

Hello Everyone,

We have successfully transitioned into cooler weather and the surprise snow was just that; a surprise. With the cooler weather we have begun eating indoors. The children receive guidance regarding manners during mealtime, movement in the classroom, and the process of cleaning-up. This is an extension of the grace and courtesy lessons all students receive during the snack process each day in our classroom.

The youngest children in the class are expanding their repertoire of lessons and it feels as if they have been with us for a long time. We have a rich classroom in that, not only are elementary students visiting to read to younger friends, but we also are starting to see older primary students in the initial stages of reading. One vision is the I Spy book I picture a five-year-old reading to a small group of children while they found the items in the pictures. Lovely way to bring a taste of the Halloween tradition into the classroom.

We have some new materials concentrating on various land and water formations. This new material is sparking a lot of interest in geography and I would like to mention to be alerted that Dr. Montessori's rich and wonderful geography curriculum will be highlighted at our next Parent Education meeting November 14. This meeting will give you an idea of the types of lessons even the youngest of children receive regarding geography and then the opportunity to view the elementary science projects as they relate to geography. I encourage you to attend. Parents who learn about the Montessori curriculum and communities typically marvel at what they learn. Our staff gave a lovely representation at the National Montessori Conference regarding history, geography and cultural studies, highlighting our activities over the past several years. I hope you were among the parents who were able to fit it into your busy schedules the evening we presented the power point to parents. We offer many opportunities for parents regarding parent education. I urge you to come whenever you can. Participation in your child's school, both socially and educationally, enhances your child's experience.

One of the nicest parts of being part of a Montessori classroom is the fact that learning can be spontaneous. The youngest children divulge their interest and Ms. Irwin and I can follow-up on those interests in a number of ways. Language cards can be about any topic and we have a rich supply throughout our school. If a child's interest is about vegetables we can move right to that shelf and choose the vegetable cards. Our library is also rich with books. If firetrucks are the interest, we have a book to read. Recently one of the students who had heard about the Liberty Bell during our cultural studies group found a picture in the class atlas (one month later) of the Liberty Bell. She brought it to me all excited because this picture showed the crack! We immediately were able to go to the library to get a book. That is when we found out that another classmate had visited the Liberty Bell last summer and the book stated that nobody knows how the crack even got there! This activity inspired reading, storytelling, AND writing because another student wrote "librty bell" on her moveable alphabet and drew a picture. Can you imagine? Reading and writing that is inspired.

Each day I learn what your childrens' interests are. One student always shows up any time we prepare to do bank work. I have learned to only invite two because he will almost invariably be the third in our group. I had the distinct pleasure of hearing, "This is so fun," when I gave a lesson on the stamp game to a 5-year-old. Remember those books we gave you when your child started in this primary class? The book that describes these lessons i am mentioning? When you get your conference report or read my monthly letters dig it out and review the lessons to which I refer. It will be worth your while to read up on Dr. Montessori's materials. In my humble opinion, it is the best way for a child to learn.

Speaking of Parent/Teacher conferences, they are tomorrow, October 31. There will be no school for children, but I will be there ready to meet with you about your child. I still have some slots open and there are a few of you who have yet to sign up. Please do so. A few of you have been in for observations and I hope enjoyed your time. I certainly enjoy my days. This is the only job I know of that this scenario would happen: I arrived at school wearing a new dress. One of my students who has been with me a long time came running (whoops) across the room and said, "Mrs. Irre, I have never seen you wear a dress THAT beautiful before!"

Do you wonder why I love my job? It is because of all of your children.

See you tomorrow,
Carrie Irre