

Classroom Notes  
December 2020

December 4, 2020

Dear Parents,

I hope you are all doing well and staying safe. I have attached two photos to help you update your Montessori shelves at home. The first picture is a tray of various spices. The idea is to present new smells to your child that you may find around the holidays. On the tray is cinnamon, nutmeg, and Star of Anise. You can also use cloves, bay leaves, or vanilla bean. Once you introduce the smells to your child and say the name of the herb/ spice, you can separate them into their own sections on a tray or in a different space on the table. You can include a small pair of tongs to move the spices, which will promote fine motor development. This work will also promote the development of your child's olfactory sense, sense of order, and broadens their understanding of the world. The older toddler, or Primary child, can also use a blindfold and do the smelling work without peeking! When you are baking with your child, you can use some of these same spices in their ground form. Have your child smell the spice before pouring it in and talk about the whole, larger form you have on the tray. This will strengthen their abstract mind and begin making correlations that there is more than one way the spice can look or be used. Here is a great gingerbread recipe that is prepared for the Montessori toddler:

<https://www.themontessorinotebook.com/gingerbread-recipe/>

The second picture is flower arranging work with seasonal items. You can take clippings from your live Christmas tree, poinsettia, Christmas cactus, or other pine or cedar trees. Place the clippings in a jar with water. You can name the various plants to advance your child's vocabulary. You can also provide small vases or jars (empty glass spice jars are great for this) for your child to create their own Christmas bouquet; which is a great way to include your child in decorating the home in their own unique way.

I stumbled across a great website resource: <http://www.alldayprimary.com>, that really correlates with what we do in the classroom. The website has tons of free information on work you can prepare at home and developmental explanations of why we introduce certain materials to the children.

Next week I will be sending out a Holiday themed circle time for you to share with your children. Please feel free to email me with any questions or if you need additional guidance while spending this time with your little one at home!

Warmly,  
Sarah Veitenthal

Winter Poem:

Once there was a snowman, snowman, snowman.

Once there was a snowman tall, tall, tall!

And in the sun he melted, melted melted,  
and in the sun he melted small, small, small.

Start in a squatting position. Slowly rise up, getting taller as you say the words tall, arms over your head like a circle. Begin to move back into the squatting position slowly when you say the melted, eventually squatting with the words small.