



Damariscotta Montessori School

Newsletter



Miss Casey's Primary Class

All parents of pre-schoolers know the challenge of providing nutritious, fast foods for our children. We are often tempted by the convenience of packaged "goodies," but we know our children are better served by wholesome meals and snacks. I know that making lunch is one of my least favorite jobs and am always looking for new ideas that my kids will eat. A brief search on the web provided me with these quick and easy options that I hope may be helpful:

Tortillas make a great alternative to bread. You can get small and large ones; they roll up nicely and can be filled with just about anything. You can also slice them into pinwheels if you want to be really creative!

Cold macaroni and cheese placed in a plastic lunch container is popular with kids.

Containers of finger food veggies such as grape or cherry tomatoes, baby carrots, celery sticks; you can make a dip with plain yogurt and

"If children are allowed free development and given occupation to correspond with their unfolding minds their natural goodness will shine forth."

low fat sour cream; add some whole wheat crackers in their lunch and you have a great meal.

Always pack a drink, preferably water or a fruit juice, perhaps even 2; your active child needs to be well hydrated

Pack a 6" round pita pocket stuffed with humus, lettuce, grated cheese

An individually packed stirred yogurt that has been frozen (it will defrost by lunch)

Fruit (make sure it's fruit your child will eat—bananas tend to go mushy and brown in a backpack)

Container of trail mix or a granola bar

Banana nut muffin (or another favourite)

Miss Sarah's Primary Class

Tips for bringing Montessori into the home:

- Put a stool in the bathroom, so that your child can get off and on the toilet and brush their teeth and hair in the mirror, independently.
- Give your child chores to do, such as setting the table or filling and starting the dishwasher or folding clothes. In this way the child gains a sense of confidence and pride, while helping with the maintenance of your home.
- If you provide your child with a dustpan and sponge, he or she can clean their own messes and those of others.

A few general class notes:

- Just a reminder that all snacks must be nut-safe for the well being of the whole class. In addition to staying away from nuts, labels must be checked to be sure no nut byproducts are in the item, and that the item was not processed in a facility where nuts are processed. Also please be sure to included a recipe/ingredient list for home-made goods. Your continued support in this is greatly appreciated!
- Thanks to Kim, Riley's mom, for reading with the children last week.

Lower Elementary Class

Monday of last week saw us investigate Nematodes, the 4th simplest Phylum of the world of invertebrates. We learned that some of them are helpful in growing healthy plants, and that

there may be as many as 1,000 in a shovel-full of soil. The children worked on matching pictures labels and descriptions of the parts of the nematode and the types of stems. In History we

worked on matching all the loose pictures of animals and plants to the large poster of the Time Line of Life, becoming more familiar with the different sizes and shapes of them in this period of the history of Earth.

In math, the children are progressing steadily through the different materials as they learn math facts, skip counting, and the basic operations. The Money Game is a favorite material, as they learn to make change with the coins. This introduction to money is also a good reinforcer of the decimal system. The younger children were introduced to the world of fractions, as we cut an apple, and explored how many equal pieces we could make out of it. In Grammar we used the grammar boxes to study plural and singular nouns.

On Friday we celebrated Ground Hog Day by making shadow puppets. We could not see their

shadows very well because it was a cloudy day! But neither did the ground hog, so maybe it will be a shorter winter.

In Botany we looked at a variety of plants and their roots, and started a few plants of our own. In History, both groups will begin a more detailed investigation of the first era in their Time Lines. In Geometry we played the Great Detective Triangle Game!

Ms. Proffetti introduced the class to prehistoric animal and people figurines, and the children made their own out of self-hardening clay.

Next week: In Biology we will be studying the lowly earth worm. We will continue our studies of the Time Lines, and in Geography, begin our study of the elements of the earth.

Upper Elementary Class

This Week: We've had a busy week this week in the Upper Elementary classroom. In history we are now studying the constitution and the three branches of our government. The children did some reading on the Constitution this week and we had an extended discussion on Wednesday. When we began our discussion the topic seemed to be met with a few yawns and glazed eyes. However, as has been my experience, when we began to delve into the topic the children began asking question after question and we wound up talking about much more than was the original planned. After our discussion the children set off to do their own research and choose from a number of activities to do as follow-up.

Our research papers are progressing nicely. The children are now beginning to take notes on

their topics (and previously created questions). Some of the note taking strategies and skills that we have discussed are: paraphrasing, keeping notes short and to the point, staying on topic, organization of notes, and thoroughness.

Finally, in science, the children finished collecting data for their rain collectors. We are now taking the data and uploading it onto an environmental science web page and comparing the data to that of other classrooms across the country.

Next Week: Our plans for next week include analyzing data for Acid Rain, beginning our study of the expansion westward in American History, beginning to find internet resources for research papers, and the detailed study of verb conjugation.

From Chip's Desk

We are now beginning re-enrollment for the Elementary program and will soon be starting re-enrollment for the Primary program (March 1st). If you have questions, please feel free to call or email me.

Valentines Day is quickly approaching. Just a quick note regarding our policy on Valentine's

cards/gifts. Please feel free to have your child bring in cards or gifts for everyone in the class. While we don't have a celebration in the classroom we do collect all the cards and gifts and put them in children's bags to bring home. With this in mind, please do not address cards to specific children (i.e. "To John"). Rather, simply

address cards with a general greeting like “My friend”, “My Valentine”, or just “Happy Valentine’s Day”, and specify who the card is from. This will save your child’s teacher hours! Thank you in advance for your help and cooperation.

We are now at around **60% participation** for the annual fund. Thank you to everyone who has contributed thus far. Again, our goal is simple:

Positive Discipline Corner

Whining

Whining seems to be one of the most out-of-proportion irritants to parents, and yet it can be one of the simplest to handle. Whining develops into a habit because it gets attention. Sometimes it becomes a major issue with a child. You can usually take care of whining very simply by refusing to respond to it. If children are not ill or becoming ill, if they are not suffering from a speech impediment or other physical handicap that may affect the way they talk, and their basic needs are being met, you can just tell them in

100% participation. The funds raised help us continue to provide scholarships, keep tuition to a reasonable level, maintain the building and grounds, and plan for future expansion. We are grateful for **gifts of any size**, and thank everyone in advance for their help with this effort.

plain language that you will not respond to whining. Say, “I can’t understand you unless you talk.” In extreme cases you might say, “If you need to make that noise, please do it where I can’t hear you. I don’t like to listen to it.” You can add, “I do like to hear you talk, though.”

Parents, Please Don’t Sit on Your Kids; A Parent’s Guide to Non-punitive Discipline, by Clare Cherry, 1996 Fearon Teacher’s Aids, page 46

Thank You

- Kim Inman for your help with the sign board.
- Bill Hinkley, Teresa Hewson and Kim Andrews for reading with the children in the elementary classroom.
- Carolina Rushton for teaching Spanish.
- Doug Rushton for publishing the newsletter.
- Lee Parsons for your help with the bottle returns.
- Rebakah Smith for substituting in Ms. Casey’s classroom.

Announcements and Dates to Remember

- February 19 – 23 – Winter Vacation (No School)
 - Tuesday, February 27 – Open Board Meeting @ 6:30 p.m.
 - Wednesday, February 28 – Re-enrollment for Elementary classroom ends, and open enrollment for Elementary begins.
 - Thursday, March 1 – Re-enrollment and enrollment for siblings for the Primary program begins.
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