

Parenting Tip of the Month

August



Lower Elementary Teachers

How Can I Help My Child Be Successful in School?

1. Read EVERYDAY! You can read to your child or have your child read to you...either way...READ!
2. Create a consistent after-school routine. Help your child study and complete their homework.
3. Be POSITIVE! Always speak positively about school, learning, and your child's teacher.
4. Encourage! Give your child the opportunity to excel in all areas of their academics.
5. Be sure that your child is getting plenty of rest each night and is ready for school each day.
6. Teach your child to be responsible for their actions and to take pride in all they do!
7. Stay INVOLVED! Make it a point to ask your child about their day.
8. Communicate...Please know you can contact me with any questions or concerns.

Material of the Month

August



Lower Elementary Teachers

CULTURAL CURRICULUM

The study of geography is broken down into two subsections: (a) physical geography and (b) political geography. However, the Montessori approach to education has a connectedness between all areas of the curriculum. One area ties into another while the door is opened to a different, yet related component.

Physical and political geography blend together as the teacher presents a lesson on the Fundamental Needs of People. It demonstrates that all people have the same fundamental needs and places an emphasis on the similarities among the human race. Children are taught to respect people from other races, countries, and religions. The geographical factors influence how people live as they adjust to their environment.

At this point, the teacher involves the class in a study of life and culture on earth. The curriculum then branches into different directions, such as: (a) geography, (b) culture, and (c) history. Children are taught history parallel to the concept of time. Discussions and further studies include paleontology and archaeology, and still further back through time to the beginning of time, or the creation of the universe. The cycle is complete.

Also, the lessons of the universe are related to the Montessori philosophy of Cosmic Education. It begins with the creation of the universe. This plants another seed of knowledge. The child begins to assemble questions of: (a) spirituality, (b) morality, and (c) social consciousness. The Montessori presentations begin with the introduction of the whole subject first and followed by more detailed lessons. This concept helps the child to recognize that first he/she is a citizen of the world, and then a member of a country and society. They begin to realize that it is all connected to responsibility.

The Montessori philosophy of Cosmic Education would not be complete without the 3 year curriculum of the universe. By working with hands-on materials, and impressionistic stories of creation, the child develops a new sensitivity toward: (a) himself, (b) other people, and (c) the environment, or the Earth. The child develops a consciousness to respect and care for life and the environment, and to become a steward of the earth.

GEOGRAPHY CURRICULUM

Geography is the study of Earth in all its diversity. When students study Geography, they learn how the physical arrangement of the Earth contributes to our history. Montessori Geography studies are integrated with history and science. We begin with general topics and progress to more specific concepts. Children learn about the development of the solar system, Earth's land, water, plants, animals, and people.

Rather than provide rote lessons with a lot of facts and information, Montessori Geography provides a hands-on approach that engages students. This helps children to develop new ways of thinking and sharpens their memory. Children learn how geological forces helped with the formations of oceans and the atmosphere. Thus, we explain continental drift and tectonic plates, volcanoes, earthquakes, ice ages, and the formation of mountain ranges. We also study the hydrosphere, which includes learning about oceans, rivers, lakes, and the water cycle. To study the lithosphere, land forms provide an understanding of the geographical features that distinguish each country.

Land and water globe represented in a miniature scale is used to recognize that Earth is shaped like a sphere. The continents and school globes help children develop map skills as they learn about the seven continents of the world. Puzzle, outline, and pin maps are used to allow students to identify continents, countries, oceans, and biomes that are the flora and fauna native to each continent.

Children receive detailed study of the United States. Within our Montessori studies, our students are taught to respect and take care of the environment and develop a foundation of global awareness.

The Solar System

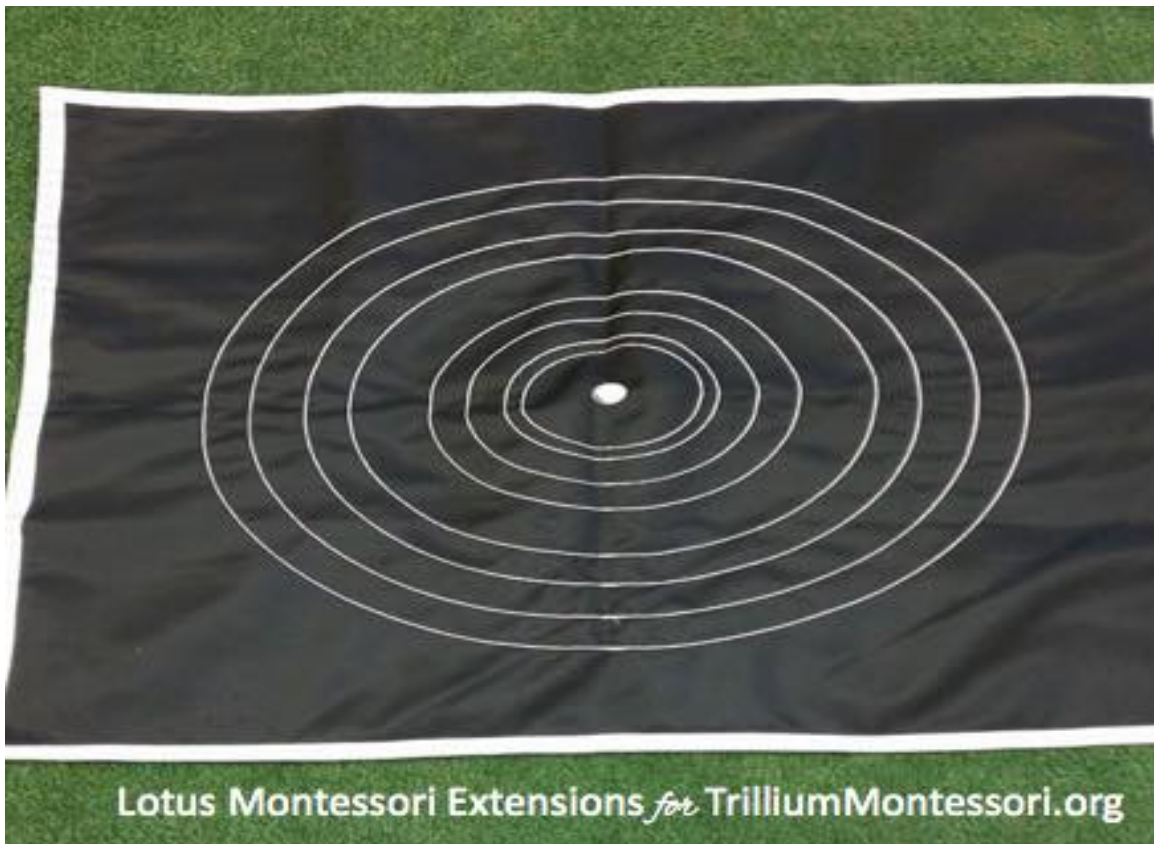
One of the favorite lessons to give is the "Exploration of the Planets." Children learn the names of the planets and explore them in a variety of hands on ways.



Object Picture making



Using the Planet Mat to learn the order of the planets



A closer look at the Planet Mat (Source: Lotus Montessori Extensions)



Color cut and glue the planets in order, and draw the orbit lines



A simpler version of gluing the planets in order



Make the solar system with clay



Solar system sewing work



Solar system on a stick



Books about space



Books about space

(photos credit: TrilliumMontessori.org)