

November 2010

Dear Families,

As I observed our class this past week, I noticed that the children are involved in immense amounts of Great Work. Dr. Montessori coined this term to explain the amazing phenomenon of the children's deep involvement in creating projects which are usually inspired from a lesson given by the teacher.

Presently we have had students engaged for hours in finding the common multiples of four and five, writing into the thousands with complete fascination. No one suggested or required this work of them. The teacher's role is to just check in now and then and share their enthusiasm.

Following a story about the Ordovician period, a six-year-old decided to draw all the creatures she could find of that period on the time line while another student brought her books with more information on her topic.

Two girls spent a few days drawing and measuring angles after a brief lesson in using a protractor. When I called them over for a lesson on supplementary angles, they came with wide eyes and eager expectation of the next thrilling bit of information on their new-found passion.

A seven-year-old made long lists of nouns with the noun classification chart, taking breaks for other lessons, then returning.

Three children worked together to learn all they could about Paul Klee and then studied several pieces of his work and made their own copies with colored pencils and markers.

Children who were involved in a lesson on simple and compound leaves worked quietly creating their own designs to demonstrate their knowledge.

One of the beauties of children having the freedom to use their imaginations and reasoning minds in the creation of their work is the contagion factor. Our students inspire each other (and their teachers) to work joyfully, creatively, and intently.

Sincerely,

Mona Nixon