



The TMI Update

A Monthly Newsletter Written by the Toronto Montessori Institute

Dear Friends,

TMI enjoys developing and presenting interactive and informative workshops throughout the year. These workshops provide an excellent opportunity for teachers in the Montessori community to meet new people, reconnect with old friends and share stories and ideas from their own classrooms.

The feedback on our most recent Arithmetic Refresher course was positive, indicating that the topic gave a new appreciation of the Montessori principles as they are applied to the Ontario Curriculum. To further support our alumni we would like to share some of the significant learnings of the dynamic day.

The discovery that the experience of arithmetic through quantitative exploration can be found within the sensorial curriculum was very insightful for those in the Early Childhood Arithmetic Refresher Course. This reminder of the importance of the sensorial materials to foster the exploration of number sense and numeration, geometry and spatial sense and patterning left participants eager to represent these materials in novel ways.

The Elementary Arithmetic Refresher Course focused on the application of mathematical concepts through critical thinking and problem-solving. One of the key learning tools discussed was why language is so important in math. Writing is many things: it is thinking, problem-solving, predicting and reacting. Writing is also assessment as it allows the teacher to find out what the children still need to know. The value of writing in mathematics is similar to writing in any area. Children have to gather information, organize it and decide how to apply it. The child has to stop, think and plan.

How can language and writing become a regular part of the math experience for a child? **Journaling** is a tool that can be used by all age levels. Children can draw pictures or symbolize and then write simple sentences describing their diagrams. As their writing becomes more proficient, children can answer questions about problems they have solved "*I think the answer is ... I think this because...*" **Explaining an idea orally** provides an opportunity for children to talk about what they know i.e. "*Explain what $\frac{3}{4}$ means*". Through **Reflective Writing**, children can go beyond just thinking about logarithms. Teachers can learn about the child's perspective on a unit, how well they think they understand something or what they like or dislike about something in math. Children use their creative side to answer questions like, "If mathematics were an animal?" **Problem Solving** by its very nature involves writing but more often than not is limited. Children can be encouraged to write more than answers, to give written explanations of their reasoning or to write an explanation of why their chosen solution is correct.

We look forward to offering more valuable workshops and refresher courses based on the needs of the Montessori community in the near future.

Yours truly,
TMI Faculty and Staff

October 2009

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**Your feedback is greatly appreciated
(see next page)**

Visit our Web site for regularly updated job postings, as well as information about professional development workshops.

Please e-mail any questions or comments to tmi@torontomontessori.ca

Events at TMI



Elementary History Dioramas



An Early Childhood student teacher receives feedback on her Original Practical Life sock tie-dyeing exercise

Upcoming Professional Development

TMI is looking forward to continuing to offer this affordable service to the Montessori community by providing workshops and refresher courses that are useful in the professional development of teachers. One of the challenges TMI faces when planning for workshops during the year is determining whether there is interest in workshops introducing new perspectives, straight refreshers or both.

So that we may continue to offer workshops that are informative and interesting we would greatly appreciate your feedback on the type of workshops you would like to attend at TMI. Please take a moment to contact Trucilla Macedo tmi@torontomontessori.ca with your ideas to assist us in offering workshops and refresher courses geared to your needs. Thank you.

Community Events Board

CAMT presents: The Spirit of Montessori

November 6, 2009 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

The Old Mill
21 Old Mill Road, Toronto

Featuring keynote presentation by Catherine McTamaneý, author of *The Tao of Montessori*, a collection of reflections on compassionate teaching that quickly became a favourite of Montessorians after its publication in 2005.

Dr. McTamaneý addresses our own endless quests to connect with spiritual selves in order to better serve the children in our classrooms. This presentation offers a practical perspective on the struggles of remaining mindful and the essential work Montessori teachers do when they acknowledge their own spiritual needs.

Workshop Presentations by:

Catherine McTamaneý
Wendy Agnew
Sarah Enright
Nicole O'Rourke
Maureen Pesner

For more information, please contact CAMT at www.camt100.ca



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