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# ORGANIZING MONTESSORI MORNING WORK PERIODS AT HOME

The first step of Montessori in the home

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# Agenda

**A quick primer to prepare for a few weeks ahead (30 slides in 30 minutes):**

- **Meals and snacks with young children**
- **Practical life works- starting with food preparation ideas**
- **Ground rules/ guidelines for work period at home**
- **Extensions of works (toys) you already have**

# MEALS AND SNACKS

**MAIN MEALS (BREAKFAST/ LUNCH/ DINNER)** You've probably got this one down pat. Perhaps introduce:

- Clearing the table if you have not already (one dish with 2 hands), show child where to place dirty dishes, dish washing?
- Brush and pan for sweeping, offer presentation
- Wipe table
- Sitting through the meal until the family is finished (or a reasonable time has passed)

You may need to offer a container for your child to pack away uneaten foods, as some toddler families do on regular school days. They can pack it up and place in kitchen for snack!





# MEALS AND SNACKS

## MORNING SNACK...

- Prepare in advance and set in container for accessibility by small people
- Prepare 2 choices in “serving” containers, along with a plate for a child to reach
- Present to child, how to serve snack (select 1 or 2 pieces, put on plate, bring to table, sit to eat, clean up...)

**Goals:** For child to serve self and meet needs; for child NOT to paw through family foods in search of something salty or sweet; for adult to help choose acceptable snacks; for child to feel empowered and “nourished” in all senses of the word.







# FOOD PREPARATION WORKS

## Purpose:

- Prepare in advance and set in container for accessibility by small people

## Goals:

- Promote independence
- Healthy eating
- Learn to open/close containers
- Find motor skills
- Concentration



Vegetable Cutting



Orange Peeling

Fruit Cutting



Egg Slicing









# YOUR WORK PERIOD

## Purpose:

- To help children find independence, concentration, coordination, order
- To discover interest and ultimately find repeatable patterns
- To uncover one's own intrinsic motivations
- To give everyone in the household space to focus
- To help find repeatable patterns for children to progress at their own pace: cognitively, socially, emotionally, physically



# structure/ ground rules

- Material are “ours” until I choose them, then they are “mine”
- Materials can be selected and brought to tables or rugs/mats
- Choose (and put away) one material at a time
- Some works need to be presented several times (for a variety of reasons)
- Observing, reading, watching clouds is part of the work
- New routines/systems require presentations (adult demonstration with kindness and clarity)

# USING THE TOYS AROUND YOUR HOUSE- MONTESSORI EXTENSIONS

## Purpose:

- Toys can offer independence and creative play
- Offer enough toys that can be reasonably cleaned up independently by your child
- Less is more! Rotate toys on shelves every week, or few days.
- Time invites creativity



# SMALL OBJECTS

(animal figurines, beads/baubles, toy food, legos/blocks anything...)

## Activities (we call these extensions):

- Matching, Grading, Sorting, Classifying, Patterning
- Stacking/Balancing, Floating/Sinking, Printing/Imprinting, Mystery bag
- Drawing/Labeling, Booklet-making, Pattern card making
- Sentence completion, Grammar, Research/Writing

With sibling/parent:

- I-Spy, What's missing, Hide & Seek



# Matching, Grading, Sorting, Classifying, Patterning...

- Match objects in pairs, horizontally or vertically (children can give you a presentation)
- Grade objects (place in a line) from largest to smallest, darkest to lightest, heaviest to lightest
- Sort objects by number, color, type, any characteristic (into different columns/groups)
- Build and continue patterns- cat, bear, pig, cat bear, pig... blue, red, red, yellow, blue, red, red, yellow...



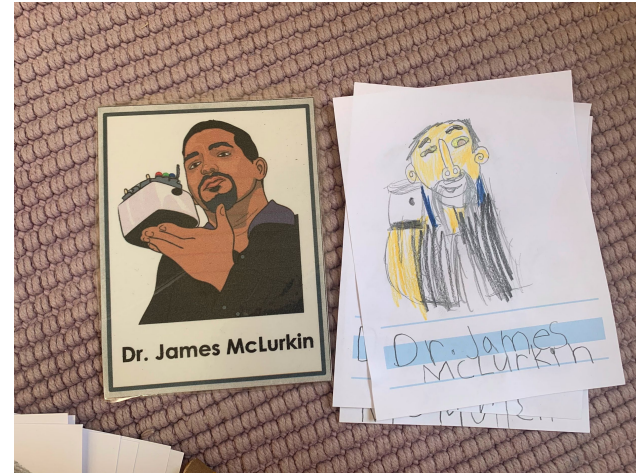


# Stacking/Balancing, Floating/Sinking, Printing/Imprinting, Mystery Bag/Box

- Stack objects, try to balance them, build a toy animal pyramid, etc...
- Use a clear glass bowl with water (min. 4-6 inches) and see which objects float or sink. Provide placemat/sponge/towel (objects should be preselected/kept in a container to avoid random experimenting)
- Find objects (from nature too) to print with paint/ink onto paper, or to imprint by pressing into playdough
- Place 3-10 objects in a drawstring bag (or small box with a hand-hole cut out) and reach in to feel for/find a specific object. You can help make prompts (picture cards or name labels for each object, or “find something round and soft”, etc.)

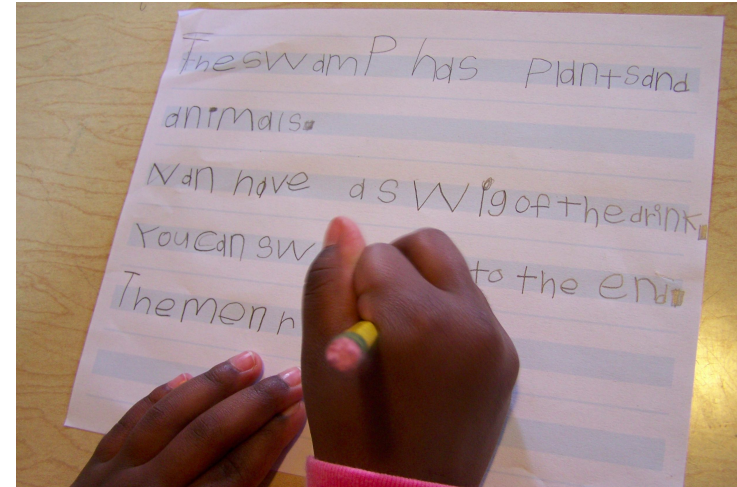
# Drawing/Labeling, Booklet making, Pattern card making

- Trace, make a rubbing, or draw objects on paper and label them (or they can trace the label that you write)
- Use one small page for each object, and draw/label (or write a sentence) to make a themed booklet. Make a cover page (title, kid's name) and staple it together. (Red toys, types of dinosaurs, toys that start with the sound: "b", etc...)
- Draw or write a series of set orders of objects to be repeated in a pattern, children can reuse cards to build and complete each pattern
- Draw each lego or block structure on paper, children can reuse them to try and rebuild their structures



# Sentence Completion, Grammar, Research/Writing

- Use objects/labels as subjects to create/complete sentences or short stories (which can also be illustrated) “The cat is big. The rat is not.”, etc.
- Use objects to explore/write with grammar as the focus- “The bird is behind the ball [preposition]. The pen is red [adjective].”, etc.
- Use objects to inspire research, write 1-3 sentences about each object, etc.



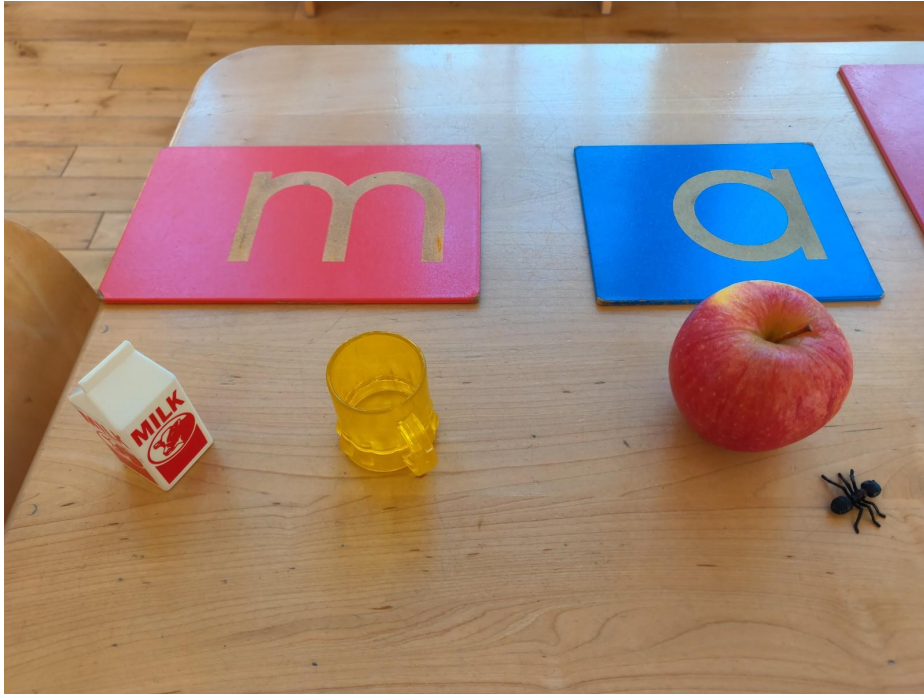
# I-Spy, What's Missing, Hide&Seek



- Line up 3-10 objects, describe one and let them name it (“I spy something big/round, that starts with sound RRR, etc.”)
- Line up 3-10 objects, let children name/study them, they’ll close eyes while one (or more) objects are removed, and guess what’s missing
- Hide objects within a designated area for children to find



# Initial letter sounds- fetching game



- Write each initial letter sound on a separate piece of paper
- Children choose one set of 1-4 letters
- Make the sound of each letter- ask child to hunt for objects that start with the sound mmm
- Child brings objects back to table/ sorts
- If child can write (or draw), feel free to do so!
- You can also increase the number of objects/ number of letters

# Make an Art Materials Shelf/ Tray

Things to Include:

- Cutting strips
- Glue Stick
- Scissors
- Mark-making materials (crayon/  
marker/ pencil/ highlighter...)
- Playdough/ cookie cutter
- Beads/ string
- Collage materials
- Sticky notes??!!!!
- DESIGNATE A WORK MAT AND  
TRAY for one material choice



# You are a model- work is contagious



- Your children are inspired by everyone around them- you and your family.
- Your physical actions
- Your communication style
- The specific language you use
- Your technology usage
- Your self-care routines (yes, even if you're working at home, BRUSH YOUR TEETH)
- The classroom inspiration is so clear

# Decision making takes time...

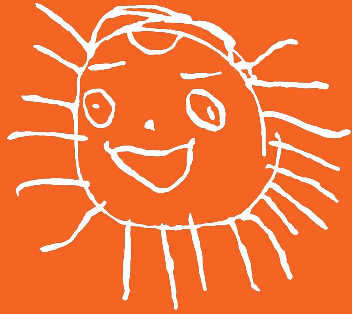


- Doing nothing is not necessarily doing nothing
- Decision making is a skill
- Decision making is a learned pattern
- Children are figuring out what choices are acceptable in the home environment

# This IS POSSIBLE



- Home environments and classrooms have challenging moments
- We do recover
- These patterns do work
- Stick with it, be creative, follow your child's interests
- The teachers agree: it's tough work, but joy we experience when children find independent success is immeasurable



\*more meetings  
to come\*

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# Thank you, families!

- \*We will continue to support you in this journey.
- \*Be patient with yourselves.
- \*Be kind.
- \*Share daily gratitude, even if it's hard.
- \*Apologize when you make a mistake.
- \*Set up your sustainable patterns- we'll help.

You are the best MODEL for your children.

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