

January 2020

Children's House Three

January News

Save the Dates

Monday, January 13th:

Extracurriculars Begin

Monday, January 20st:

MLK Day: No School

February

Wednesday, February 12th:

Primary Education Night: 6:30

Friday, February 14th:

Teacher Staff Day: No School

Monday, February 17th:

President's Day: No School



December Recap

December was short but sweet. We began the month exploring the underwater world of fish. Fish are one of the five classes of vertebrates within our curriculum. As the holiday season quickly approached, we discussed two specific holidays; Hanukkah and Christmas. We learned the meaning behind each of these holidays, as well as, that some of our families celebrate both Christmas and Hanukkah.

A big thank you to all who came to our spectacular Christmas performance! The kindergartners, played the roles in the nativity story while the elementary students narrated. We are so proud of all our children!

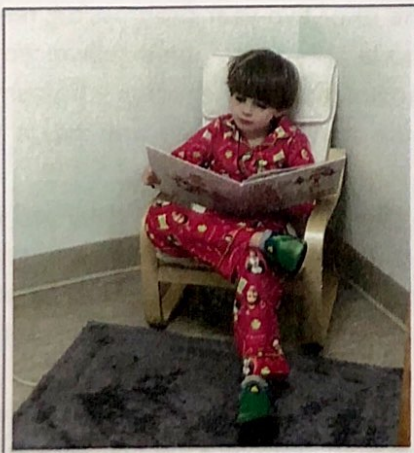
January Highlights

We are starting off the year by reviewing our grace and courtesy lessons. The lessons include life skills such as taking care of ourselves, our friends, and our classroom. Beyond that, grace and courtesy is also used daily through the way we communicate to each other within our little community.

As we make our way through January, we will begin studying the second class of vertebrates: Amphibians. A few key characteristics that we will learn about amphibians are that they:

- lay eggs
- have smooth, wet skin
- are cold blooded
- live part of their lives in the water and part of their lives on land

Our month will close with studying the continent of Asia. This year we are studying Asia during the Chinese New Year. We are looking forward to a Chinese celebration!



Spanish Lessons



December was a busy month for us during our morning Spanish lessons. Here are a few highlights from the month:

We began each group with discussing the *Días de la Semana* (days of the week), *Mes del año* (month of the year), and *clima* (weather). When it came time to take attendance, the children learned to say *aquí* or *presente* when their name was called.

In addition to our daily routine mentioned above, we also learned about *mi familia* (my family) and the different members that make up a family such as, *mamá* (mom), *papá* (dad), *abuelo* (grandpa), *abuela* (grandma), *hermano* (brother), *hermana* (sister), and *bebé* (baby).

Last but not least, now that winter is finally here we are learning about what *ropa* (clothes) you wear when it is *frío* outside. Here are a few examples: *bufanda* (scarf), *guantes* (gloves) *chaqueta* (jacket), *botas* (boots) and *pantalones y suéter*.

Listen out at home and see if you hear any Spanish vocabulary. Its amazing how quickly they catch on!

Three, It's a Magic Number

The number three holds a very important place in Montessori educational concepts. Why three? What does this mean? The number three is a basic element of three crucial Montessori concepts: The Three Period Lesson, the Three Hour Work Cycle, and the Three Year Cycle. Over the next several newsletters we will explain each of these concepts in detail. The purpose of this article is to emphasize the importance of the Three Year Cycle.

The Three Year Cycle is an essential part of Montessori Education. Dr. Montessori was a scientist and a great observer. Based upon her extended observations of young children, she developed her concept of the Planes of Development. The Three Year Cycle refers to these Planes of Development. They are broken up into these groups - Infant/Toddler program ages 0-3, an Early Childhood program ages 3-6, a Lower Elementary program ages 6-9, an Upper Elementary program ages 9-12 and middle school. Having children for three years in a multi-age classroom is beneficial for several reasons.

First, the materials in the classroom at each level are organized in a sequence moving from simple to complex in each curriculum area. After a lesson is given by the teacher, children move through the sequence of materials at their own pace, not according to their age or grade. A child who is strong in one area is able to move through the materials without being held back. And a child who needs more practice in an area can take their time.

Second, children learn from each other. Younger children look up to the older ones and are inspired by the work they see, which gives them a goal to strive for. The older children become masters of the materials and they can teach their younger classmates.

A third benefit is that the third year students become the role models and leaders in the class. They are automatically put into this leadership position because they are the oldest and most experienced with the curriculum. This year builds confidence and self-assurance. These students are also able to solve problems and find solutions. They have become the experts.

In the third year, the magic of the curriculum comes together. The first year is the foundation and the time of exploration with materials. The second year is for experimentation and practice. In the third year, everything comes together in an amazing almost magical way as a result of the prior two-year progression, resulting in a kind, confident, and strong student who is able to complete advanced work and who has developmentally moved into abstraction. The children who complete the third year receive the full benefit of the materials which are meant to be completed over a three year period.

Finally, the balance of the classes is affected. Each class is balanced with a certain number of first, second, and third year students and a balance of sexes at each level. When children do not complete the three-year cycle, the balance is disrupted. Finding children to "fit" into these spots is difficult. A child is generally able to go on and become successful after only completing one or two years, however, it is unfortunate when a child is denied this third year, when the magic happens and they are not given the opportunity to complete the full cycle. Without that third year, their Montessori education is incomplete. We look forward to completing the three year cycle with each of your children!