



*"It is necessary for the teacher to guide the child without letting him feel her presence too much, so that she may always be ready to supply the desired help, but may never be the obstacle between the child and his experience."
Dr. Montessori's Own Handbook, 1915*

This week on Lesson Night, the Elementary children became the teachers, and the adults become the students. Throughout Lower and Upper Elementary children demonstrated their knowledge with such joy and grace.

When it was time to go to the environments, we talked about what it means to be an observer. Dr. Maria Montessori based her entire pedagogy upon scientific observation. That night we asked that you take on the role of an observer. We asked that you listen, watch, sit back, and speak little. Take a moment today and reflect upon your experience. Did you see something new? How were the children speaking and moving? Were you pleasantly surprised by what the children shared with you or how they shared the information?

Dr. Maria Montessori created the environment, curriculum, and materials based on her scientific observations of children. She saw children that became engaged, peaceful and engaged learners when the environmental conditions were right. She observed for signs of readiness and interests. She observed what could be an obstacle. It is our job as adults to not stand in the way but to open up the path for the freedom to explore, to develop and to build up concentration. These are the things that our Elementary teachers have been trained for, to observe and then use their observations and experience as tools to create each child's educational plan. The term "Guide" is often used to describe a Montessori Teacher: he or she understands the intellectual, social and emotional capacities of the growing human being, observes where each individual is, presents appropriate lessons to meet and strengthen their capacities, and guides each child in their learning and advancement. Just like you may have experienced on Lesson Night yourself, there were a variety of interests, subjects, styles of teaching and levels of difficulty. Some children were bravely presenting a concept that they have just begun to explore themselves but wanted to share with you. Some children wanted to show you complex and challenging concepts.

Lesson Night is the purest example you can witness as to Dr. Maria Montessori's vision for the children of the future. What you experienced is a typical day within the Lower and Upper Elementary environments, under the loving care of the staff. We hope you enjoyed your time.

Warm Regards,

Lisbeth and The Elementary Team