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THE MONTESSORI PRIMARY CURRICULUM

The overall goal of the Montessori Primary curriculum is to provide a prepared environment that meets the needs and tendencies of the child in the second half of the first plane of development. This developmental phase generally takes place between the ages of three and; six though it may be observed earlier or continues longer.

Characteristics of the primary age child include:

- Sensorial exploration as the primary mode of adaptation
- An unconscious absorbent mind that effortlessly takes in the impressions of the environment and gradually moves toward greater consciousness.
- An ability to concentrate for long periods
- A desire for independence
- A need for manipulation of concrete materials which gradually leads to abstraction
- Observable “sensitive periods” of intense attraction to certain experiences. These include sensitive periods for language, order, movement and mathematics
- A strong desire to answer the question “what?” and acquire the nomenclature of the environment

The environment prepared for the primary age child should meet these characteristics as well as provide for the exercise of the eight human tendencies.

The primary curriculum is divided into five basic areas:

- Practical Life
- Sensorial
- Language
- Mathematics
- Cultural Studies

PRACTICAL LIFE

OVERVIEW: The Practical Life area includes those activities which human beings must perform every day in order to establish, maintain and restore proper conditions within the environment and among members of the social group. They are activities the child sees in his own home and they serve as a link between the home and school environment.

GOALS: The Practical Life curriculum is designed to utilize the child’s attraction to purposeful activity and desire to be a contributing member of the social group. It has as its goals:

- the development, coordination and refinement of movement
- the development of independence in taking care of one’s own needs
- the development of concentration
- the development of the sense of order and logical sequence
- the development of the will and confident awareness of one’s own powers and abilities
- the development of awareness of others and skill in social integration
- the integration of body and mind
- the development of an individual sense of responsibility to care for the environment

MATERIALS: Practical Life materials are specifically designed to:

- be attractive and beautiful to the child
- offer experiences with real tools with real purposes and function in the classroom
- offer the experience of need for care, safety and responsibility through use of breakable materials, knives, irons, needles, etc.
- develop the hand through introduction of sequentially more difficult and refined movement
- provide opportunities for increasingly complex work
- allow the child to be able to work independently

AGE: The Practical Life exercises are the first; the young primary child will be introduced to and create the foundation upon which all other work in the classroom depends. The interest and enjoyment in Practical Life continues throughout the primary years, through the amount of time spent on these activities diminishes. The focus and purpose of the activity also changes for the older child.

OBJECTIVES:

Care Of The Person – to teach the skills of:

- how and when to wash hands
- combing and brushing hair
- brushing teeth
- cleaning and caring for fingernails
- blowing ones' nose
- brushing clothes
- folding and hanging clothes
- dressing and undressing
- proper use of various fasteners, (buttons, snaps, zippers, hooks and eyes, buckles, bows, safety pins, lacing, boot lacing)
- cleaning shoes and polishing leather
- using a doormat
- how to avoid spreading germs (i.e. keeping hands away from nose, etc.)
- toileting

Care Of The Indoor Environment – to teach the skills of:

- dusting
- sweeping with various types of brooms and dust pan
- washing furniture and shelves
- polishing furniture
- washing windows
- polishing mirrors
- washing towels and dusters
- ironing clothes
- folding cloths and napkins
- washing and drying dishes
- polishing brass and silver
- sponging up liquid
- washing chalkboards
- hanging up dusters and cloths
- hanging up damp cloths and clothes
- laying a table for a meal
- arranging and refreshing flowers

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- pruning and care of plants
- caring for animals and their environments

C. Care Of The Outdoor Environment – to teach the skills of:

- weeping mats
- shaking dusters
- weeding
- pruning and caring for garden plants
- raking, hoeing and digging
- watering a garden
- planting and transplanting seeds, bulbs, etc
- harvesting
- carrying garden tools
- feeding outdoor animals

Grace and Courtesy (Social relations)

- greeting people – shaking hands
- thanking someone
- apologizing – how and when
- offering something to someone
- offering something sharp to someone
- inviting someone into the class
- receiving a visitor – providing a chair
- standing up when an older person approaches
- letting someone pass
- asking permission to pass someone
- asking for something
- interrupting other people who are talking – how and when
- speaking softly
- knocking at a door and waiting for permission to enter
- watching others work without disturbing
- waiting for turns
- picking up something someone has dropped and returning it
- borrowing and returning items
- helping others when they spill or drop things
- holding a door for others, especially smaller children
- walking in a procession
- entering and leaving a room
- walking up stairs in a courteous and safe manner
- entering and leaving a room
- walking up stairs in a courteous and safe manner
- table manners: serving food; eating and drinking quietly; not speaking with mouth full; using forks, knives and spoons properly; setting and clearing the table

Control of Movement:

- walking quietly
- walking around furniture
- walking
- walking on the line with poise and grace

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- sitting down
- getting up from a chair
- making silence
- dry pouring
- pouring water in various types and sizes of vessels
- rolling mats
- folding cloths
- opening and closing containers
- opening and closing doors
- cutting various materials (paper, string, vegetables, flowers, etc.)
- peeling, grating preparing vegetables
- carrying various apparatus, objects, furniture, etc.
- picking up and putting down various objects

THE SENSORIAL CURRICULUM

OVERVIEW: The young child, from birth to six, is a sensorial learner, actively exploring the environment and absorbing information through all the senses. This begins as a largely unconscious process. During the three year span in the primary classroom. Awareness of the environment, its properties and his ability to act upon it.

GOALS: The Sensorial Curriculum is designed to utilize the child's strong attraction sensorial experience and has as its goals:

- to strengthen and refine each of the child's perceptions
- to aid the child in gradually abstracting the various properties such as size, length, breadth, weight, texture, color, shade or tint, pitch, volume, shape etc.
- to aid the child in mentally organizing his environment and the impressions it gives him
- to aid the child's development of vocabulary by providing language for each of the perceptions experienced
- to aid the child in developing the ability to handle materials in a careful, precise and orderly way
- to more specifically aid in the development of the hand, especially the pincher grasp as an indirect preparation for writing
- to provide for internalization of sensorial images which will form the foundation for acquiring abstract principles, especially in math, at a later age

MATERIALS:

The Sensorial materials are specifically designed to:

- be attractive and beautiful to the child
- allow the child to experience one sense impression and one property in isolation from the rest
- allow the child to work on the material independently
- to have a built-in "control of error" so the child has feedback from the material itself as to whether or not the task has been done correctly
- provide for movement and activity, in some cases incorporating the "muscular sense" of the property as well as the visual

The materials are classified according to the five classic senses: sight, hearing, taste, touch and smell, and also the more complex senses: baric, thermic and stereognostic.

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AGE: The Sensorial materials are begun with the youngest children in the class. Through the various extensions and games they remain interesting to the oldest children. Often older children will show great creativity in their own use of the materials and will go back and repeat work already mastered demonstrating apparent satisfaction. Thus while the Sensorial materials are the foundation for all the Montessori work, and are a major focus for the younger primary child, they continue to be used by the older child, though to a lesser extent.

OBJECTIVES:

Visual:

- to ensure the development of the visual perception and discrimination of size and related language of large, larger, largest, small smaller, smallest, big, bigger, biggest, little, littler, littlest, tall, taller, tallest, short, shorter, shortest, broad, broader, broadest, wide, wider, widest, narrow, narrower, narrowest, long, longer, longest, deep, deeper, deepest, shallow, shallower, shallowest.
- to ensure the development of the chromatic sense and the language of the names of specific colors
- to ensure the development of the perception of various shades and tints of color and the specific language to identify them
- to ensure the ability to match things that are visually the same and the vocabulary of same and different
- to ensure the ability to grade by visual characteristics. (e.g. Tallest to shortest, darkest to lightest, etc.)
- to ensure the ability to compare and contrast by visual characteristics

Auditory:

- to ensure the ability to distinguish sounds and match those that are of the same pitch
- to ensure the ability to distinguish sounds and match those of the same volume
- to ensure the ability to grade sounds by pitch
- to ensure the ability to grade sounds by volume
- to introduce the vocabulary related to the auditory sense, (high, low, soft, loud, etc.)

Tactile:

- to ensure the ability to perceive differences in texture
- to develop muscular control and lightness of touch
- to learn the language of rough and smooth and related superlatives
- to be able to match textures that are the same, purely by touch
- to be able to grade by texture
- through use of "the fabrics" to further refine the sense of touch and develop a varied vocabulary of descriptive words such as silky, ridges, limp, etc. as well as the names of specific fabrics

Gustatory:

- to perceive and distinguish the basic tastes and learn the related language (salty, sweet, bitter, sour)
- to perceive and identify specific tastes (with the aid of smell) such as lemon, mint, orange, etc

E. Olfactory:

- to perceive and distinguish the various aromas and learn the related vocabulary (perfume, aroma, fragrance, etc.)

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F. Thermic:

- to perceive and distinguish differences in temperature
- to be able to match like temperatures
- to be able to grade by temperature
- to learn the language of warm, hot, cool, cold and related superlatives

H. Sterognostic: (Tactile and Muscular)

- to be able to sort various items with use of vision and then solely by touch (muscular sense)

I. Visual Sterognostic:

- to perceive and distinguish all the plane shapes
- to learn the names of all the plane shapes: circle, triangle, square, rectangle, quadrilateral, polygons, irregular figures, rhombus, trapezoid, oval, ellipse, parallelogram, quadrilateral, quatrefoil, curvilinear triangle, pentagon, hexagon, heptagon, octagon, nonagon, decagon; types of triangles: equilateral, isosceles, right angle isosceles, obtuse angle isosceles, acute angle isosceles, scalene, right angle scalene, obtuse angle scalene, acute angle scalene
- to be able to perceive the plane figures when drawn in outline
- to be able to perceive and distinguish all the solid figures
- to have the vocabulary of the solid figures: cube, cone, sphere, ovoid, ellipsoid, cylinder, square based prism, triangle based prism, square based pyramid, triangle based pyramid
- to be able to recognize which plane figures are the bases for the solid figures
- to be able to identify the parts of a triangle: base, sides, apex, height, midpoint, angles
- to be able to perceive that various shapes can be made by the joining of triangles and through experimentation be familiar with various geometric facts
- to perceive and experiment with the concepts of concentric, tangent, adjacent, aligned and inscribed
- to be able to construct, in puzzle form, the concrete representation of the binomial and trinomial cubes
- to be able to name the parts of the cubes

J. General Extensions:

- the ability to perceive the various properties isolated by the materials in the general environment (e.g. finding shapes, shades of color, etc. in the building, garden, etc)
- the ability to see relationships between various pieces of materials and creatively combine them
- to be able to do various activities blindfolded
- to be able to use more precise descriptive language both in oral expression and written work
- to be able to read the names for and label the various materials

LANGUAGE

OVERVIEW: The lengthiest of all sensitive periods acquiring language, begins even before birth. It is intensely operative during the primary years and continues into the second plane. This process is limitless, therefore the richer the language environment, the richer the language acquired. Montessori observed that the potential exists for children to develop the higher language skills of reading and writing with almost the same ease with which they acquired oral speech. This "explosion" into literacy occurs naturally in the primary years if they are presented with the appropriate tools and experiences.

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GOALS: The Montessori language curriculum is designed to provide an environment rich in language and to foster the natural development of reading and writing and has as its goals:

- the development of a rich vocabulary
- the development of oral _expression
- the development of a strong foundation in phonetics
- the development of appreciation for the rhythm and beauty of language through literature and poetry
- the development of the hand for use in writing
- the creation of the awareness of the ability for self-_expression through writing
- the creation of awareness that one can know other people's thoughts through reading
- to stimulate the child's natural desire to acquire information and pleasure through reading
- to aid the child's development toward "total" reading (i.e. mastery of phonics, phonograms, sight words, etc with fluency)
- to be familiar with the function of words in a grammatical sense

The language material:

- include the spoken word as a model in terms of diction, quality of speech, tone grammar and vocabulary
- include an extended collection of objects and pictures to provide language representing classified categories in the environment beyond the classroom (animals, clothing, dwellings, transportation, etc.)
- provide indirect preparation for writing through many activities which refine the use of the hand
- are designed to offer "keys" to unlocking the difficulties of decoding written English in a specific progression which allows for the greatest success
- provide opportunities to repeat and fully utilize the skills being acquired at each stage moving them towards increasing levels of mastery
- utilize "props" and drama to convey an impression of the function of words in the grammatical sense

AGE: The rich language environment is experienced by the child throughout the primary years. The "key" lessons are introduced following the individual development of each child.

OBJECTIVES:

- Pre-reading and Vocabulary Enrichment
- to introduce the child to the nomenclature of the classroom itself (physical room, furniture, materials, etc).
- introduce the child to nomenclature within classified categories beyond the classroom such as vegetables, occupations, boats, etc
- introduce the child to language concepts such as opposites, rhymes, associations, sequencing, etc
- to provide the opportunity for the child to learn to speak with confidence before the group
- to provide the opportunity for the child to hear and memorize poetry
- to provide the child with exposure to high quality children's literature that represents rich cultural diversity and rich language and illustration
- to provide the child with awareness of the parts of a book, care in handling a book and knowledge of authors and illustrators
- to provide an environment in which oral communication skills are encouraged
- to train the child's ear to hear the component sounds of language and their relative position in words (beginning, medial, final)

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- to encourage the child's use of oral language for the purposes of discussion and problem solving

Indirect Preparation for Writing

- to encourage the repeated use of the pincer grasp through use of the practical life and sensorial material
- to encourage the development of the hand using an implement through the repeated use of such things as chalkboard art, painting through the repeated use of such things as chalkboard art, painting, crayoning, clay, stylus work, orange stick tracing, etc
- to encourage assimilation of the form of the cursive letters into the muscular memory through repeated tracing of the sandpaper letters
- to encourage the further refinement of the hand in using a pencil through progressive skills of tracing a frame, tracing an inset, controlling a parallel lines, shading, working within a given space, developing pressure control, awareness of pencil grip, etc.

C. Direct Preparation for Writing and Reading

- to teach the sounds of the lower case cursive letters using the short vowel sounds
- to teach the additional key sounds of the English language made by double letters which includes one way to make the long vowel sounds (sh, ch, th, qu, oy, ai ee, ie, oa, ue, er, ar, or, oo, ou, au)
- to introduce the moveable alphabet as a tool for the child's written _expression, progressing from words to phrases to sentences to stories
- to introduce the child to the various ways of spelling the key sounds previously introduced
- to introduce the child to the formations of lower case cursive letters with chalk and then a pencil in isolation
- to introduce the child to the positioning of the letters on lined paper
- to introduce in isolation the formation of the upper case cursive letters and to give a first introduction to their proper use
- to introduce in isolation the formation of the upper case cursive letters and to give a first introduction to their proper use
- provide numerous opportunities for the child to write
- to use props and drama to provide an experience that makes the child aware of his ability to decode a written phonetic message and "read" another's thoughts
- to provide numerous opportunities for the child to practice phonetic reading skills
- to integrate the use oh phonograms or key sounds into the reading materials
- to introduce non-phonetic "sight" vocabulary to the child, building his reading vocabulary on a gradual basis
- to provide a great deal of reading material at various levels to stimulate the child's independent reading and progression of skills
- to provide opportunities for the child to experience the alternative spellings of each of the sounds in reading material

D. Interpretive Reading and Writing

- to provide opportunities for the child to further explore the activities of the classroom, on the level of reading, by using written labels learning and using definitions, researching subject areas and writing reports and creative stories
- to provide the opportunity for the child to orally present his written work and listen to that of his classmates

E. Function Games

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- to provide the opportunity for the child to read and act upon hand written “messages” and commands
- to provide the child the opportunity to experience what questions are by reading, writing and answering them in the form of games
- to allow the child to experience the function of the parts of speech through props, dramatic presentations and games and to associate the corresponding Montessori grammar symbol for use in diagramming phrases and sentences
- to formally introduce the child to the use of punctuation in writing

F. Relates Language Skills and Extensions

- to give a first introduction to the skill of alphabetizing
- to introduce the use of a dictionary and encyclopedia
- to introduce the concept of reading for information and then rephrasing it in report writing
- to provide opportunities for dramatic art through acting out little stories and plays
- to introduce word study including prefixes and suffixes, feminine and masculine forms, plurals, contractions, abbreviations, tenses, collective words, etc.

MATHEMATICS CURRICULUM

OVERVIEW: The primary age child has a natural tendency toward order, manifesting itself in a sensitive period for mathematical concepts. The primary math curriculum presents the concepts through sequential concrete materials that allow the child the opportunity of repeated manipulation leading to the internalization of the abstract concepts inherent in the material. The child thus has the opportunity to “discover” basic mathematical notions.

GOALS: The mathematics curriculum is designed to utilize the child’s natural attraction to order and has as its goals:

- to give the child a concrete impression of quantities and processes in math
- to aid the child in connecting the symbolic language of mathematics with the concrete experience
- to aid the child in gradually abstract the concepts
- to aid the child in relating mathematical concepts to real life situations
- to facilitate the child’s memorization of mathematical facts

MATERIALS:

- be attractive and stimulate interest through the manner in which they are displayed
- isolate one concept at a time
- build skills in a sequential manner
- encourage repetition
- foster independent work and offer some “control of error”
- be consistent in terms of size, color and form to aid the child’s recognition of the interrelatedness of the exercises and underlying concepts
- encourage movement and manipulation

AGE: The sensitive period for mathematics is most intensely manifested beginning around the age of four and continuing for the rest of the primary years and beyond. However, even the youngest primary children are absorbing the order of math from the display of the materials as well as the language of math from both the classroom and wider environment.

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OBJECTIVES:

A. Number to Ten

- to teach the concept of quantity for 1-10
- to teach the child to recognize the order and sequence of 1-10
- to teach the child to recognize the numerals from 1-10
- to teach the child to associate the written symbols and quantities
- to help the child to learn to count with one to one correspondence
- to teach the child to recognize quantity in the form of separate objects
- to introduce the child to the concept of zero
- to introduce the child to the concept of sets
- to teach the child to sequence the numerals 1-10
- to give the child a first impressions of odd and even numbers
- to give the child the first impression of division
- to give the child the concept and language of greater than and less than
- to give the child the first experience with addition and making combinations of quantities up to ten
- to give the child the first experience with subtraction in diminishing quantities from ten
- to provide the child the opportunity to train the memory to retain a single digit number in the mind over a period of time

B. The Decimal System

- to acquaint the child with the names of the different categories (units, tens, hundreds, thousands) and the differences in quantities in actual mass and geometric shapes
- to acquaint the child with the written symbols for the quantities of units through thousands
- to make the child aware of the limit of nine in a category, the role of zero as a place holder and the importance of place in the value of the numeral
- to aid the child in reading and forming 4-digit complex numerals
- to give the child a concrete impression of addition being the putting together of smaller numbers to make a larger number
- to give the child concrete understanding of the concept of carrying quantities more than 10 from one category to the next
- to give the child a concrete impression of multiplication as the addition of equal quantities
- to give the child a concrete impression of subtraction as the reverse of addition and the diminishing of a larger number by smaller numbers
- to give the child a concrete understanding of the concept of borrowing quantities of ten from the next higher category
- to give the child a concrete impression of the process of division
- to give the child a concrete impression of long division
- to give the child the opportunity to practice the four operations on an individual basis, using a more abstract material utilizing pencil and paper
- to introduce the child to the concept of tens of thousands

C. Teens and Tens

- to introduce the child to the concrete quantities of the teen numbers as one ten plus units
- to introduce the child to the numeric symbols for the teens
- to teach the child to associate the written symbols and quantities for the teens
- to introduce the child to the quantity, language and symbols of the numbers 10, 20, 30-90
- to teach the child the sequence of the quantities and symbols from 1-99
- to consolidate the child's skill at counting to 100 and then 1,000 by both units and tens

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- to give the child a visual impression of the square and cube of the numbers 1-9
- to aid the child in learning to skip count by twos, threes, etc through nines

D. Addition

- to familiarize the child, through a variety of activities, with all the possible number combinations that will make 10 and to acquire a subconscious knowledge that no two digits summed together amount to more than 18
- to provide extensive opportunities for varied experiences of addition, leading to memorization of all the essential combinations and experience with the commutative principle

E. Subtraction

- to familiarize the child, through a variety of activities, with all the possible subtraction combinations
- to provide extensive opportunities for varied experiences of subtraction, leading to memorization of all the essential subtraction facts

F. Multiplication

- to give the child an impression of the geometrical form of multiplication and that the multiplier is never a "solid body" as is the multiplicand, but is only indicative of how many times a number is taken or a given quantity is repeated
- to give the child the impression that a succession of lines creates a surface and is therefore geometrical
- to give the child indirect preparation for square root and factoring and other exercises in geometry and algebra that they will learn in Montessori elementary
- to provide extensive opportunities for varied experiences of multiplication leading to memorization of all the essential multiplication facts
- to provide concrete experience of the commutative principle in multiplication

G. Division

- to make the child familiar with the ways in which numbers may be divided and to show that not every number is divisible and some by only a few numbers
- to provide practice with division combinations leading to memorization
- to give awareness of prime numbers as only divisible by one or them

H. Bridge to Abstraction

- to provide opportunities to work with the bead frames which give the child practice with the abstract form of addition, subtraction and multiplication on paper and to give the child preparation for working out problems on paper without apparatus
- to introduce the child to the hierarchies up one million

I. Fractions

- to give the child the sensorial experience of parts of a whole
- to provide the child with the language for the parts
- to allow the child to discover the equivalencies of fractions
- to provide the child the experience of doing the four operations with concrete fraction material

CULTURAL STUDIES

OVERVIEW: The cultural area of the Montessori Primary curriculum can and should be as broad and varied as the world in which we live. In a sense, the whole cultural area is an extension of the child's

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work in practical life, sensorial, language and math in order to allow for further exploration This are includes music, art, geography, history, the sciences of botany, biology, zoology, geology and the physical sciences. The overall goal is to provide the child, through sensorial experiences, with a first introduction to these subject areas. There is no expectation for mastery at this level. Rather the goal is to introduce basic concepts and language while arousing interest and curiosity, crating a broad foundation which the elementary child will bring to fruition.

GOALS:

- to expose the child to a wide variety of cultural subject areas
- to stimulate the child's natural curiosity
- to aid the child to adapt to his particular time and place
- to lead the child to an awareness of the interrelatedness of the subject areas
- to provide a sensorial experience of key concepts
- to provide a language and nomenclature basic to each area

MATERIALS:

The Cultural Studies materials:

- are designed to provide experiences to the child at various levels of development
- isolate a particular quality in order to give the child's mind a point of focus
- foster independence and opportunities for extended exploration
- will vary from class to class reflecting eh personality and interests of the class and teacher
- will vary from time to time as materials are rotated
- also include non-tangible experiences such as stories, singing, group presentations, etc

AGE: Even the youngest children are introduced to cultural lessons. The work continues throughout the primary years in greater depth according to interest and skill of the child.

OBJECTIVES:

A. Geography

- to approach the subject from the global perspective introducing the earth as a whole
- to introduce various physical characteristics of the earth such as land and water forms and their nomenclature
- to offer extensive opportunities for the child to work with the puzzle maps on a sensorial level, internalizing political geography
- to offer extensions according to the child's interest, (names of countries, capitals, flags, etc.)
- to offer experiences that expose the child to various world cultures
- to introduce the concept that physical geography influences the life of humankind

B. History

- to first present the concept of history in terms of the child's personal history sharing his individual "time line" or biography
- to aid the child's development of a sense of time through the use of daily calendars, weather charts, current events, the clock and stories from past times

C. Music

- to provide the child with a repertoire of various types of songs and opportunities to sing
- to introduce the concept of rhythm, the use of the body as an instrument and the use of rhythm instruments
- to expose the child to various styles and cultural expressions of music

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- to introduce the child to the nomenclature of specific instruments
- to offer extensions, according to the child's interest including such things as the life and work of particular musicians and composers
- to offer extensions to the sensorial work of the bells to further train the ear and explore music theory

D. Art

- to provide instruction in the care and proper use of various art media tools and techniques. (tempera, water colors, crayons, pastels, craypas, charcoal, chalk, clay, collage, printing, stitchery, pencils, etc.)
- to provide daily opportunities for the child to independently explore the use of these media for free expression
- to emphasize experience over the end product
- to introduce the idea that art comes in many forms, (architecture, sculpture, handicrafts, etc.) and offer the related nomenclature
- to expose the child to various artists and their work

E. Sciences

- to offer experiences in the various areas of science including botany, zoology, geology, and physical sciences
- to provide a rudimentary classification including living/non-living, plants/animals/minerals, vertebrate/invertebrate, five classes of vertebrates, etc.
- to offer experiences with the parts of animal and plants and their nomenclature
- to offer the names of specific plants and animals, rocks, minerals, shells, etc.
- to acquaint the child with some basic biological functions (role of roots in plants, reason for camouflage in animals, etc.)
- to give the child the experience of various physical principles such as buoyancy, magnetism, static electricity, etc.
- to offer practical experiences in caring for and observing plants and animals
- to introduce simple principles and procedures of experimentation
- to give an overall impression of the interdependence of all living things and some practical applications, (i.e. recycling, composting) and the study of ecosystems
- to offer experiences that expose the child to various world cultures
- to introduce the concept that physical geography influences the life of humankind

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