



VMS Weekly News - December 9, 2016

Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.

~William Butler

Yeats

Primary 1 Classroom

- Miss Ty, Miss Cristina and Miss Rebecca

We have been highly blessed this year to have had Rebecca Deloughne working in our classroom for many mornings. Her calm and strong demeanor was wonderful for the children as she welcomed them into early care, and then as she helped during the work time. She was a consistent presence at lunch with them and helped smooth the transition for some going into Ms. Chris's room for rest. We wish her the best as she takes these days away in preparation for her new arrival! We will miss her until she returns after a few months at home.



In our classroom, on the art shelf, we have *scissoring* as a choice of activity. At the beginning of the year, the children were using scissors on a blank piece of paper; learning to put the proper pressure on the blades, making small snips. As the year progressed, we placed other strips of paper as options to cut. Some had straight lines, some had diagonal lines, some had large zig-zag designs and some had wavy lines. Well, several of the children's hands grew stronger, and they became more adept at this activity, so this week a new paper was added for them to try: perfect for making a snowflake! The children have made quite intricate designs to decorate the windows of the classroom or take home.

In class, after the initial songs and lessons have taken place on the blue line, I always ask my students to close their eyes and think about what work they would like to begin with that day. I walk around the circle and gently tap each child on the head (one by one). It is a really calm way to begin the day and helps each student begin the day focused and ready to find an activity to work on. While the children work independently, I provide individual and group

lessons while my amazing Montessori teaching assistant reinforces the important rules and routines of the class and helps diffuse any issues as they arise throughout the morning.



Primary 2 Classroom

- Miss Chris and Miss Holly

Each and every morning, our day begins with us gathered together on the rug. Being together as a classroom community allows for the opportunity to share; sharing lessons, sharing songs and poems and most importantly, sharing thoughts and feelings. Some mornings, I share a lesson with the children. Today's lesson was about hibernation, migration and adaptation. After the lesson was over, I taught the children a poem about winter animals.



Often times, the children take turns sharing a story with us. These opportunities allow for each child to be the center of attention, addressing the class while the rest of the group sits attentively, being respectful and patient while waiting for their turn to share.

After the children have shared their stories, we fill in our calendar, practicing the days of the week, the names of the months and the actual date. We count the numbers, first in English and then again in Spanish, up to the date where we are currently. We discuss the weather and find the appropriate weather card to place on the calendar. Finally, I tell them any special news regarding the day, and then each child is dismissed to choose their first lesson.

Our morning gathering is a wonderful opportunity for the children to practice being respectful, patient and kind. It is a beautiful way to start our morning!



Elementary Classroom

- Miss Irene and Miss Nora

During Monday's trip to the Morgan Learning Center for this week's museum class, we were represented with a demonstration of how our island was formed by a glacier. Using a plaster replica of a glacier, rocks and sand were pushed onto a map of our island and then receded to show the moraine and glacial out-wash that formed our island. Students were surprised to find out that what we refer to as *up-island* was named so because of the increasing latitude numbers and not the island's elevation. Nora and I were asked to leave the center for a short time while students and museum teachers choreographed a dance to demonstrate the glacier forming our island.



Bead frames, bead chains and working on personal timelines occupied Elementary I students' mornings this week. Nora continued to read aloud from the Newbery Medal-winning book, "Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH" by Robert C. O'Brien, as students listened intently.

Elementary II students took turns practicing their out-loud reading from Augustus Pelletier. We are half way through reading about the Louis and Clark Expedition. They are also learning how to communicate and submit writing assignments through google classrooms. Descriptive essays were the focus this week for our writers. They were to choose a familiar place that they have visited, make a web around their place with information on the five senses and write their first draft with as much description as possible.

Thursday night the Elementary II students met with Cassie Stanek at VMS to make wreaths. The wreaths will be sold during Christmas at our Montessori Model United Nations (MMUN) sale in Edgartown this Saturday. We will be set up outside of Dock Street Coffee Shop from 11:00 am until 2:00 pm. Students will be selling the wreaths, hot cider, goodies and chances to win a lottery tree (lottery tickets in the shape of a Christmas tree)! All money will go towards the students' expenses for MMUN trip to NYC. Please stop by to visit!

The kids were pleasantly surprised to meet Cristina's parents today during Spanish class. They speak only Spanish, so Tomas Carreno helped me to greet them at the gate and invite them inside. Read more about it in Miss Cristina's post.



Late Day

- Miss Weezie and Miss Cristina

Our weekly walk to the Art Studio on Monday was abruptly cancelled due to a sudden downpour. As it turned out, within the next hour the skies had cleared. We will be extending our session one week to make up for the loss. The last class will be Monday, December 19th.



This weather occurrence was the perfect segue into our library theme of changing winter weather and how people and animals adapt. We read "When will it Snow?", "Snow toward Evening", "The Wind Came on Sunday" and "Winter White". We try to become careful observers of our environment.

Late Day students enjoyed another puppet show this week. "The Three Little Pigs" is a finger puppet kit available through our wonderful library system. Students' listening skills are improving, and children are learning to be an enthusiastic and appreciative audience.

Spanish

- Miss Cristina

This week, we had very special visitors from Spain. My parents, Jose and Maria, came to meet the students and answer a lot of questions about the Spanish traditions during the holidays.



During the month of November, the students learned about Spanish holiday traditions (New Year, nativity, and the 6th of January) and Christmas songs. This week, they introduced themselves and have put in practice everything they had learned since the year started.

My parents were very happy to see the place where I work and meet the students. It was an amazing experience for all, and for me to see them talking with the students in Spanish. I am very proud of the Spanish class and how the students were able to enjoy and carry a conversation in Spanish with my parents.

Check out VMS' Online Store!

Looking for a unique item or holiday gifts? Purchase our school-themed items and support VMS at the same time. Check out our collection of t-shirts, sweatshirts, mugs and more by clicking [here](#).



Upcoming Events

Saturday, December 10th from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm -- Elementary II Wreath Sale

Elementary II students will be selling wreaths that they have made. They will be set up outside of Dock Street Coffee Shop in Edgartown from 11:00 am until 2:00 pm. Students will be selling the wreaths, hot cider, goodies and chances to win a lottery tree! Proceeds go to their Montessori Model United Nations trip.



Thursday, December 22nd at 1:30 pm -- Elementary Winter Gathering

Friday, December 23rd at 11:00 am -- Primary Winter Gathering

Recommended Reading

"What do P. Diddy, Sergey Brin, and Peter Drucker have in common?"
by Glenn Rifkin

"Succeeding at their own pace" by Alex Beam, Boston Globe Columnist

Book Corner for Parents

"LastChild in the Woods": Saving our children from Nature-Deficit Disorder
by Richard Louv

"Montessori Madness!": A parent to parent argument for Montessori education
by Trevor Eissler

"Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius" by Angeline Stoll Lillard

Book Corner for Children

"What Do You Do With An Idea?" by Kobi Yamada

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