

# Montessori Schools of Central Texas Newsletter

April 2024

Mrs. Jennifer Watson – Director

## News from the Top

### Writing Before Reading

Edward Fidellow



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### Upcoming Events

April 2024

4/8	Solar Eclipse
4/16	Temple Fire Dept
4/20	Staff Training

Montessori assumes a totally different way of teaching reading by teaching writing first. This approach is far more effective and efficient because by the time you learn to read you've already learned to write. Traditional education approaches reading through an intellectual process. Montessori begins teaching reading long before the intellectual process is ready giving it a great head start. Montessori education begins with the training of the senses. That is why there is tremendous emphasis on practical life and sensorial materials in the classroom. None of it "appears" intellectually stimulating but it is the basis of success in Montessori reading.

Montessori embraces all of the senses (and trains them all) to serve the acquisition of reading. Washing dishes, scrubbing clothes develop large motor skills. Polishing, spooning, sorting develop small motor skills. Both are essential for success in learning how to write. Then your child moves onto the sensorial materials. Each material develops different senses again reinforcing those needed for writing but also developing the senses for acquiring the sounds of language.

The reading process starts with the writing – one letter at a time, one sound at a time. It is not your ABC's but the phonetic sounds that create the building blocks for reading. The use of the senses with the sandpaper letters enhance the total process. Each sound, each letter is slowly marinated in to the child's senses – audibly, visually, tactilely. This is fun – not pressure. Recognizing letters and signs along the street add to the child's delight in the process.

They begin to put the letters together with the moveable alphabet. They begin to sound words out one sound at a time. They begin to write them on chalkboards and on paper. They begin to discover the power and sounds in the marks they make on paper. They begin to read without pressure because the reading has had a long gestation period through the practical life materials, through the sensorial materials and through the writing exercises.

The hard work of learning to read has a magical element in Montessori. At first you don't and then you do and you have a written record to verify the magic. You can read without learning how to write but you cannot write without learning how to read.

\* \* \*

## Infant 1

April is such a fun and exciting month as our infants love exploring everything outdoors! With the weather getting warmer, we will start going outside both in the morning and in the afternoon. Please make sure that your infant has a jacket labeled with their name.

We would like to say how proud we are of all our babies! They have each reached so many milestones and continue to show more and more personality and determination every day. We are working on balance and coordination and some of our babies are taking their first steps! Please make sure to send appropriate shoes for those who are working on walking. Also, for safety and sanitary reasons, please make sure to keep your child's nails trimmed at all times.

Thank you for allowing us to teach your child and help them learn and grow!

-- Mrs. Wallace

## Infant 2

During the month of April, the Infant 2 students will spend time gardening in their outdoor environment. We have planted peppers, strawberries, and herbs, and the students will learn how to water and care for the plants on our porch and playground. We will also be making spring crafts focusing on the weather and insects.

In circle time the students are learning more about self-control as we encourage them to calm their bodies and sit cross-legged. They will be learning new songs and reading books about the body parts in English and Spanish, as well as listening to stories from Moses.

At lunchtime, the students wash their hands by themselves and get their own lunch boxes. Then we choose two leaders to set the table, which might be their favorite part of the day! They love to exhibit their independence and leadership skills.

As we continue to prepare the students for the Toddler class, we'd like to thank you for partnering with us. By working together to keep consistent arrival times and a good nap routine at home as well as at school, we can help them achieve greater independence and a strong self-esteem.

--- Mrs. Karla Torres

## Toddler

In April, the toddlers will be learning about amphibians, reptiles, weather, and plants in their large group lessons. We'll talk about spring weather and go into more detail about rain, clouds, rainbows, and cooler mornings turning into beautiful sun-filled afternoons. In our small group lessons, we will introduce amphibian and reptile life cycles and students will reinforce their knowledge through the use of sensory bins.

This month our Bible study lessons come from the story about Jonah and the whale. In math, the students will concentrate on numbers 1-10, manipulating turtles and eggs as they count. Toddlers will practice sorting living and non-living objects in science and make amphibian dot art. They will also be practicing their handwriting skills by making straight lines and circles.

Now that the weather is warmer, our class will be going for nature walks to spot birds, bugs, and flowers. Toddler students will also participate in watering and caring for the flowers and plants in their garden.

--- Mrs. Clausen

## Primary

3 of 5

This month our continental study will be on Australia. The students will make Aboriginal art, study the anatomy of Koala bears and kangaroos, and work with the Australian puzzle map. They will use the cultural folder to learn more about the people, customs, and animals that live down-under. For our Social Graces and Courtesy lessons, the students will learn about conflict resolution and waiting their turn to speak. They will also hear some examples of social and environmental responsibilities as we learn about Earth Day and the importance of recycling.

The Science lessons in the beginning of the month will focus on the upcoming solar eclipse event! We will be conducting a solar eclipse demonstration, discussing totality, and creating a science craft. In the second half of April we will learn about the human body, its anatomy, and the identifying bones in the skeletal system.

The Bible study lessons in April focus on Luke 24:1-35, *Jesus is Risen!* We'll also read the *Ascension of Jesus* and *A Net Full of Fish*. In Spanish, the vocabulary will center around the parts of the face (partes de la cara) and parts of the body (partes del cuerpo).

Later this month, we will switch gears in appreciation of our great country. The students will learn to recognize the United States flag and how to respect it; they will use the US puzzle map, learn the Pledge of Allegiance, and learn to recognize American symbols.

--- Mrs. Prudencio, Mrs. Alvarado, & Ms. Copeland

## Elementary

Our Botany study during April will be on the parts of a seed, diagramming a bean seed and corn seed, the germination of a seed, and seed dispersal. In addition, the elementary students will continue to tend to their gardens outdoors in this beautiful spring weather.

In Physical Science, we will study the movements of the Earth and the effects of wind direction, temperature, ocean currents, and precipitation. How exciting it will be to have lessons on the solar eclipse! We will learn about this rare event through a simulation and then witness it with special glasses on April 8<sup>th</sup>.

In Math, we will learn the second-level checkerboard design, measurements, and the study of figures. For Geography, Australia will be our continental focus, learning the countries, their flags, capitals, and an in-depth cultural study into the people, customs, diets, and animals indigenous to this part of the world.

Our Bible stories this month will focus on Jesus' Last Passover, Jesus is Risen, and the Ascension.

--- Mrs. Dolline Abraham and Mrs. Monica Walker



Happy Birthday



Serving snack

- Aspen Beason                      Primary 2                      April 6<sup>th</sup>                      4 Years
- Braden Parish                      Upper Elem                      April 13<sup>th</sup>                      8 Years
- Finnegan Delaney                      Primary 2                      April 18<sup>th</sup>                      5 Years

## Director's Notes:

I am excited to announce the playground renovation project for the primary classes. We will be having **Astroturf** installed with new playground pieces in the coming months.



Music Area



Modern Swing set



8 ft carousel



Funnel ball