

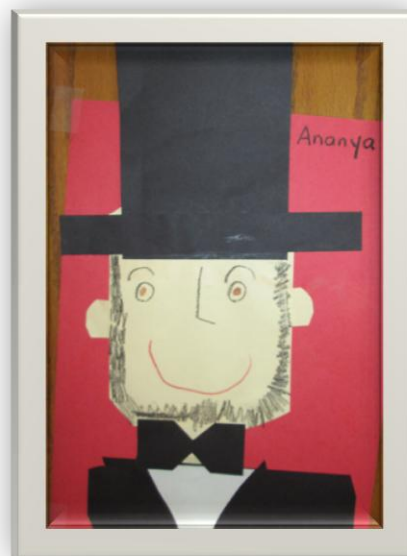
Montessori Pathways'

News

February, 2014

"Educating the MIND without educating the HEART is not education at all."

Aristotle



*"President Lincoln"
South Room project*

Notes from Ms. Alena

February was a short month with uncooperative weather, but very busy nonetheless.



In honor of **Chinese New Year**, the kids had a special dragon parade. They all helped hold up our LONG dragon kite and, accompanied by Ms. Ambreen's rhythm, paraded from the South Room to the East Room chanting "Happy New Year" in Chinese.

With **Valentine's Day** quickly approaching, the children began to prepare for the Valentine's Day celebration by *decorating their own collection bags*. Then, on the day of the exchange, the children *practiced grace and courtesy* by taking turns walking around the circle to distribute their

Valentines and thank each other as a Valentine was dropped in their bag. The children really enjoy giving special notes and cards to each other on this day that focuses on love and friendship.

Mr. President Lincoln and his wife Mary Lincoln visited our school, met with our Kindergarten and Elementary students, and made history come alive. They brought a lot of interesting information to the kids, while showing the difference between 19th and 21st century. It was very interesting to see how the kids tried to respond to whether President Lincoln and his wife are real or not.



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Thank to Max and Donna Daniels, who played the roles of Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln and brought a lot of excitement for our students.

Thank you to *all of our friends* who joined us during the **Family Story Night** this month. Kids were so excited to come to school after the school day was over, wear PJ's and bring their favorite stuffed animals and blankets, lie down and listen to a story, sing and dance or creating their own book, and enjoy milk with cookies.

Thank you to *Ms. Ambreen, Ms. Laxmi, and Ms. Katy* for the preparation of this wonderful evening.



While studying the different *Biomes of Africa*, Elementary kids learned a little about African music and read the **folk tale “Abiyoyo”**. After reading this story and listening to the music, the class decided to **turn it into a play** that they later presented to our kindergarteners.

You are welcome to take a look at this play as well – just click this link.

<http://1drv.ms/NlpQwt>

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Coming School Events

- **March 3 - March 7 – Dr. Seuss Week**
- **Thursday, March 6 at 9:30am - “The Fabulous Fable Factory” at Raue Center for Arts in Crystal Lake**
- **Saturday, March 8 at 10am- 1:00 pm - Open House.**
We invite you to come and discuss any questions you may have.
- **March 11 – March 13 - Parent / Teacher conferences** for Primary classes (East and South rooms). Please make sure you have returned the conference sign up form to school.
- **Tuesday, March 18 – Picture Day**
- **March 24 – March 28 - Spring Break**
The school will be operating for All Day students during Spring break.
- **Registration for Summer Camp and the upcoming 2014-2015 School Year has begun.**

Thank you to all of the families who have returned the re-enrollment application for the Summer Camp and next School Year.

If you have decided to continue your child’s education at Montessori Pathways, please complete the Registration Form for Summer Camp and / or Re-Enrollment Form for the next School Year and return it to us, along with the registration / re-enrollment fee, no later than March 15 2014.

The 10% tuition security deposit is due April 15 2014.

Please help the school be prepared for Summer Camp and the next School Year on time.

As always, if you have any comments, questions, or concerns, feel free to contact us via e-mail
montpathways@hotmail.com

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*Stay warm and healthy,
Ms.Alena*

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Notes from the Elementary Class (North room)

Ms. Katy

February has been a busy and fun month in the Elementary classroom. During this month we had many **Kindergarten friends visit** to see what a day is like in the North Room. The elementary children enjoyed hosting and were eager to present them with new works. It was a good opportunity for the first year students to see what it will be like next year when they become more of a community leader.



Our **Valentine Fraction/Pizza party** was a success! Thank you for bringing in the ingredients. The class had a great time making and eating their pizzas. We cut them in fourths or quarters. We also made whipped cream.



This month we had a **visit from President Lincoln and First Lady Mary Todd Lincoln**. They were a hit and answered a lot of great questions. Prior to their arrival we learned a little bit about President Lincoln and drew portraits of George Washington and Mr. Lincoln in honor of Presidents Day.

We furthered our **study of the Common Human Needs** this month by exploring *the difference between a want and a need*. The students broke into small groups and had to narrow down a number of choices like television, the latest clothes, clean air, an education to name a few, into only eight choices of things they felt were definite needs.



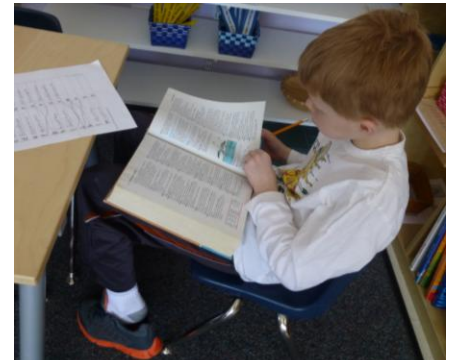
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It was interesting to listen and observe their decision making processes.

As an extension of this work, each child was asked to bring in an item to represent a Common Human Need. Each child presented the items they chose to bring and they were challenged to choose one item they could give up and for how long. Some choices included a favorite shirt for 3 days, a spoon for 3 days, and legos for 2 days. These were some very difficult decisions!

Research has been the other popular work this month. Children have been researching, writing their findings, creating interesting visuals and presenting what they learned to the class. Here is a list of some of the topics that were researched and presented this month by the students: Butterflies, Chickens, Fish, Squid, Tornadoes, Madagascar, Ancient Egypt, Zimbabwe, Bugs, South Africa, Jewels and Gems and the Arabic Language.

Research in the Montessori classroom is one of the most wonderful things to see. Here the child is able to incorporate all areas of the classroom into one large work and apply their knowledge and gain more at the same time.



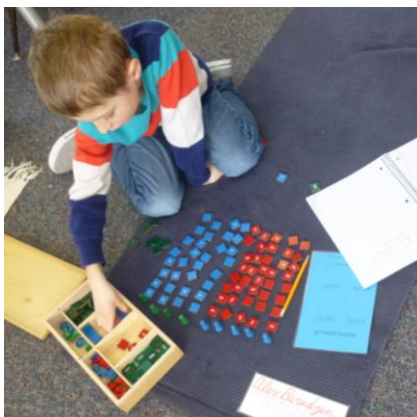
A small sample of new lessons this month:

Group Lessons: Verb Game, Parts of a Mountain, Types of Mountains, Common Human Needs Extensions

Math:

First Years: Greater than Less than with Decimal Cards, Vertical, Horizontal, Oblique Lines, Measuring Perimeter, Polygon Command Cards, Detective Addition, Beginning Fraction Work

Second Years: Turning quadrilaterals in to triangles, Stamp Game Division, Liquid Measurement, Place Value to One Million, Fraction Work

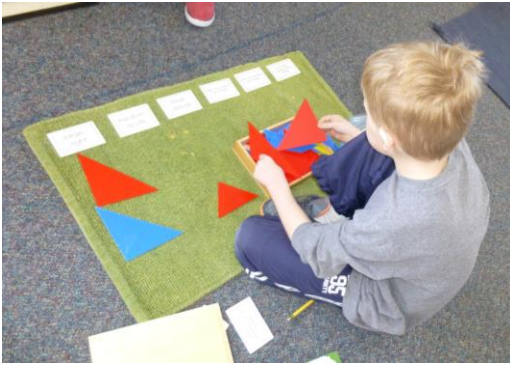


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Language:

First Years: Symbolizing Sentences, Green Series Long A spelling, Logical Partners, Logical Analysis (sentence analysis)

Second Years: Triangle Adjective Game, Syllabication, Adverb Works, Sentence Analysis



Zoology: Vertebrate Sorting, Internal Characteristics of Birds and Mammals, Needs of Animals Research, Animal Stories



Geography and History: Finding Locations in Africa, Europe and Asia, Land and Water Forms on a globe, Countries of Europe



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Art, Music, Spanish: Drawing a still life, Painting a Mountain Landscape, Playing Mary Had a Little Lamb on the xylophone, Spanish Fruits and Spanish Weather



I hope everyone is doing well and hanging in this winter! Let the countdown to spring begin!

Stay warm!

Ms. Katy

Kindergarten Extended Day News

Ms. Patty

It was such a busy month for the Kindergartners!



In the language area, the children continue to expand on their reading and writing skills! All the children are working with challenging *reading comprehension books*! They read the books and then complete worksheets about each book.

They are also beginning to work with the *noun and verb boxes*. They are learning about nouns (person, place or thing) and verbs (show action).

The children continue to use their journals to extend their writing skills. They are *journaling* about a variety of topics that are of personal significance which requires them to organize their thoughts. They are learning *basic sentence structure* (capitalization and punctuation) and using inventive spelling in their writings.

Snake game, number comparison (greater than, less, than, equal), and place value are just a few of the math works that the Kindergartners have been working with this past month.



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In addition, most of our friends have had an introduction to the *decimal system*. A few have been working with *the 45 layout* and have been practicing making “big” numbers. In the coming months, we will be learning about money and measurement!

Our special project this month has been our *President Lap Book*. We have been reading many interesting facts about George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. Through our readings, we learned that George Washington was not only our first president, but he only had one tooth when he took office.



We were so excited about our *in school field trip with President Lincoln and his wife Mary Todd Lincoln*. They both gave an interesting lesson on the life of Abe Lincoln before he became the 16th President of the United States! Did you know that Mr. Lincoln used to deliver mail? He carried the letters in his stovepipe hat!

We also had a directed art lesson and completed *presidential portraits of Abraham Lincoln and George Washington!*

The Kindergarteners enjoyed their visit to the Elementary classroom! They all came back excited to show all the work that they completed with the first and second graders! They also welcomed the pre-kindergarteners to our afternoon work time. Each kindergartener had the opportunity to mentor a pre-k friend. *It was such a pleasure to see them showing their leadership skills and confidence in presenting the kindergarten work to their young friends!*



Sincerely,

Ms. Patty

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Notes from the South Classroom

Ms. Patty, Ms. Ambreen

The month of February has been a busy one! Over 100 days of school have already passed. Our class has shown lots of growth in relationships, learning, as well as socially. As always, there is room to grow even more! This February we started some new units of study (heart, teeth, body, and presidents).

In the language area, the children have been busy *making their very own books about George Washington and Abraham Lincoln*. The children are able to color, cut, and sequence the book in order. The mini-book contains very basic information about each president: birthdates, monuments that honor them, and the order of their presidency. This activity helps the child develop their oral language skills. They enjoy “reading” their book over and over again!



The older children were able to extend this activity into further *research of the Presidents*. Many chose to illustrate their own mini-books about the presidents!

The children have also been using the *Spanish materials* on a regular basis. Several have completed their own *fruit / vegetable Spanish booklets*!

It is so exciting to see the progress that has been made by the children in language. Those who have been working with initial sounds have moved to reading simple phonetic words: *mat, hut, lip, pen, and hop*. Others have moved to reading *Bob* books and *Phonetic Reading Comprehension* books.



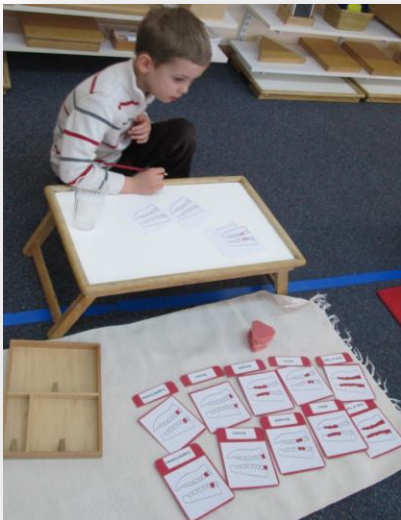
In math, we have been *sequencing the presidents* from George Washington (1)-Barack Obama (44). The children are able to use the “golden” beads (tens and ones) to match to each president’s number. With this fun activity, they were able to practice their math skills and to learn about each president!

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We have been learning *the concept of comparing numbers* with the “Greater Than, Less Than, and Equal” with the number weight scale. We have extended this work with the “alligator” manipulative math work. The child places the correct number of counters under each number to determine greater than, lesser than, and equal. The $<$ and $>$ signs are tricky! We turned them into alligator mouths by drawing teeth inside and a nose on top. We say that this is a numbers-eating alligator, and he is VERY HUNGRY. He always wants to eat the biggest numbers. The wide-open mouth side of the symbol will always point to the bigger number. We say the rhyme: **"I'm a hungry alligator; I will eat the one that's greater!"** Children do not automatically know if a number is greater than or less than another number. They are still forming a way of visualizing these relationships mentally and will need plenty of exposure to the numbers for that to happen.



Many are now working with the advance materials in math, *square and cubing chains, ten board sequencing and the decimal system (45 layout)!*



The month of February is National Dental Month and our science shelves contain many works pertaining to teeth. We are learning about *kinds of teeth, parts of a tooth, and foods that are healthy for our teeth*. We are also learning about our *heart* and we are using a stethoscope to listen to our heart beat! We are using the anatomy apron *to learn the placement of our heart, liver, lungs, intestines, and kidneys*. We will continue our study of the human body into the month of March.

February had many special days to celebrate including Groundhog’s day, Chinese New Year, (we ate fortune cookies and paraded the Chinese Dragon through each classroom). Valentine’s Day, and President’s Day! During our line time, we read several of our favorite books: “*Sweet Tooth*” by: Margie Palatini Stewart, “*George Washington’s Teeth*” by: Deborah Chandra and “*What Presidents Are Made Of*” by: Hanoch Piven. We also learned our monthly poem:

*In February it will be
My snowman’s anniversary
With cake for him and soup for me
Happy once, happy twice
Happy chicken soup with rice.*

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Birthdays celebrated this month: Angelina, Sofia, Emmie, and Ms. Patty! Thank you so much to the parents that sent snacks for our Valentine's Day party! This special day allowed us to celebrate friendship and to practice our grace and courtesy skills with each other!



Warmly,
Ms. Patty and Ms. Ambreen

Notes from the East classroom:
Ms. Christine, Ms. Laxmi

Although, technically, February is the shortest month of the year, this has been one looong month! Our outside time has been limited and everyone is ready for spring - let's hope it's just around the corner!

We started this month with the celebration of **Chinese New Year**; 2014 is the year of the horse. We read a book about Chinese traditions to celebrate, and enjoyed sharing tangerines and fortune cookies with the South classroom. We made our own paper dragons and even had a visit from a huge dragon kite from the South classroom. Even the Elementary students joined in!

Of course February brings **Valentine's Day** and our classroom was filled with pink, purple and red hearts and decorations. *Thank you Ashley's mom, Melody, and Isabella's parents, Julia and Mark, for your help with making Valentine's, and chocolate covered strawberries.* Everyone was excited to be a part of these projects and we always love having our parents' help - thank you!



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Thank you to the families for the items donated for the Sharing Basket projects. Our tables had beautiful flowers and we enjoyed some special snacks and decorations for baking. Our monthly **tasting activity** was making *homemade tortilla chips* (all the children enjoyed them) *along with homemade guacamole* (some children liked it, others tried it, and some didn't care for it). Of course, the fun is in the process of making it and the final product is secondary!



Some of the things we have been working with this month:

Practical Life - Lots of manipulative work using hearts, chopsticks, pouring water using a funnel, a variety of objects that open and close differently, color mixing. These not only lead to great vocabulary lessons, but offer the children an opportunity to strengthen their hands, hone their fine motor skills, and require precision and concentration to successfully achieve the desired effect.

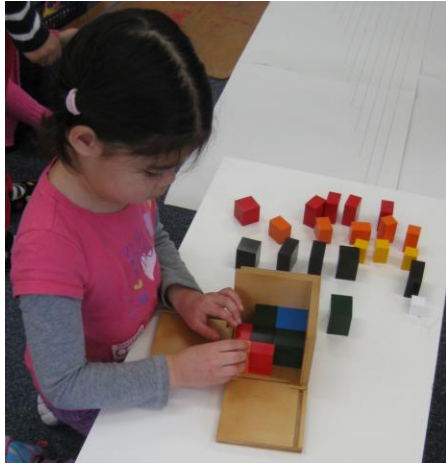


Sensorial - Our classroom Christmas present, the Arithmetic cube, offers a challenge similar to the Binomial and Trinomial cubes, but is more difficult to put together because it has an extra level and more color variations to assess.

Additionally, some of the children have enjoyed making a "maze" to walk through using the red rods. This requires discrimination of longest to shortest rods, and then skills to arrange them in a perpendicular pattern at right angles.

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The kids can then walk through the pattern, and sometimes use a bell to hold and NOT ring to see who can tread the softest and stillest.



Math - Children continue their individual solidification of numbers and quantities associated with them. Children, who familiar with the 45 layout (ones, tens, hundreds and thousands) are now executing addition equations requiring much larger sums and knowledge of place value.

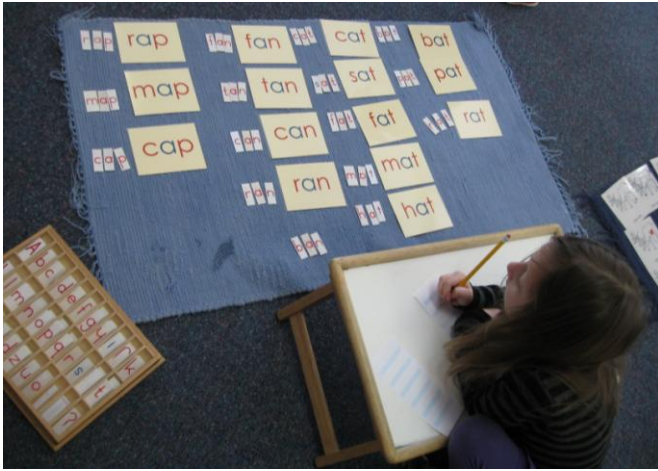
We have introduced the concept of odd and even numbers by placing materials called "counters" in partners (or pairs) on the rug. We tell the child "six has partners, seven has one left over". This work makes for a nice extension to the 100 board, where the child will see that every other number is odd/even.



Language - Every child has made nice progress on individual letter sounds and many are in the process of mastering the blending process - this is the pre-reading stage where they are putting it all together to read the words. Often by experiencing language patterns of words such as "-at" or "-ip", they are successful in blending.

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Reading comprehension is also being assessed so that they are confident in their reading abilities. Rhyming list activities, missing letter searches and introduction to two letter phonograms such as "oo" and "th" are worked with daily.



Science - We recently changed objects for use with the magnifying glass; it has led to corresponding interest in moss, shells, rocks and minerals. One child brought a collection of rocks and minerals which we observed, and then looked up / identified from our reference manuals. This, in turn, led to a discussion of metamorphic, sedimentary rocks and precious gems. This, in turn, led some children to "Parts of a Volcano" and "Parts of the Earth".

It is always interesting to see how a child will take something presented one way, and make it their own, personal experience. A few weeks ago, one child who was presented the red and blue math rods as a

horizontal work on a rug to match with the corresponding number, try to arrange them vertically. No numbers with it, but the challenge of making them stand up kept him focused for a long time. He was very focused on his attempt and who knows.....one day, an engineer? By not always jumping in and saying "no" we observe curiosity and a tenacity for success with their ideas and concepts.



We wished Arianna a happy 5th birthday and look forward to her school celebration soon.

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March brings..... Dr. Seuss' birthday (we'll be in touch with our volunteer parents), Parent/teacher conferences and Spring Break (hopefully, the weather will cooperate!). As always, we look forward to your feedback, volunteering, contributions and mostly, confidence with your children!



Sincerely,

Ms. Christine & Ms. Laxmi

Notes from the Pre-K Extended class:

Ms. Ambreen

The month of February was the busiest month with many events at school. We started with the celebration of Chinese New Year, which inspired us to study about the great country of The People's Republic of China with its rich history and culture.

Groundhog Day, Valentine's Day and President's Day followed and added excitement into our daily routine.

In Math, we worked on revision of the addition and subtraction facts to reinforce and strengthen these concepts. Learning about the different Presidents of the past for President's inspired us to identify the coins and their worth, so we made a book on coins. We also learned to make 100 numbers using our Ten board.



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Notes from the afternoon classroom:

Ms. Donna



February had us in the mood for love. Drawing pictures of what we love, creating love bugs, caterpillars, and making hearts.

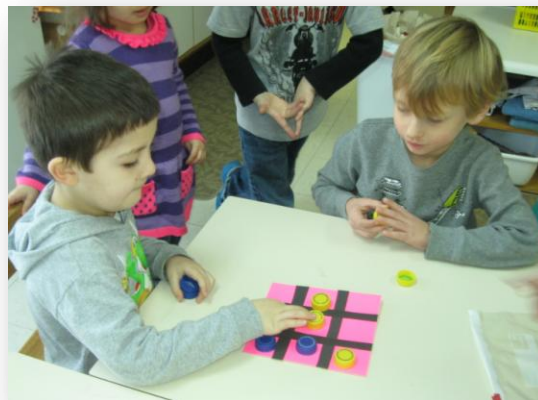
We also *sung a few songs* such as "Do you know my Valentine? My Valentine? My Valentine? Do you know my Valentine?" One child would then say: "Her/his name is _____." Everyone would join in the song until the solo would be sung by that child.

The other song was "Valentine do you have a letter for me?" One child would walk around our circle and drop a letter behind someone. That child would pick it up and walk around the circle dropping the heart letter behind another child.

We did a *science experiment* to see which jar of water would dissolve our Sweet Tart first, (hot, cold or room temperature). We observed the hot water making bubbles first, later the room temperature water has a few bubbles and that the cold water did not make any bubbles. We continued watching the Sweet Tarts in the different waters and concluded that the hot water dissolved our Sweet Tart the most and the fastest in our hour of observing.

We also painted *pictures with food coloring ice cubes* and learned if you waited for the ice to begin to melt you could draw a better picture.

We began to play games of *Tick-tack-toe* using



recycled bottle caps in two different colors on our reusable boards.



We also played *Body Bingo*. The cards were made up pictures of parts of our body, each card had two of the same parts so each child had to make sure to look at all of the pictures and sometime cover two parts instead of just one.

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We were able to go outside twice this month and enjoyed ourselves in the snow, sledding, making snowmen, and snow angels (these angels loved to sing as they were making their angels).

Gym time had us taking turns at rolling a large box that looked like a dice. The number of dots told us how many times we were to do the exercise.

The child rolling would call out what we were to do, such as jumping jacks, sit ups etc. We also had fun hitting balloons in the air with a noodle baton. Some of us got over 40 consecutive hits.



*Stay warm,
Ms. Donna*

