

# MONTESSORI OF PLAINFIELD

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## Key Dates in October

- October 1st: Tuition Due
- October 3rd: Plainfield Library Visit
- October 7th Arboretum Field Trip—NO SCHOOL
- October 10th: Columbus Day—NO SCHOOL
- October 11th: Small Hands Catalog Orders Due today!
- October 12th: Plainfield Fire Department Visit
- October 19th: Parents Night: - Miss Kelly & Miss Heather 6:30—7:15pm
- October 20th: Parents Night: - Miss Mari-Ann 6:30—7:15pm
- October 21st: Scholastic Book Orders Due
- October 31st: Halloween Celebrations—All classes. Parade at 11:30am

## Tidbits From The Teachers



### The Role of Practical Life in the Montessori Classroom

Between the two world wars and the turmoil of the 1930's, Dr. Maria Montessori became ever more concerned with the future of our world. Celebrated technological advances were achieved, yet perhaps even greater problems resulted from such 'progress.' Machines allowed us to build 'better' cars, highways, buildings and weapons, developing what Montessori referred to as a "supernature." (*Education and Peace*, Maria Montessori, page 67). In this "supernature," families moved to large, rapidly growing cities with modern technology to make their lives easier. As families abandoned their farms, the child was no longer given opportunities to contribute to the family through truly meaningful work.

#### Children Need to Feel Capable and Valued:

With this in mind, Montessori developed the practical life component of the curriculum. These activities are an essential factor in the Montessori classroom. Practical life provides a vital opportunity for the child to gain skills necessary to function within her culture, but perhaps more importantly, to feel capable and valued.

#### The Montessori Environment is Created to Meet the Child's Need to be Independent and Competent:

To facilitate the child to this end, the Montessori classroom meets the needs of the child because she is allowed to explore her surroundings and construct these practical skills in a safe, encouraging environment. The child is given freedom with responsibility, which is an important life skill in itself. Furthermore, Montessori developed materials and furniture appropriate to the child to support her on her journey for independence.

To educate the whole child, the Montessori classroom supports the child in developing the necessary practical life skills through the maintenance of the classroom environment, the development of skills, which build a sense of self-worth, and the acquisition of language and adeptness required to solve her own problems.

#### The First Plane of Development and Practical Life:

Montessori initiated the practical life component of her method beginning in the Toddler and Primary classrooms. In the First Plane of Development, the child is in a sensitive period for ordering her environment and strengthening her independence. To facilitate her in this process, Montessori developed specific materials, such as the careful scooping, spooning, pouring, washing and folding, to support the child to this end. These practical life skills help the child develop fine motor skills, as well as increasing her independence and concentration in preparation for more challenging work.

#### Closing:

With the acquisition of practical life skills, the child becomes independent, while attaining important life-long skills. Montessori addresses the necessity for practical life experiences in the classroom and states, "Today we might define this goal as the preparation of children to live successfully in their world, by which we mean the future, rather than live primarily in ours, which is the present and the past." (*Montessori Today*, Paula Polk Lillard, page 3). Therefore, through practical life experiences, the child is provided the skills necessary not only to function within her environment, but also feel capable and successful in her world. The child's desire to learn new skills and her eagerness to contribute has enabled her to not only feel valued, but to be valued as well, even while existing in the "supernature." By gaining practical life skills, the child enables herself to generate useful contributions in the classroom, at home and in her community.

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By Rachel Wallace Reid, Certified Montessori Teacher and Parent Educator

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## Miss Heather's Kindergarten News

I am happy to report we are all settled in!! All of the students are working every day and getting comfortable with the all day schedule. Be sure to ask your kids if they have had a chance to be the set-up and clean-up team or the lunch box patrol.

We are working in small groups and individually, and it is so exciting to watch them working in a group of their peers. They all have such an eagerness to learn and work and we are already doing so much. October will be a time of studying the changing seasons, learning about Christopher Columbus and a little bit of fun for Hal-



## Extended Day Updates

### Science Discoveries



We began our month with a simple explanation of what scientists do and the different types of scientists there are. I took the children on a trip outdoors with magnifying glasses in hand to do some "investigating". We looked at many different things, asked questions and created a nature tray for further investigating indoors. Our most interesting find seemed to be a beetle casing we found under a tree.

I introduced some new vocabulary to the children. I.e. hypothesis, actual results, magnetic, non-magnetic, sink, floats, living, non-living and categorizing.



We spent three classes categorizing, making hypotheses, and testing and then logging our results just like the real scientists do. We talked about how it's alright if our hypotheses were incorrect from our actual results. Everyone was able to do hands on testing which made everything extra fun and engaging.



### Art Appreciation



Lines are the simplest form found in art work, so what better place to start. We have used the past month to discuss and learn about the different types of lines and how they can be manipulated to form other shapes. New vocabulary introduced was, diagonal, vertical, horizontal, parallel, curved, angles, broken, thick and thin.

Our first artwork was a simple "line dropping" activity. We took construction paper cut into different lengths and thickness and stood on a chair and let the pieces randomly drop onto a large white paper. If it was pleasing to the child's eye they secured their pieces with glue and added a touch of glitter to complete their look.

Our second class we learned that certain lines have names to describe their place in space. I instructed the student how to angle a line to create a diagonal. We then went on to draw and learn about vertical and horizontal lines. When they were finished they had a lovely example and understanding different types of straight lines.

As we progressed through the month I wanted to show my young artists that if they manipulated a straight line they could create shapes and pictures. The best way to make this first attempt successful was to use yarn as our medium. It was easy to curve and easy to change if we didn't like our results. We also had fun using pipe cleaners to practice making shapes out of straight lines.

The first famous artist I introduced was Piet Mondrian. Mondrian used quite a bit of cubism as well as a work using vertical and horizontal lines and bright colors. It tied in nicely with the technique we were working on this week.



### Phonics Fun

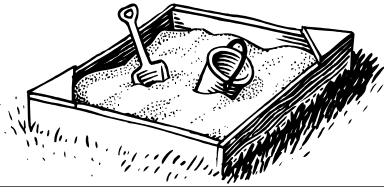


Learning your letters and phonetic sounds can be fun! Your children have been busy starting on an alphabet book that we will keep updating each week until we reach letter Z. They are filling each page with pictures that represent the letter of the week we are working on. At the end of the year I will have them bound into a nice sturdy book for them to keep and practice with.

In addition we have been making some really fun and cute art projects to take home. During this process we are working on our cutting, gluing cooperation and social skills.







# Sandbox Talk...

Miss Mari-Ann asked her students, "What is Mommy's favorite store to shop at for herself?"

- ★ Alannah—Meijer
- ★ Alex G.—Target
- ★ Alex P.—Meijer
- ★ Cecelia—Walmart
- ★ Emiliano—Walmart



- ★ Hannah—Macy's
- ★ Katie—Walmart
- ★ Leah—Kohls
- ★ Lyvia—TJ Max
- ★ Natalia—Walmart
- ★ Nieve—Walmart
- ★ Safiya—Meijer
- ★ Samantha—Walmart
- ★ Stephen—the Mall



## Important Update to School Year Calendar

We inadvertently left Veterans Day as an unscheduled day off. **There will be no school on Friday, November 11, 2011** to honor our Veterans as they are so deserving of this day.

Please mark your calendars.



Stretch-n-Grow class is off to a great start this year! Stretch-n-Grow is a children's fitness class. The kids learn about healthy habits, their muscles, good nutrition and much more. We exercise each week during class.

Classes are offered on Fridays immediately after Montessori class. Pick-up from Stretch-n-Grow is at 12:30pm. Right now there are 2 openings still available. If you are interested in enrolling or finding out more about the program, please call Chris Ulreich at (815)254-9448 or ask your child's teacher for a brochure.

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