



While the production of the Lion King is in high gear with props, songs, lines and stage blocking, the classrooms are still busy with academic discoveries. In Maria Montessori's book "Psychogeometry" she repeatedly speaks about the journey of discovery and the point of arrival. This means that the children walk a different path than many of us did when we were in school.

Can you recall the days of sitting in class and the teacher has just written some geometry or algebra formula on the board, and you wondered how it got there? Or better yet, have you asked why it is the answer? In math, we heard that the why is not needed, just compute the equation or formula. This is not the path of a lesson or topic in Montessori. First, we expose the children to an image or impression. We may use concrete materials in geometry, scientific experiments in geography, a game in language. That is merely to open up the door within the mind. Then, the children receive one piece of information at a time, slowly, patiently, gracefully. As we observe the children demonstrate knowledge and understanding we hand over the next piece of information. And then the next.

In the case of geometry, for example, we start with stories of ancient civilizations and their encounters with nature that supplied them with answers to their questions; maybe, in this case, how big is the piece of land. Then we show the children how to use material and the simple unit measurement of a square, slowly unveiling the concept of area. We have not yet mentioned any formulas. That comes later. Together, through the guidance of the teacher and the social discussions and explorations, the children begin to explore the area of various shapes such as rectangles, trapezoids, rhombi, and triangles of various types. The children discover that there is logic in the transformation of a polygon into a rectangle and then, as if in the distance subconscious there begins to be a whisper.

Without being told, the children arrive at such formulas such as $A=B \times H$ to $A = (B + b)h/2$. The formula is not given to them. The teacher asks guiding questions that lead the child to see with their own eyes the truth of area. When the children discover these formulas, they have come to a point of arrival. In our experience, this is a point of departure but for the children, this is the point of arrival.

I mention this to you and encourage you to imagine these similar steps with the work the children did this week in their environments. Children read essays, presented reports on countries, analyzed sentences, heard stories about the history of the United States. Some children were enthralled with the scientific experiments that demonstrate how hot air rises. Others were exploring the ancient history of life on earth. With spring budding, some children were learning about the root. They may have heard that the job of a root is to seek out water and to keep the plant stabilized in the earth. Did you know that roots secrete a chemical when they encounter an obstacle such as a rock and begin to dissolve the obstacle to continue to perform their job of seeking water?

As your children are busy learning about the world around them; be patient, be trusting and above all, be curious alongside them.

Update on the Lion King:

Things are slowly coming together. Props are close to completion and costume fittings are happening this Saturday and on Friday, April 26. We anticipated that there would be some types of workshops but the children have been doing most of the work at school, and therefore the workshops are not needed. The ticket reservations are well underway. If you haven't reserved your ticket yet, there is still time. You still have until 7 PM on Monday. Once we have a count of who has made reservations, we will know how many more seats to open up in case you want to come both nights. Some things may pop up along the way so please be on the lookout for any announcements for extra help or a possible extra hour or two of rehearsal. Please remember that on the days of the show, we are asking that you have your child back at school by 5:00. If you have any additional questions, please reach out to me at lisbethh@themontessorischool.com.

Hakuna Matata,

Lisbeth and the Elementary Team