One test of the correctness of educational procedure is the happiness of the child.
-Maria Montessori

Calendar

Monday, April 16th - Friday, April 20th: School closed-Spring Recess.

Saturday, April 28th: Family Yard Day

Primary 1 Classroom
- Miss Cristina and Miss Rebecca

Special Visitor Day was very well attended! It is one of my favorite days of the year. I love watching what each child chose to show to his/her parents. The children are so proud of their work and excited to share with mom and dad. As the children spend so much of their time here at school, it is great to have you observe them. Thank you all for coming and making this a special day for your child.

This week, I presented a new and very exciting lesson. The students learned about volcanoes. First, I presented the volcano nomenclature cards and then showed them how to make a volcano made of clay erupt. Already in our
classroom, some children know a lot about volcanoes. It was fun and very interesting to have conversations about volcanoes during our community time. They really enjoy the nomenclature cards, matching the pictures and the labels. When the children complete the lesson, they get to make a booklet. The older children write the words independently by looking at the labels while the little ones trace the words or color the parts of the volcano.

I then presented the “cool” volcano lesson. It is a classic science project, which helps students discover and learn about chemical reactions and what happens when a volcano erupts. We simply used vinegar and some baking soda to create the demonstration. I love this volcano lesson. It is an independent work because of its small size and easy clean up. When it is set up, the children get the right amount of the ingredients; there is just enough baking soda and vinegar for one eruption. Once finished, the child has to clean it up for the next person. This work is just like many other multiple-steps lessons in our classroom.

I added photo cards to give children a chance to see great pictures of lots of different kinds of volcanoes. This is a great primer for the elementary grades where they will learn about the various types of volcanoes.

Primary 2 Classroom
- Miss Chris and Miss Holly

This week ended our skating and baking programs. The skaters really enjoyed this opportunity to learn new skills and develop a stronger sense of self-confidence. We joined Miss Cristina's class for our last day, and the children got to skate through an obstacle course painted on the ice. You could really see the change in so many of the children as they moved swiftly and care-free up and down the ice. I want to thank the many parents who helped drive and chaperone the trips to the ice arena. Without your support, programs like skating would not happen. Our final baked treat was M&M cookies. The bakers were quite excited to share these delicious treats with us upon our return to school. The enthusiasm in the children's voices as they explained which ingredients were used and what part they had in creating the cookies was so endearing. A big thank you to Miss Holly for sharing her special recipes with us!

One of my most favorite days at school is Special Visiting Day. The children have the chance to invite a special friend (parent, grandparent, family friend) to join them for an hour when the child becomes the "teacher" and gets to show the visitor all the things that the child has been working on at school. The excitement and anticipation that fills our room on these days is palpable. I thoroughly enjoy stepping back and watching all the special interactions between the children and their visitors. Thank you all for coming and sharing that special time with us.
Elementary I Classroom
- Miss Nora

This week, the Elementary I students continued their study of the seasons. They learned about the sun's rotation and the winter and summer solstices. They were introduced to the significance of the vernal and autumnal equinoxes and how they relate to the equator, Tropic of Cancer, and Tropic of Capricorn.

The students have done so well with their skating lessons that they are now able to skate on the ice without an instructor! Sadly, Tuesday will be our last day.

We got a break in the weather on Wednesday and were able to plant our peas in the garden to get ready for “First Peas to the Table” with Mary-Sage. It was wonderful to see all of the parents and friends that were able to join us for Special Visitor Day. The students always love to share the lessons they have been working on in class.

Elementary II Classroom
- Miss Irene
We continued writing entries and creating illustrations for our whaling logs with Ann at the Morgan Learning Center this week. She gave students additional writing prompts and many cool art materials such as water color pencils for illustrations.

Joyce reviewed what our script writers have written so far for their short plays and was impressed with their imaginative works. They met a few time after that to try to complete their plays for her by next Tuesday.

Students had the week to work alone or in pairs to research and prepare short presentations about the skeletal system. Previously we used three part nomenclature cards for an overview of each of the body systems. Now we will have one week per system until the end of the year for a more in depth look. They also turned in their projects on animal cells which was assigned last week. Both 2D and 3D models of the animal cell made their way into the class on Friday.

The Wanderings of Odysseus is our newest literature circle book that we started on Monday. This is a retelling of the Odyssey by Homer and links with our timeline of Greece and it's famous philosophers, historians, mathematicians, artists, and poets.

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**Middle School**

*Miss Ty*

On Wednesday, the Middle School and the Upper Elementary students visited a first-grade class at Oak Bluffs School to present their work on Zero Waste. As you have seen from a few of the past newsletters from both classes, our students have visited the Primary classes and the Lower Elementary class at VMS during the past weeks. We took those same “lessons” and presented them to groups of first graders at Oak Bluffs.

Matthew Coggins and Gracie Coggins presented their game of “Conservation Concentration”, a memory card game using pictures of ways to conserve. Arin Atema and Silas Stanek presented a game using three different containers representing recycling, trash, and composting. Students would place pictures of items into the appropriate container. Finally, Connor Graves, Carly Coggins, and Marysol Jurczyk presented a sorting lesson about what can or cannot be composted. Our students were wonderful with the younger ones, speaking clearly and slowly and explaining their concepts fully.

In science, we have begun a new unit on heredity. A trait is a characteristic that an organism can pass along to its offspring. In any sample population, there are differences in skin color and complexion, eye color, and physical size, which are just a few traits. Matthew began by working on a survey of various physical traits exhibited by his classmates. He was observing earlobes, dimples, clefts in chins, hairlines, finger hair, and types of thumbs!
Late Day
- Miss Weezie

A photograph taken on Monday on our playground illustrates the contrasting weather conditions we have been experiencing. The children, dressed in snow gear, were playing when they spotted three purple crocuses sprouting up through the snow. No one attempted to pick them, but rather showed joy and respect for the new spring growth.

We listened and read from a book entitled, *If You Were a Penguin*. The C.D. provided an additional way of experiencing literature as well as engaging the listeners. The book contained many interesting and fun facts about penguins and was beautifully illustrated. These book and disc sets are available at all of our libraries. Students can listen on their own or with small groups promoting independent learning.

Recommended Reading
"There's No Such Thing as the Real World" by Peter Piche in Montessori Parent
Read article here.

Book Corner for Parents
"Robot-Proof: Higher Education in the age of artificial intelligence." by Joseph Aoun

"Yardsticks: Children in the Classroom Ages 4-14" by Chip Wood

"The Six Stages of Parenthood" by Ellen Galinsky

Book Corner for Children
"What Do You Do With An Idea?" by Kobi Yamada
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