

Elementary – December 7, 2018



We often say that the Lower and Upper Elementary classrooms are not actually separate entities, but one continuous curriculum. Let's take a look at how that happens in our reflection of the lessons the children received just this last week.

In the Lower Elementary, children are learning about various parts of speech such as nouns and adjectives. The materials guide the children to a discovery that all parts of speech have a special job. For example, they learn that nouns name things. This moves away from the typical phrase "person, place or thing" as it doesn't explain what the noun does. From this experience, the children in Upper Elementary return to the study of parts of speech but dive a bit deeper. They will learn to classify nouns into concrete and abstract nouns, collective and material nouns, common and proper nouns, just to mention a few.

Specifically this week, lessons from the past in Lower Elementary are resurfacing in Upper Elementary. By the third year in Lower Elementary, students will have discovered that prepositions build a relationship between two words such as, "Place your feet on the chair." --- connecting feet and chair with the word "on." (It is a great deal of fun when the children have to act out these sentences.) This week in Upper Elementary the children are returning to the same concept and are now working on prepositional phrases. Each time, the concept is taken a step further for a more in-depth exploration and discovery. Another beautiful example that happened in one Lower Elementary environment and simultaneously in the Upper Elementary this week is the study of in synonyms on Lower Elementary and the study of similes in Upper Elementary.

These isolated exercises allow the children to express themselves confidently in both oral and written language. The Lower Elementary children are currently working on Thanksgiving letters. The Upper Elementary, taking it a step higher, are writing detailed research papers. We would like to give acknowledgment to the Sixth Years, who just submitted their research papers on Chile to the Montessori Model United Nations in preparations for the convention in NYC that they will be attending in February alongside other Montessori students from around the world!

This type of continuous learning happens every day, in a variety of ways. As we reflected upon the week and what was happening, it was so vast and rich that besides giving a bit of pedagogy about what Cosmic Education is and how it is done, below you will find brief descriptions from the teachers themselves about what happened in their classrooms. It was so beautiful and amazing that it was impossible to tie into one pedagogical theme. Therefore, here are small snippets into the world of Lower and Upper Elementary for you to enjoy.

-In Upper Elementary some children are working on understanding how photosynthesis works by creating a glucose molecule, starting out with water, carbon dioxide, and sunlight. The end result of this exploration is that they are left only with oxygen molecules in the bowl. This shows that during photosynthesis, plants give out oxygen.

-While 4th years continued working on achieving finesse in their botanical illustrations, 5th years worked on writing fish reports incorporating information from our combined lesson on classes Agnatha, Chondrichthyes, and Osteichthyes. We have been learning such interesting facts in the process. Did you know that the Greenland sharks have cartilaginous skeletons, but give live births? Their learning guided the children into a big discussion about why does it still belong to class Chondrichthyes, and not a mammal? Learning is happening in the most unexpected ways.

-Children in Upper Elementary are working on: haiku, weather forecasting, topographic maps, atoms, biomes, Peace Stories from the Aboriginal People in Australia.

-Trip's grandpa, whom we were calling Dr. Papa (as in he is an MD and a grandpa) was a fantastic presenter about his hobby, astronomy. He talked about nebula, the moon, and galaxies. He was super impressed by the children's knowledge (as in they've been studying the solar system!)

-They surprised me by planning and singing "Down in the Valley" at our morning ring (inspired by Chris, the music teacher) explains Carla.

-Older children are writing about a member of their family

-First-year children discovered synonyms

-Still a lot of surveys, older students turning results into fractions.

From All of Us To All of You,

Lisbeth and the Elementary Team