

JANUARY NEWSLETTER

Dear Parents,

As one year spills over into the next, so our work of December spills over into this new month and New Year. We trust that everyone enjoyed their Winter Break and all are looking forward to our days and weeks ahead. We will continue on with lots of work and projects in all our academic areas, picking up from where we left off in December, and in some cases, starting down some new paths.

In our December work of **Language and Writing**, the 2nd Yrs. worked hard on understanding and mastering Articles and Nouns. Now, while continuing to practice those parts of speech, they will also begin the final part of the Noun Family - the Adjective. With that, they will experience how this "family" works together to bring much more detail and richness to all that we write. They will experience it as they write their daily Journals, do their Language assignments, and their weekly "Spelling sentences" assignments. You can always refer to the "Grammar Refresher Course" sheet I gave everyone earlier, which explains each part of speech and how they work, and how your child will be working with them in Montessori. For 3rd Yrs. Language, there will continue to be work on "Possessive Nouns" and also "Contractions." The 3rds too will be putting these skills to work in their Journal, Language, and Spelling Sentences assignments. Any and every skill learned never really becomes one's own until it is *used!*

Though we will still have some of our regular Journal assignments, we will also start on a big writing project. This will be each child's **Personal Timeline**. It is a tradition in Montessori Elementary for the children to annually make a Personal Timeline of their lives, with each "page" about one event for each year of their lives. It is a wonderful keepsake to have - to see how your child perceives his or her life throughout the years. More details about this project will be coming to you soon (via email).

In **Math** we're excited to be giving a group of the students a material we thought would have to be skipped because of the restrictions remote learning places on all of us - students and teachers alike. This material is what is called a "Dot Board" and we will be giving a working facsimile of it to the children who have arrived at the point in their math work where it should be utilized. I don't think anything brings the clarity of what goes on in an "exchange" from one place value to the next as the Dot Board does, particularly for students working in 4-place Subtraction.

In other **supplementary Math work**, the 2nd Yrs. will move on in their clock work to doing quarter hours (and now they'll be able to understand why I've been so fussy about the placement of the hour hand exactly half-way between the two numbers when it's half past the hour...yes, there certainly is a reason! ;) It's also important to use the words for the time rather than only writing the time in a digital format, as this greatly facilitates their understanding of what is actually going on. For the 3rd Yrs. who have been doing Money work, they will be completing their work very soon, as they demonstrate on paper how someone gets change for an item when more than the exact amount is given - and how there are quite a number of ways of doing this. Once they have completed their work, the coin rubber stamps will be passed on to three other 3rds who then will have their turn to learn much more about money.

Something new in Math starting this month is **Math Stories**. There will be sheets of a half dozen or so math "word problems" which will be done each Friday in place of Math Facts. The math that is needed to find the correct answer is always quite simple addition or subtraction. The challenge though is what exactly are the numbers needed and how should they be used, especially when it is mainly words you are reading? And therein lies the challenge, and the fun, of word problems!

We will also be discussing **the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.** and the Civil Rights Movement in our country. I will be reading several excellent books about Dr. King and what he taught and accomplished with the hope that all people could live in peace with dignity and respect.

The end of January also brings **Report Cards**. As in the past they are not given with a conference unless of course you would like one. If you do, please contact me and I will be happy to set up an appointment time for you.

Happy New Year to you all!
Mary Anne and Amira

CALENDAR:

Friday, Jan. 8th - Sharing Day - The children may bring something interesting they received as a gift

Thursday, Jan. 11th - Parent Drive-through to pick up new materials for the next 4-6 wks

Monday, Jan. 18th - Dr. Martin Luther King Day - no regular classes

Friday, Jan. 29th - End of the First Semester; Report Cards go home