

# Montessori Pathways' News



## Multi-Age Grouping: Observation + Imitation = Learning

Inside the Montessori community and beyond, multi-age classrooms are a hot topic for parents, teachers, and school administrators.

Angeline Stoll Lillard, in her authoritative research review "Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius", describes the Montessori multi-age setting this way: *"Montessori encourages learning from peers in part by using three-year age groupings. This ensures that as children move through the classroom they will be exposed to older and younger peers, facilitating both imitative learning and peer tutoring... Dr. Montessori was quite clear about the need for this mix of ages."*

### How & why multi-age grouping benefits younger learners?

Simply put, children learn readily from other children. Not only are they eager to play "teacher," they are astonishingly attentive "pretend" students. What young child has not played "school" with a friend or sibling? Multi-age Montessori schools take advantage of this natural tendency toward spontaneous learning by letting them "play school" with structured classroom activities.

Along with direct lessons given by classmates, younger students in a multi-age setting also learn by observing the activities of older peers and even by "eavesdropping" on advanced lessons given by the teacher to another child. Montessori teachers are careful to present lessons to older children in a manner that allows interested younger children to watch, listen, and learn.

### The benefits of multi-age grouping to older learners.

It's easy to see how access to advanced activities and lessons benefits younger children academically. What about older children? Any adult who has tried to teach something the least bit complicated to someone else has enjoyed a taste of the older child's Montessori learning experience! There is no better way to reinforce one's own knowledge than by teaching someone else.

Teaching a real lesson, as children do in Montessori classrooms, helps older children identify gaps in their own knowledge and often inspires them to achieve even greater mastery.

Leadership opportunities are extremely rare for children in a single-grade classroom; such roles are often assigned by the teacher. A Montessori multi-age classroom affords children daily opportunities to teach a skill or share information with others. Further, because every child is particularly good at something, this opportunity exists for every child, every day. This difference in how leadership roles develop in the classroom is a typical illustration of the difference between single-



grade, teacher-centered, traditional schools and Montessori multi-age, child-centered classrooms.

When peer-to-peer learning is self-directed, when it happens because children are ready, willing, and able to participate, it bolsters the older child's self-confidence, opens doors for younger children, and sharpens the academic skills of both.

Maria Montessori observed that children are eager to learn, and she identified self-directed, observational learning as a central theme of childhood. Describing the phenomenon of observational learning in a multi-age group, Montessori wrote that the child *"...suddenly becomes aware of his companions, and is almost as deeply interested as we are in the progress of their work."*

[www.montessoriservices.com](http://www.montessoriservices.com)

## Notes from Ms. Alena

This month, our Pre-K / Kindergarten kids absolutely proved this statement. The "Land and Water Forms", "Parts of Volcano", "Famous People" projects by our elementary students that were displayed in the school encouraged some of our kindergarten students to ask the teachers for similar presentations and partake in the same research and projects.

It was so fabulous to observe their spark and eagerness in the learning process that was led by their older friends' role modeling, not by teachers.

### Elementary students:



### Pre-K / Kindergarten students:





## REGISTRATION FOR THE 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR HAS BEGUN!

As you know, Montessori Pathways School has been serving the community for over twenty years, building a better future for our children and our world—one child at a time. Innovative Montessori education is our trademark. Our unique Montessori Pathways Team are delighted that your child and your family have been a part of this vision.

The Montessori approach to child development and education encompasses a wide range of experiences. Montessori works best when the child has maximum attendance and stays with us for the entirety of the developmental stage, which includes the Kindergarten Year in Primary class and Elementary education.

### The completion of the 3-year cycle in every stage is the key of Montessori Education.

We look forward to having you and your child(ren) continue with us in the coming 2021-2022 school year!

*We do not know yet what the next school year will look like, but as soon as things will get better and Illinois will move to Phase 5 of Reopening, we will slowly begin returning to our regular activities, rules, and procedures. We will be notifying you about every single coming change.*

*We all know that due to Covid-19 a lot of great private schools and childcare facilities were closed while the number of students in every classroom is very limited. Because of this, the demand of enrolling children in the program is rapidly growing. Therefore, we would like to make sure that we accommodate our current families before opening registration to new families and are beginning enrollment for our current families for the 2021-2022 school year.*

The Tuition Schedule 2021-2022, Re-Enrollment Application Form for the 2021-2022 school year and Registration Form for Summer Camp 2021 will be emailed soon to all families.

⇒ If you have decided to continue your child's education at Montessori Pathways, please complete the **Re-Enrollment Form for the 2021-2022 school year** electronically and email it back to us along with the **\$50.00 re-enrolment fee (\$25.00 for the second child)** no later than **March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021**.

*Check or QuickPay via Zelle are acceptable.*

⇒ **The 10% annual tuition security deposit is due April 15<sup>th</sup>.** *This will ensure a place for your child at our school and allow your child to continue in the same class with the same teachers.*

⇒ The tuition contract will reflect a 10% discount for the second child's tuition and 20% for the third one's.

⇒ **The Summer Camp registration begins March 1<sup>st</sup>. The application and \$30.00 early registration fee are due April 15<sup>th</sup>.**

*Please note: If the registration forms will be returned after April 15, your child will be considered as a new student with a \$100.00 registration fee for the next School Year and \$50.00 registration fee for Summer Camp requirement.*

*~ It is important that we know who is enrolled in Summer Camp and the School Year as soon as possible so that we can make the appropriate plans for hiring staff. Students who are enrolled just prior to the start of Summer Camp or School Year cannot be guaranteed a spot in the same class or at school at all. ~*

We look forward to another great year with your family!

### IN FEBRUARY:

- ◆ February 1 (M) – Re-Enrollment and New Families Enrollment begins
- ◆ February 2 (Tu) – Groundhog Day
- ◆ February 12 (F) – Valentine's Day at Montessori Pathways
- ◆ February 15 (M) – No School (Presidents' Day)
- ◆ February 22—26 – Send a Card to a Friend Week



# NEWS FROM THE ELEMENTARY CLASS



## Ms. Bridget



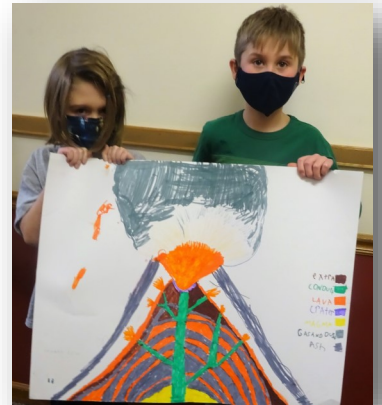
Walking in a winter wonderland...

We have enjoyed winter to tenth degree! We have been sledding, built an igloo, froze colored water in art and made a design like mosaic art that we did in class, made snowballs with all of the Winter Reading Programs Snowball makers that 2 students earned from the program, danced on the ice floor outside and had lots of fun creating. It sure is nice to live in an area that has 4 seasons.



We have had fun in physical fitness class doing chair aerobics and a workout called "Jack It". We learned about energy and arthropods in science. We have begun looking at parts of our Earth through mountains, volcanoes and rivers. We will actually build our rivers and mountains this week in groups.

Speaking of groups, we do a LOT of group work. Sometimes, kids pick their partners/group and sometimes I do. It is fun to watch all of the discussions that go on. I find the kids are patient, listeners and willing to compromise. I am proud whenever I see them working as a team.



Some highlights: We watched the Inauguration of our 46th President and first woman Vice President. Several of our classmates have hung their work in the hallway which in turn inspired the other two classes to do BIG works on land and water forms as well as our volcano and biography projects.



We continue to work hard in small groups in reading, math and language.

Did you know that we sing a song to clean up our morning activity before lunch? Because we are exploring American History, we have been singing songs that are folk tales, patriotic songs as well as seasonal songs. Last week, since it was Dr Martin Luther King, Jr's Holiday for his birthday, we sang a class favorite, Stevie Wonder's "Happy Birthday" song. We sing the song all week and all of the kids have the words to join in. They really enjoy this part of their day and several kids now feel comfortable enough to begin the song when I am not aware of the time.

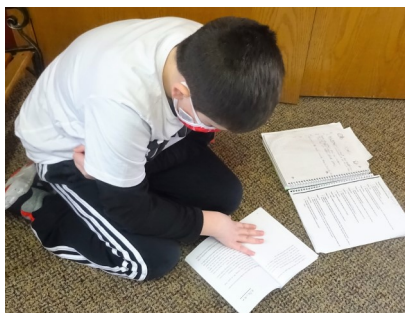
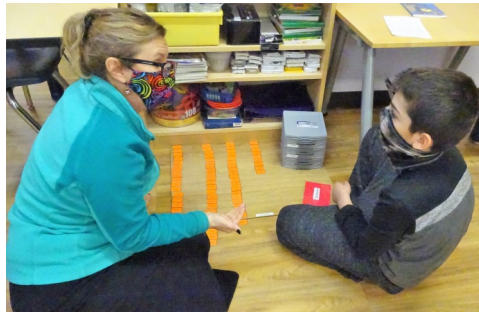


We pretended we were Michelangelo painting the Sistine Chapel in Rome, Italy as we were lying on the floor under our tables with our art taped to the bottom.



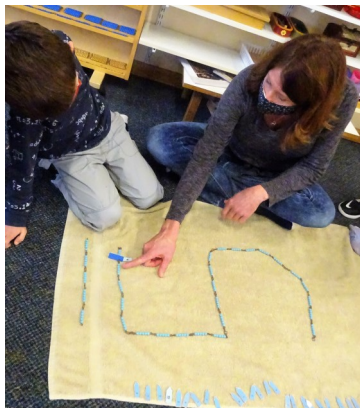
# JANUARY PHOTO GALLERY

## Elementary Class



# JANUARY PHOTO GALLERY

## Pre-K and Kindergarten Extended Day Group



## NEWS FROM THE SOUTH ROOM

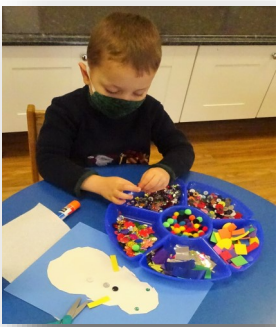
Ms. Kathy, Ms. Urana



Happy New Year,

We are nearly through the month of January. It was a busy and exciting month for all. The children all returned from winter break with a renewed enthusiasm to learn. Every one of the children has been challenging themselves in one way or another.

In the Practical Life area the children are enjoying snowflake and snowman spooning and pouring. The shelf is covered in white and blue reflecting the colors of the season.



In math we began counting snowflakes from one to ten and making books or posters of the numerals and quantities.



Science added the parts of a penguin and a snowman. We also learned all snowflakes are different crystals. We then made crystals with Borax dissolved in water they turned out beautiful.



January brought us Martin Luther King Day. Just as no snowflake is the same as another it was interesting to see that we all have different skin colors even within the same families. We are all the same and all uniquely different. We traced our hands and assembled them around a picture of the Earth. We Read the story of Ruby Bridges. The children were all astounded learning about segregation. We agreed we should all be treated the same as members of the human race.



There has been a burst of beginning reading. Nearly all of the five- and six-year-olds have begun both the Bob Book and Primary Phonics readers. Both of which are phonetic and make an easy transition from the sound materials in our room. Many of the children report they have the Bob series at home.



Invite your child to read out loud. It is very important to continue reading to and with your child even after age 5. The studies show a decline in reading to children after age 5. It is still very important. Make it fun, add character voices, and take turns reading ham it up. Ask question about the story and the characters.

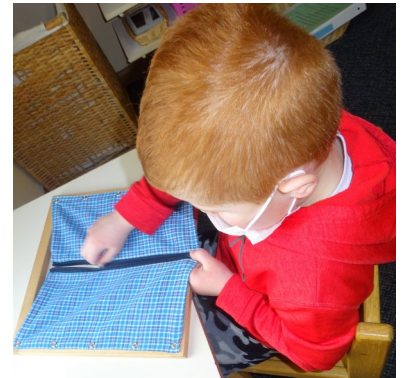


Thank you for participating in our Spirit Week! The children all loved Wacky Friday, and pajama day the best!



# JANUARY PHOTO GALLERY

## South Room



## NEWS FROM THE EAST ROOM



### Ms. Joey, Ms. Carole

We have had a great start to a new year. It's wonderful seeing the class reunite after our holiday break, we are all very excited to be back at school and together again.



The children continue to work at their own pace, with many new works available to choose from. One of the works introduced in the science area was the Animal Tracks work. With the new fallen snow, it is the perfect time to go outside and see what animal tracks can be found. It was very exciting to discover that our playground is home too, or had been visited by squirrels, lots of rabbits, a raccoon, and of course people.

We are also exploring the polar regions, learning about the animals that live or migrate to these regions and how they survive, beginning with Parts of the Polar Bear and Parts of the Penguin works!



We did a small exercise to better understand how this flightless bird moves, carrying its one precious egg. We first started by having the children place a bean bag on top of their feet. They were then asked to walk to a friend and pass their egg without letting it touch the floor. Most of them agreed that it would be every hard to protect your egg with your feet on slippery ice!

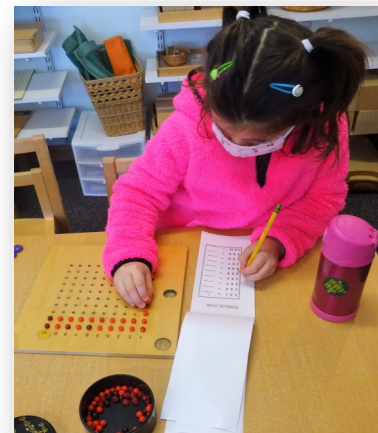
From ice to fire, Parts of the Volcano work have been very popular. The children have been doing research on Volcanos, then drawing and painting their own volcanos. In the afternoon, the Kindergarten children worked together to make a Volcano and create their own eruption, it was awesome! We also had fun growing our own crystals.



The children have been very busy in the Language area. The younger children continue to work with beginning sounds and making books, while others have begun word building with short vowels. Some of the older children have started word building using phonograms. They are all very proud of their work and look forward to reading their sound and word books to you, so please remember to ask them to share.

In the math area rods, spindles, cards, beads, cubes, and counters are some of the concrete tools used to symbolize mathematical abstractions. The child does not merely lean to count; they understand the concept of "how many" because they hold the amount in their hands.

Likewise, they are able to perform the operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division using concrete materials. They are also presented with the possibilities of fact memorization at a young age when combinations like "3+2=5" offer a real fascination and can be retained easily. Like all Montessori materials, the mathematics materials build on each other in increasing complexity so that a child using them will experience the thrill of discovery for herself as part of a natural progression.



This month in remembrance of Martin Luther King Jr., we talked about his life and his dreams for a better world and discussed ways that we can help to make a difference every day. We celebrated 3 birthdays this month, Kaylee, Lotte, and Axel. Happy Birthday to you all! It is so nice to have a new friend in the East Room, welcome Gavin!



# JANUARY PHOTO GALLERY

## East Room



# MORE WONDERFUL MOMENTS AT MONTESSORI PATHWAYS



*“Children acquire knowledge through experience in the environment.”*  
~M. Montessori

