



NAMC News

FALL 2007



SHARING INFORMATION AND IDEAS AMONG OUR SCHOOLS, STUDENTS AND GRADUATES

Message from Dale Gausman, Program Director

As Montessorians, we understand the importance of a well prepared environment. We spend countless hours pouring over catalogs, perusing materials, making wish lists, fantasizing over what we'd buy if only we had the money. We use our evenings, weekends, and summers coloring and making new materials. We organize laminating parties where parents come, ready to help make the environment a welcome and inviting place for their children. This constant preparation and adaptation to the environment is an essential foundation in the Montessori philosophy and method of teaching. We realize that by doing this we help children develop a sense of beauty, gain independence, and inspire them to do work.

New teachers focus primarily on creating this environment. But after all that hard work, what comes next? What do we do once the students are actually there, in the classroom? Experienced teachers hear these questions often. We, at NAMC, have developed program-specific classroom guides that will give you ideas and concrete suggestions about how teachers, new and experienced, can put Montessori theory into practice in the classroom. Our classroom guides provide answers to much asked-for direction in many curricular areas, including goal setting, observing, program implementation, and starting your classes off right.

We are proud to announce that the eagerly anticipated Upper Elementary program is ready and available for students to enroll! Four years in development, a team of experienced Montessori teachers, writers and designers prepared top-of-the-line materials to meet the ever increasing need for well-prepared Montessori teachers. With so much meticulous attention to detail, we know you'll be pleased with it as well. With the completion of our Upper Elementary curriculum, we rest easy knowing that it distinguishes NAMC from all other training programs in the world.

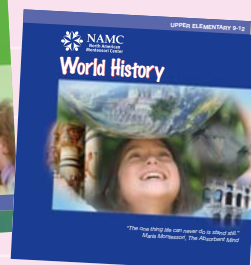
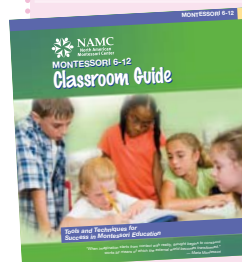
We have received an over-whelmingly positive response to our new edition Lower Elementary albums and blackline masters. We are pleased to announce that the Lower Elementary coursework is now complete.

We invite you to visit our website, www.montessoritraining.net, and check out our new blogsite. Feel free to ask questions or comment on posts. Our moderator, Michelle Irinyi, is a lower elementary teacher in North Carolina.

Finally, in this issue, we interview Kerri Hofmann, a NAMC graduate from Long Island, New York. Kerri is busily preparing to open her new school this month. She tells us what inspires her and the plans she has for her school.

Best wishes for a fantastic school year,
Dale

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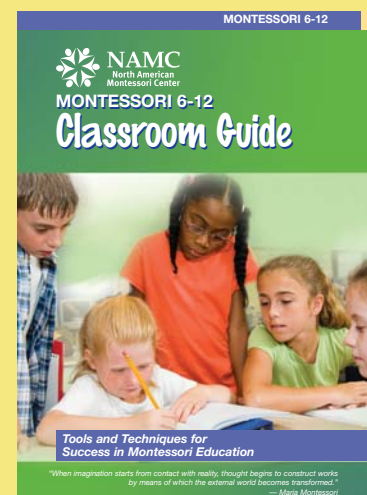
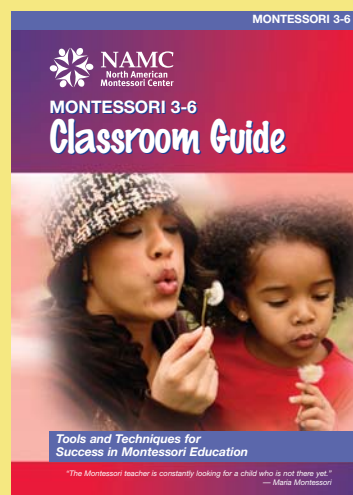
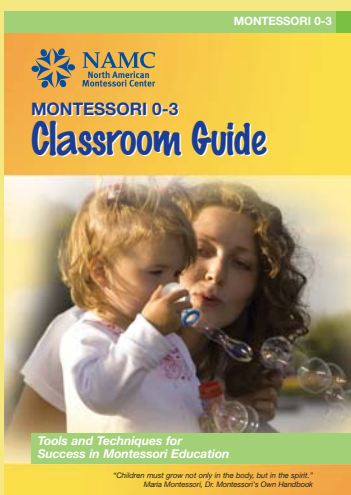
Introducing ...
**NAMC'S
MONTESSORI
TEACHING
GUIDES**

**SPECIAL OFFER
FOR YOU!**
(see page 2)

NAMC CLASSROOM GUIDES – AVAILABLE NOW!

WE ARE SO PLEASED TO INTRODUCE NAMC'S CLASSROOM GUIDES FOR ALL LEVELS – SPECIFICALLY, 0-3, 3-6, AND 6-12

The Montessori method is a combination of theory and practice. It is about the ideas, principles, techniques, and materials that inspire, inform, and guide all Montessori programs in practice – when teachers interact with children. Our comprehensive and easily referenced guides present theoretical and practical considerations for the Montessori classroom, including important discussions on the philosophy, physical, cognitive and social development, implementing the curriculum, classroom start-up, observing children, assessment, classroom management, and normalization. These guides are invaluable resources for every Montessori teacher.



Some topics that are covered include:

INFANT/TODDLER (0-3)

- How to organize a Montessori classroom
- Preparing yourself as a Montessori Caregiver
- Communicating with young children the Montessori way
- Preparing the Montessori environment
- Five of the most important ideas in Montessori
- Presenting activities
- Dr. Montessori and the Montessori method
- Growth and development
- Materials and equipment

PRESCHOOL/KINDERGARTEN (3-6)

- How to present lessons the Montessori way
- How to organize a Montessori classroom
- Classroom management
- September start-up
- Parental involvement
- Special needs
- The absorbent mind
- Critical periods of development
- Grace and courtesy
- Dr. Montessori and the Montessori method

ELEMENTARY (6-12)

- Goals of the elementary program
- Elementary environmental design
- Teaching the Montessori way
- Keep it exciting and inspiring
- Program implementation
- Observation, recordkeeping
- Classroom management
- Starting elementary classes off right
- Sample forms
- Resources
- Dr. Montessori and the Montessori method

SPECIAL OFFER

PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER WITH OUR CLASSROOM GUIDES.

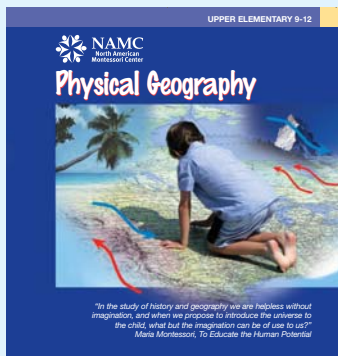
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UPPER ELEMENTARY (9-12)



THE WATER CYCLE, CLOUDS, AND RAINBOWS

Background Information

The ocean is one of the most important components of the atmosphere. The water cycle, clouds, and rainbows.

The water cycle

Most Montessori students will have been introduced to the water cycle through the basic concepts involved with the water cycle. The major processes of the water cycle being taught from the atmosphere to the earth's surface and back again. The upper elementary level students take a more global view, focusing more on the fact that moisture moves with the air in convection cells of various sizes from global cells such as the Hadley cell, to large weather systems, to local thunderstorms and rain.

While water is the focus of the water cycle, water is in fact a passenger hitching a ride on air currents of various sizes, in each case, however, the underlying process is the same.

- Moisture evaporates, rising from bodies of water and the ground in water vapor and plants transpire, releasing water vapor through the leaves in the leaves.
- Moisture is absorbed by the plants from the environment.

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ACTIVITY: Observing the Water Cycle on a Small Scale

Purpose: To observe the water cycle on a small scale in the classroom.

Material: The water cycle.

Devices prepared in advance with soil, seeds, plants, and light source. Before the activity, remove the water from the bowl inside the terrarium.

Photos of hot water that enough to steam.

Adhesive tape.

Large bag of ice cubes or large frozen ice pack.

Physical Geography journals and pencils.

Presentation:

- Montessori instructs presents the concept of water cycle.
- Appropriate that the students will have an opportunity to observe a water cycle inside a terrarium.

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF TERMS:

- Describe the water cycle.
- Describe the water cycle.

Resources

- Research cloud seeding. Then create a labeled poster illustrating how the method used in the past to seed clouds.
- Research in part of the world where precipitation is constant. Then write a report describing the kind of weather experienced there in recent seasons.

The curriculum for the first component of our newest diploma program, Upper Elementary (9-12), is currently available. We know you've been waiting patiently and we are proud to bring you the best Upper Elementary teaching resources available worldwide! The NAMC Upper Elementary curriculum is a natural progression from Lower Elementary (LE), advancing key concepts in all areas of the LE curriculum, and introducing new elements that spark the interest and imagination of the 9-12 Montessori student.

This program includes our trademark quality, full-color curriculum manuals, with CD support to complement the curriculum content. The first five manuals, World History, Physical Geography, Botany & Microscopic Study, Zoology and the Montessori 6-12 Classroom Guide have been released.

You will note the exceptional organization format (see above sample pages) of our new manuals with easy referencing, descriptive visual aids, and implementation guidelines. The manuals have been designed to be as

helpful as possible to Montessori teachers working with elementary students.

The manuals contain these main features:

Background Information: Provides basic information a teacher will need to review, research, and present the concepts involved at this point in the elementary curriculum.

Activities: Each activity outlines learning goals, material needed, presentation, and extensions. Although these activities are formatted as lesson plans, they are called activities to emphasize two important goals: Namely, the teacher will take on the role of someone who inspires and facilitates; and each student will engage actively in some way with the concept under study.

Did you Know?: Provides tidbits of information in textboxes that teachers can use to excite and inspire the student during the presentations and after with follow-up projects.

Illustrations: Drawings, photographs, charts and tables have been added to help the teachers and students envision the concepts under study.

Resources: Resource suggestions for websites, books and magazines are provided for more information on the topics and concepts under study. In addition, a main Resources section near the end of each manual lists print, web, and audio/video resources for teachers and students.

Glossary: Throughout the manual, words that appear in bold also appear in alphabetical order in a glossary located at the very end of the manual for easy referencing.

Whether you are interested in pursuing your 9-12 certification, or wish to supplement your classroom with three years of comprehensive curriculum in any of our subject areas, it will be our pleasure to assist you.



NAMC TEACHER TRAINING BLOG

[HTTP://MONTESSORITRAINING.BLOGSPOT.COM/](http://montessoritraining.blogspot.com/)

A blog is a frequent, chronological, online publication of philosophy, questions, and issues. The NAMC blog was created this spring to help school directors, students, and graduates read and take part in the latest discussions on Montessori philosophy, curriculum, classroom management, and classroom activities.



Our blogger, Michelle Irinyi, is a NAMC 3-6 graduate, as well as being 9-12 certified.

She's taught at the 9-12 level for the past three years, during which she's spent countless hours researching Montessori philosophy as well as curriculum. Michelle started her career as a public high school teacher in California and received her master's in Educational Administration. Later, she worked as an editor in educational publishing. When her son was seven, Michelle decided to go back into teaching. Unhappy with the situation in the regular system, she decided to pursue a program in Montessori education. She says she loved the NAMC program because it allowed her, then a single mom, to continue working while completing her studies. Michelle accepted a new teaching position in the lower elementary classroom this fall and is finding our NAMC LE curriculum manuals to be an excellent teaching resource. She's also very excited about the new 9-12 program being offered by NAMC and can hardly wait to see the new manuals!

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 13, 2007

Montessori Classroom – Creating a Peaceful Environment

In order to create a quiet classroom, the environment must first be established. This generally means a change in behavior in both the Montessori teacher and the student. To create this atmosphere, it is important that all adults in the Montessori classroom agree to react the same way and that once a change is made; it isn't changed again for quite some time.

Changes in the Environment: Proximity

There should never be a reason to call across the classroom. Children should be close enough to the adult who is speaking to them to be able to speak in a soft voice. When I need to speak to a child or my co-teacher, I make sure that I walk across the room to address them. If I hear a child calling out to me or shouting across the room, I will walk quietly over to that child and explain to her that I would like her to come to me instead of calling out to me. The next time the child calls out to me, I will ignore her until she remembers to come seek me. I then give descriptive praise (“I like the way you came to me when you had a question”) to reinforce the positive behavior.

This was a hard lesson for me to learn as a new Montessori teacher. It seemed so much easier to simply call out to a child. It takes effort to walk to each child individually in order to speak to them. However, after being observed by a mentor, I realized that I was the cause for some of the noise level in my own Montessori classroom. Once I made the decision to not call out, I noticed a big difference in the behavior of my children. Children are great imitators of the adults in their lives. If you are calm and using a quiet voice, the children will follow your lead.

The teachers approach is paramount. Chastising a child for being noisy is ineffective. Often children are noisy or call out because they have learned this is an effective way to gain attention. It is best to quietly approach the child and gently remind them that they are to use quiet, inside voices. Doing this is respectful and engages the child in the process.

When we're in circle and I'm waiting for the group to quiet down, I sit quietly and wait patiently for them to quiet down. Often, a child who is ready will whisper “Michelle has her waiting face on”. If it seems like I've waited longer than necessary, I will casually notice aloud how quickly some have gotten ready or simply state that I appreciate those who are sitting quietly, waiting. The key is never raising my voice. When I wish for the students to be quiet, I keep my voice calm and soft. Raising your own voice only ensures that the children's voices will rise as well. I also have known Montessori teachers who do not “ssshhhhh” their children as they feel this sound is harsh and only adds to the noise level in the classroom.

Creating a Peaceful Environment continued

When you need to get the attention of the whole class, find a quiet, unobtrusive way to signal for their attention. A peace bell, a chime, a Tibetan singing bowl, or a rainstick are quiet and peaceful sounds. I had a friend who chose to use a small gong, but soon found the sound quite harsh and irritating. Unfortunately, her children had grown to love it and she was forced to use it for the rest of the year!

It is important to remember that in a Montessori classroom, quiet and calm do not come from threats or promises of rewards. A peaceful classroom is the result of children engaged in their work. The Montessori teacher is the best model. If you want a quiet classroom, you must model being quiet yourself.

For more information on this topic and other related Montessori classroom management topics, consider purchasing NAMC's new Montessori Classroom Guide.

Some recent blog topics include:

- Montessori Philosophy – The First Plane of Development: Birth to Age 6
- Healthy Snacks in a Montessori Environment
- Montessori Philosophy – Modeling Good Nutrition
- Montessori Classroom – First Day of School
- Peace Education in the Montessori Classroom
- Montessori Classroom – Descriptive vs. Evaluative Praise

**AUGUST 14/07:
A POSTED COMMENT
BY LORI BOURNE,
OWNER AND BLOG
MODERATOR FOR
MONTESSORIFOREVERYONE.COM**

A Fantastic Blog About (what else?) Montessori!

I came across this blog a few months ago and I have been extremely impressed with the quality and depth of posts I've read there. It's called Montessori Teacher Training and is produced by the North American Montessori Center. Here's a little info from their website ...

The NAMC blog is filled with informative posts about the Montessori curriculum, planes of development, philosophy, and Montessori in the classroom and at home. Clearly, the writers at this blog love and understand Montessori.



NAMC Attends the AMS 2007 Annual Conference

MONTESSORI EDUCATION:
100 YEARS OF INNOVATION
AND INSPIRATION

We'd like to personally thank everyone who stopped by our booth in New York City in March. We received an overwhelming response to our new Lower Elementary resources. In fact, the booth was so busy, we didn't even have time to attend any of the presentations! We heard from you, though, that Dr. Maya Angelou's lecture, "Courage, the Most Important Virtue", was a highlight of the conference.

Congratulations to the winners of our AMS Conference drawing!

- Ubania Delgado of Miami, FL, was the winner of a set of NAMC Pre/KG training DVDs
- Leddy Naudain of Naudain Academy in Voorhees, NJ, was the winner of a full set of NAMC's Pre/KG manuals



Spotlight on NAMC alumni

"If we build our classrooms on simplicity, they are free to find our common soil. If we build our classrooms on patience, they are free to grow at their own pace. If we build our classrooms on compassion, they are free to wind together, climbing higher for the support we offer each other." Catherine McTamney, 2005

Prior to getting her 3-6 training through NAMC, Kerri Hofmann worked as a teacher for a few preschools and homeschools. While staying home with her young children, Kerri tried a few Montessori lessons with her own children and was impressed by how well they responded. When the time came for her to return to work, she decided to pursue her Montessori training through NAMC and eventually open her own school in Eastport, Long Island.

Kerri graduated with her 3-6 diploma in 2005. After 18 months of diligent planning, her school, Blossom Montessori, opened its doors in September. With a starting enrollment of 68 children, it looks like it was well worth the wait. There will be three classrooms with 12 classes. Kerri discovered that there are currently no all-day programs in her area, but is willing to expand to all day if there is a need. The pre-existing building in a nearby shopping center has more than adequate room to expand as it has the capacity to hold 240 occupants. Each classroom has bi-fold doors so all classrooms can be opened up to create an open area for large group presentations. What a unique and accessible location for a Montessori school – it demonstrates how occasionally terrific opportunities can be right around the corner.

Kerri has hired seven teachers and assistants, with two more assistant positions to be filled in the fall. All her teachers and assistants are trained; however, she is committed to utilizing NAMC's training programs to meet any future professional development needs. She purchased all of her materials and immensely enjoyed setting up her classrooms.

Though Kerri loves all the Montessori lessons and areas of study, she is most fond of the practical life activities. She enjoys watching and anticipating how the children will respond. They want to do what grown ups do and she loves to watch their faces light up when they can do grown-up activities.

When asked to describe the greatest benefits of her NAMC training, Kerri quickly responded that she's benefited in so many wonderful ways, personally and professionally. She feels she's become a better person and mother by learning the Montessori method and philosophy and how to openly communicate with children. She says that children are little people and that many adults don't realize how intelligent children really are. She says the program has truly been a godsend and tells everyone about the wonderful philosophy!

PEACE ACTIVITY

Peace education begins when nurturing adults model and guide children toward their inner peace and to learn to relate in peace and harmony with others. It is up to the adults to provide the tools necessary to learn these skills. One of these tools is providing the students with a peaceful space within the classroom where they can go to relax, regroup, or just experience a peaceful moment.

Judy Feeney's *Serenity Corner* is an example of such a space.

MATERIALS

- A quiet place away from classroom busyness
- Two small rugs
- A small table with a pretty tablecloth
- A beautiful object
- Quiet music



Serenity Corner

PURPOSE

- To create a space where children (and adults) can find peace.
- To emphasize that it's ok to take time out for one's own R & R.

Age: 3 years and older

THE SET-UP

In our school we have a separate, small multi-purpose room. In an alcove, between two cabinets, is the small table with the tablecloth and beautiful object. In front of it is a small rug. On one side is a screen to give the space a cozier appearance. The room is dim and quiet music is playing in the background. A small rug is placed by the door for shoes.

PRESENTATION

- Take the children to the quiet place. Take off your shoes, put them on the small rug by the door, and gracefully sit down on the small rug by the little table. (The shoes on the small rug indicate that the serenity corner is already occupied).
- Take a deep breath and relax.
- Look at, handle, and observe the beautiful object. Return it gently to the table.
- Take a deep breath and sit and enjoy.
- Take another deep breath and quietly get up, put your shoes on and leave the room.

EXTENSIONS

- Change the object on a regular basis.
- Sometimes, instead of a beautiful object, provide a small Zen garden, a finger labyrinth, or other quiet peaceful activities.