

Message from the Academic Director

Yesterday's History Fair was a brilliant example of a 'concrete' experience of Montessori's cosmic curriculum. The initial presentation given in class was the Timeline of Humans. This Great Lesson inspires our students to study the fundamental needs of humans from a historical perspective. The direct aims of this lesson are:

- ♥ to give children the succession of different human groups and their culture.
- ♥ to help children realize that the development of life did not stop with the arrival of humans.

The indirect aims are:

- ♥ to help children gain understanding of the significance of the appearance of humans.
- ♥ to prepare children for the study of society and civilization in order to appreciate the achievements gained by the great civilizations and their contributions to humankind.
- ♥ to foster a sense of responsibility for one's actions and begin to determine what contributions he/she might make to the world. The lesson is repeated (spirals) every year and the teachers create strands of curriculum design which incorporated elements of essentialist and structuralist curriculum theory:

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

Check all of the new dates on the calendar and found in the classroom news!



Comparison-Essentialist/Structuralist from The NAMTO Journal Vol. 14 No.1 Fall Winter 1988

Essentialist

1. Great Lessons inspire. Key lessons guide. Child follows his own learning plan.
2. Teachers present, not necessarily in sequence, but frequently.
3. The child's native interest is the primary motivation. The child achieves the expected learning outcome. Once this achievement is reached the child then can take initiative to explore according to interest.
4. The teacher's role is to build and support interest, but not impose curriculum design.
5. The curriculum is interaction between the child and the teacher. School-wide discussion can lead to much pre-conceived direction. Detracting from the child's spontaneous responses.

Structuralist

1. Great lessons provide the initial inspiration for the guiding sequence of the key lessons. Key lessons present discovery paths which are interrelated and necessary to understanding future steps.
2. Teachers tend to sequence presentations, building complexity.
3. A child is presented, and then practices and masters, the key Montessori concepts.
4. The teachers' role is to create new interest by building exciting sequences that lead to discovery.
5. School wide coordination of curriculum paths will strengthen the planned discovery and developed thinking skills that come with complex learning.

The curriculum strands are modified to incorporate content for each year and are developed in complexity from Year Four to Year Seven. This is a carefully analyzed process whereby learning outcomes are derived and criteria established to meet those outcomes. The process of integrating this curriculum comes by weaving subject areas from the broad groupings of social studies – *geography, history, political science, trade and commerce and culture*- with science – *geography, geology, and physics* – art – *visual, performing arts* - and language art – *oral presentation, written reports, research*. The role of the teacher in this activity is as much director as learner, visionary as guide. They create a powerful link for the students – that of integrating science with myth. The stories are a means to 'hook' and impress upon our students that the work implies a sense of wonder.... The assignments given to the students incorporated Bloom's Taxonomy - knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Part of the lessons studied involved



the concepts of 'simple machines'. The students were asked to analyze the concepts and devise machines that were used during the civilization or time in history that they were studying.

Yesterday afternoon, I gazed out the window and saw a student, dressed as a middle-aged Monk, balancing small boulder-like rocks on the end of a plank to try and determine the fulcrum and create a simple lever. Next to him, nestled in the fork of branches in a tree was another student. He had incorporated his modern-day-guitar playing in his role as a 'troubadour' entertaining the fair-goers. The school grounds were decorated with various shelters, tents, and tables displaying the wares of the times. A bakery, manned by fair maidens who were dressed in the style of the Renaissance, sold food that would be found during the time period. The Year 4's created a small community of 'cave-dwellers' who roamed about in various coverings of fur and hides. There was a great exchange of currency as pennies were distributed and bartering and trading occurred over the fantastic tools and weaponry created in Art to support their studies of Early Humans. Several primary children went home with their wares and excited discussion ensued about the 'bargains' received from the peddlers. Flowers were in abundance! Fresh tulips were sold and many replications of natural flowers were arranged for perspective marketers.

The project enabled the practice of multiple intelligences; created an opportunity for students to have success regardless of differing learning styles. What was most noticeable was the sense of harmony amongst the students! The day supports the psychological theory of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi called *optimal experience based on the concept of "flow"* as described in his book titled, "Flow". This is "*the state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter; the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even at great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it.*" Whether the teachers experienced 'flow' may be something that they reflect on after a few days rest but for certain I can state that the students sure did. Beginning with a shared potluck luncheon, a delightful play of Greek Tragedy and following with the actual fair the day was a significant highlight for the term!

The day highlighted the skill of our teachers whose job, according to Socrates, is to help inspire the inquiring mind of the student to generate enthusiasm about knowledge, by facilitating the process of discovery. It demonstrated to me how vital the Montessorian's role is of linking knowledge to each stage of the child's development. Following Dr. Montessori's guidance in her book, *To Educate the Human Potential*, our teachers have helped the students "*realize that part that humanity has played and still has to play, because such realization leads to an uplift of the soul and human conscience*". Thank you to the Eileen, Barbara and Cathy von Ende for expending the energy to create this stupendous event! The cosmic seeds are being planted and we will wait patiently for the results.

I had a fantastic time at camp! I thoroughly enjoyed working with the Intermediates and being in their presence. I can honestly say that I have never worked with a more kind, cooperative, peaceful group of students in all of my teaching experiences. These children truly care for the welfare of one another, and this is evident in the way that each student is so willing to encourage and assist their classmates. I am grateful for the experience of being able to attend camp with these students. It opened up my eyes as to the difference that an education of the human soul can make.—Elicia Hack

9. Fundraising Committee

- 9.1 We encourage gifts to the school to be given in the spirit of generosity.
- 9.2 We will plan our fundraising events so as to maximize the dollars raised with a given investment from the school community. Because of the significance of these funds, we encourage the entire school community to participate in fundraising. The Fundraising committee will provide a variety of opportunities from which our parents can indicate their participation.
- 9.3 While donations of funds, tangible goods, services, or real property are deeply appreciated, the school can never accept any gift that would require it to violate any of its core beliefs outlined in this document.
 - 9.3.1 While individuals wishing to donate funds to the school are welcome to designate the use to which they may be used, it is up to the Board of MIND to establish policy about who will decide on behalf of the school if they can be accepted in light of the conditions established.
 - 9.3.2. Only the Board can accept a gift of real property or tangible goods on behalf of the school that would potentially require the expenditure of funds to repair or maintain.
- 9.4. The Board should be a key element in leading and promoting the school's fundraising efforts.



Preschool/Kindergarten Newsletter

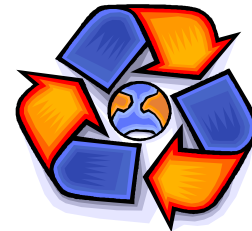
As the school year begins to wrap up we find ourselves becoming increasingly busy. The children have been working very hard throughout the year to create beautiful still life art work. The children will have two more opportunities to create yet again. On **Thursday, May 25th** we will be meeting at Diefenbaker Park in Tsawwassen for our still life drawing of the turtle. On **Tuesday, June 6th** we will be going to the Vancouver Aquarium for our mural drawing of the Beluga whale and the sea life around him. For the grand finale, on **Wednesday, June 14th** we will be holding our annual Preschool/Kindergarten Spring Tea featuring the Preschool/Kindergarten Art Gallery. Details of the field trips will be posted on the bulletin board in the Preschool/Kindergarten waiting room. The next few Fridays we will be focusing on baking delicious things for the Spring Tea.

News from the Primary Class

Earth Day was a great success! We dug a hole, planted a tree and went on tours to observe our local farmlife. We also read about the Tibetan monks who were spending the week at the Chan Centre at UBC creating sand mandalas to be poured into the tides upon completion in order to send their message of peace to the community. We then created our own mandala from tessellation tiles that we use in the classroom while 'thinking' positive thoughts about the earth. Thank you to the parents who helped on that day. Please read the insert to understand our inspiration for the day. We are flying into the final stages of work in our classroom. Student led conferences and going out experiences will dominate the remaining days until the term ends. Don't forget to check your email and make calendar notes to remember all of the dates of activities that will affect your children!

BBMH CALENDAR SPRING TERM

- May 16 School Photographs**
18 Parent Education Evening
19 Professional Development
22 Victoria Day
25 Student Led Conferences
Preschool Field Trip to Diefen-
25 baker Park
26 Primary Field Trip to Aquarium
- Jun 1 Community Mtg #1 & Orienta-**
Jun 1 Primary Field Trip to OWL
Preschool Field Trip to Vancou-
6 ver Aquarium
- Jun 8 Sports Day**
14 Preschool/K Spring Tea
16 Professional Development Day
16 Annual Gala Fundraiser
20 Newsletter
20- Rehearsals 9-11 am @ Delta Arts
22 Council
Early Dismissal 11:30 am Con-
22 cert 7 pm
School Closed—Picnic Time
23 TBD



FROM THE INTERMEDIATE CLASSROOM

Strathcona Park Lodge outdoor camp was a wonderful experience as usual, in spite of the rain for a second year in a row! The rain did not dampen the students' spirits as they participated in outdoor activities such as the zip line, canoeing, kayaking, the bog walk and a climb to Lookout Point. One of the students said "The food seems better this year", yet the same delicious food has been served every year!

The History Market was a huge success with a lot of delight and enthusiasm as students created costumes, goods and services and worked with simple machines designed from their time period. The Year Five Greek Play, as well as our traveling minstrel, entertained our guests. There was a lot of bargaining, bartering and buying as the primary children negotiated for food, artifacts, and flowers from our Early Human, Egyptian, Greek and Roman, Medieval, and Renaissance vendors.

We have started the FSA (Foundation Skills Assessment) required by the Ministry of Education for Grades Four and Seven. The Year Five and Six students also participate with a practise test to go through the experience. Many of the children enjoy the experience of writing the assessment and find the questions interesting. Only the Year Four and Year Seven students will receive the results. The results will not be available until October 2007.



Operated by MIND

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BBMH Education Series

7: 00 pm Thursday, May 18, 2006

GEOMETRY

Material based demonstrations given by our teachers that allow for interactive practice and experimentation by the participants!

We welcome new and experienced parents and all educators from the private or public system who are interested in learning more about Montessori education and methodology to join us for these evenings!

Interested in joining the MIND Board?

The MIND Board is recruiting new members to join for the 2006/7 school year. If you are interested in a position the next meeting is Monday, May 29, 2006. It is a perfect time to join us at a board meeting to see how we operate and how you can add value. Being a board member provides you with an excellent opportunity to learn more about Montessori, become more active in our community, share your expertise and knowledge, and experience how a small organization operates. We'd like one of our new members to have a financial/accounting background. If you are interested in finding out more please contact Jeff von Ende, President MIND, at 604-943-5634

CHARACTERISTICS OF A MONTESSORI EDUCATION

The child's inherent desire to learn and perfect his/her skills is nurtured by the stimulating and dynamic Montessori environment.

- ♥ The child develops a lifetime love of learning
- ♥ Each child works at his or her own pace and receives a high degree of individual attention.
- ♥ Student teacher ratios at BBMH are 10:1 in Preschool and 18:1 in Elementary.
- ♥ A well structured, prepared environment, with learning materials that are self-correcting.
- ♥ Respect for each other, the self and the environment are taught within a peace curriculum that is multi-cultural and non-denominational.
- ♥ With these opportunities, the child is empowered to fulfill his/her own potential thereby fostering:
 - Independence
 - Self-discipline
 - Self-esteem
 - Self-motivation
- ♥ The child is honoured in this caring, community-minded educational environment where parents are invited to participate.

PARENT PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES

- ♥ Material Makers—call Nancy Noso or Sheila Binnie
- ♥ Book coverers

- ♥ Cleaners - summer—Barbara Hofmann
- ♥ Fundraising committee members—see Diana Nesbitt

Fundraising

Pistol & Burnes Coffee Order forms are in your mail box. There are many different blends of coffee to choose from as well as teas, syrups, chocolate and cocoa.

Thrifty's Gift Cards Order form is included with the newsletter.

Bottle Depots Both the Ladner and Tsawwassen bottle depots have BBMH accounts. You can direct the proceeds from your empties to our accounts just by mentioning the school name.

**GALA IS TO BE HELD ON FRIDAY, JUNE 16, 2006
READ THE ANNOUNCEMENT LETTER INCLUDED**