiences. Anybody interested in this program for Fall 2012 should complete and return the Extended Day Kindergarten enrollment form. Space is limited.
- ✍️ **Monthly Tuition.** Tuition is due on the 1st of each month. A late fee of \$20 will be applied for tuition received after this date. Please remember to return your tuition envelope with your tuition check.
- ✍️ **Please Label** all of your child's jackets, hats, mittens, etc. There are so many in each of our coat rooms—this makes it easier for everyone.
- ✍️ **Scholastic Book Orders** for this month are due by January 20th. If you would like to order online, SIGN UP at [www.Scholastic.com/bookclubs](http://www.Scholastic.com/bookclubs). On the parent page, click the "Don't have a User Name and Password?" (or new user) link, then register for your own username and password. When prompted, enter the one-time **Class Activation Code: GVFQH**. This code ensures that your order is sent to us. When your account is activated, it will say that Mari-Ann Unger is your child's teacher – this is correct.. *If you have already signed-up, all you need to do is log-in and shop.* For every order placed online our school receives a free book. For paper orders please make checks payable to: Scholastic Book Clubs (not our school). No cash please.
- ✍️ **Severe Weather Closings.** In case of severe weather, please call the Emergency Closing Center at (847) 238-1234 and enter the school's phone number (815-254-0136) to find out if our school is closed. You may also visit the emergency closings website: [www.emergencyclosings.com](http://www.emergencyclosings.com)
- ✍️ **Weekly Family Envelopes.** Please remember to **return** your family envelopes. Papers get lost or misplaced if your envelope is not returned to school. We would hate for anybody to miss important information.

*Please patronize our sponsors. The generous support of their sponsorship helps bring you this newsletter each month*

## PEDIATRICS

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## 25 Reasons to Keep Your Child in Montessori Through Kindergarten

*Although every family must make this decision on its own, we offer a number of thoughts which should be considered before transferring a child in the kindergarten year.*

1. Does your child love school and can't wait to go every day? If so, consider yourself lucky. Why tinker with a winning school situation when so many families are frustrated and disappointed?
2. Your child has waited for two years to be one of the five-year-old leaders of her class. The kindergartners are looked up to as role models for the younger students, and most children eagerly await their opportunity to play this role.
3. The third year, the kindergarten year, is the time when many of the earlier lessons come together and become a permanent part of the young child's understanding. An excellent example is the early introduction to addition with large numbers through the Bank Game. When children leave Montessori at age five, many of the still-forming concepts evaporate, just as a child living overseas will learn to speak two languages, but may quickly lose the second language if his family moves back home.
4. As a five year old, your child has many opportunities to teach the younger children lessons that he learned when he was their age. Research proves that this experience has powerful benefits for both tutor and tutored.
5. As five year olds, Montessori children normally go on to still more fascinating lessons and more advanced Montessori materials, such as the Stamp Game.
6. The Primary Montessori curriculum is much more sophisticated than that found in most kindergartens.
7. Having spent two years together, your child's teachers know her very, very well. They know her strengths and areas that are presenting challenges.
8. Your child already knows most of her classmates. She has grown up in a safe, supportive classroom setting.
9. If your child goes on to another school, he will spend the first half of the year just getting used to the new educational approach.
10. Montessori math is based on the European tradition of unified mathematics. Montessori introduces young children to basic geometry and other sophisticated concepts as early as kindergarten.
11. In many Montessori schools, five year olds are beginning to read the Junior Great Books; kindergartners in other schools may be learning to recognize letters and numbers.
12. Five year olds have a real sense of running their classroom community.
13. In Montessori, your child can continue to progress at her own pace. In traditional kindergarten, she will have to wait while the other children begin to catch up.
14. Even in kindergarten, Montessori children are studying cultural geography and beginning to grow into global citizens.
15. In Montessori, five year olds work with intriguing learning materials, like the Trinomial Cube, instead of coloring books and insipid basal readers.
16. With the Land and Water Forms, he'll learn about lakes, islands, isthmuses, straits, capes, archipelagos, peninsulas, and other geological forms, rather than circles, squares and rectangles.
17. In art, she'll learn about Picasso and Renoir, rather than learn her basic colors.
18. In Montessori, your child has been treated with a deep respect as a unique individual. The school has been equally concerned for his intellectual, social, and emotional development.
19. Montessori schools are warm and supportive communities of students, teachers, and parents. Children can't easily slip through the cracks!
20. Montessori consciously teaches children to be kind and peaceful.
21. In Montessori schools, learning is not focused on rote drill and memorization. Our goal is to develop students who really understand their schoolwork.
22. Montessori students learn through hands-on experience, investigation, and research. They become actively engaged in their studies, rather than passively waiting to be spoon-fed.
23. Montessori is consciously designed to recognize and address different learning styles, helping students learn to study most effectively.
24. Montessori challenges and set high expectations for all students, not only a special few.
25. Montessori students develop self-discipline and an internal sense of purpose and motivation.

*If you still have any doubt, spend a morning observing in your child's class and compare it with a morning in a kindergarten class in the other school you are considering. Sit quietly and take mental notes. The differences may be subtle, but most likely they will be significant. Then project your child into the future and ask yourself how the positive differences you observed in the Montessori classroom might help shape your child to become the teenager, and later the adult, you envisioned for you child's future.*

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