Evergreen School

What to Expect Next Year in Primary

Each year of a three-year Montessori classroom cycle has distinctive characteristics. Each phase provides key experiences for each child's development. In the first year, a child benefits from watching older students model behavior as they internalize classroom routines and expectations. In the middle year, children are more independent and comfortable in the classroom. They learn how to interact with both older and younger children while developing their knowledge and skills with classroom materials. Second year children aspire to be leaders and look forward to the next step. Then in the third year, children have the exceptional opportunity to be role models and leaders and master classroom materials.

Allowing children to stay in the same classroom with the same friends and teachers is critical for our teachers to build strong, stable and consistent classroom communities. Consistency for children is key: they are able to concentrate on learning without spending time adjusting to new teachers and systems.

Learning in a multi-age classrooms is individualized by its very nature. Children progress at their own rate. One of the key benefits to this individualization is that children do not experience the kind of boredom or frustration that is common with whole-group instruction. Classrooms are more peaceful and teachers do not need extensive discipline plans or behavior reward systems.

Notwithstanding the high level of individualization, each three-year classroom cycle has discrete learning outcomes and a well define progression of lessons. Learning objectives meet or exceed the curriculum found in traditional independent and public schools. Below is a summary of skills in language and math that are expected by the end of Primary.

Primary Language

SPOKEN LANGUAGE

• Enrichment of vocabulary: naming of objects, develop and refine the skill of conversation by focusing on sentence structure and staying on topic • Lessons to practice and simulate social situations • Stories, songs and poems develop comprehension skills and the appreciation of literature.

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS

• Diagraphs and blends • Rhyming, sentence segmenting, syllable segmenting, and alliteration. • Sound games: initial sounds, ending sounds, middle sounds, words with a specific sound anywhere in the word, and sounding a word out from beginning to end • Sandpaper letters: beginning with consonants and vowels then progressing to phonograms (diagraphs and long vowels).

WRITING

• Constructing words with the moveable alphabet, then phrases and sentences and finally paragraphs and stories • Preparation of the hand through fine motor practical life activities, metal insets, art and paper activities.

READING

• Phonetic reading, Puzzle words (sight words), alphabetizing and spelling • Phonograms: writing, reading and spelling • Grammar and parts of speech through the use of concrete objects and games • Word study: antonyms, synonyms, homonyms, singular and plural, contractions, positive comparative and superlative.

SENTENCE ANALYSIS

• Exploring how the order and placement of phrases affects the meaning.

Primary Math

NUMBERS 1 TO 10

• Through the use of rods, spindles, and objects, numeration, one to one correspondence and teaching the quantity, symbol and sequence of numbers 1 through 10.

DECIMALS AND PLACE VALUE

• Categories of unit, ten, hundred and thousand are introduced with the bead materials. The processes of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division are experienced with the manipulation of the materials giving the impression of the four operations in math.

TEENS AND TENS

• The teens are introduced through the manipulation of gold beads, colored beads and cards to represent quantities and symbols of numbers 11 through 19 • Numbers in the tens are explored with the emphasis on the change from nine to the next ten (39- 40, for example) by building the numbers with beads and cards • Bead chains provide concrete practice in counting and recognizing numbers. Exercises using the chains include the introduction to multiples of numbers and the concept of squaring and cubing.

MEMORIZATION OF FACTS

• The exploration of math facts occurs through a series of beads and boards. Through practice and repetition each child experiences the memorization of math facts in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.

MOVING TO ABSTRACTION

• Some children move to abstraction in the math through the use of an abacus-like bead frame for addition and subtraction enabling each child to perform math operations with very large numbers.

FRACTIONS

• Through the manipulation and exploration of fraction inset materials, each child is introduced to the language and writing of fractions and their relationships to each other.