



Hello from the Ladybug room!

September 5th marked the beginning of a new school year. We had only two returning students and we welcomed eight new ones. The first days of school went pretty smoothly. Children did not cry after parents left at drop off and seemed excited to be in school. "One test of the correctness of educational procedure is the happiness of the child" Maria Montessori said.

We had our first birthday celebration on September 13th. Jenah turned three. Thank you Leyla for coming in and sharing pictures of your daughter and for the yummy treats.

On September 14th we gathered at the beautiful Crown Park for our Ice Cream Social event. It was a lot of fun. The weather was nice and pleasant and B J the Clown with his many props and entertaining performance made us all laugh hard.

Children are still adjusting to their new environment. At this time in our classroom there is emphasis on rules. They are very important to be understood and applied in order to maintain a safe and kind environment. We show children what to do and say through Grace and Courtesy lessons. We gather a group of children and we model the wanted behavior. Then we ask for volunteers to demonstrate what we just did. Children are eager to participate. They love to play it out. Grace and Courtesy lessons are a respectful, loving, and empowering way for children to build their character, to learn how to behave and what to say in different situations, and to think for themselves. We want to help children become aware of how their actions affect others and the environment. Also we want to support children in making choices that are good for the whole community.

We teachers are loving and firm as we let kids know right away if their behavior is not acceptable. In this case we ask them to stop and choose differently. If they can't we observe the situation and decide if they need a break to sit in a quiet place for a few minutes, or to change the activity, or they might need to go outside to play. We are aware that when children misbehave they have a reason for that and we put the effort into finding out what it is, and support them in choosing a kind behavior.

In a Montessori classroom there is a lot of freedom within limits. Children can choose from the shelf any material that was introduced to them and work with it for as long as they want before they put it back; they can sit at a table or work on a rug; they can move around the classroom and observe other children work; they can work individually or in small groups, they can walk, run, or dance on The Line, etc. They have the choice to participate in group meetings and if they don't want to they can do something else as long as it's not disturbing the classroom. During group time we read a story from a picture book or recite a poem, sing songs, talk about the calendar, the actual season, play games, and present Grace and Courtesy lessons. The Line is tape on the floor in the shape of ellipse. It's a very important part of the classroom. It helps children develop their balance and body awareness, attention and self-control.

One of our roles as teachers is to match the child with the right activity, to help the child find something to do based on his/ her inner need, interest, energy level, skills, and readiness. Our goal is to support children to become independent, self- confident, caring and compassionate. Maria Montessori affirmed that the greatest sign of success for a teacher is to be able to say, “The children are now working as if I did not exist.”

All children love to do art: easel painting, drawing with colored pencils, crayons, and markers, water coloring, etc. Art activities enable them to express themselves, to develop their focus and concentration which is essential for their learning process, and to feel good.

Other activities that children have been doing:

Amelia is enjoying working with materials from Practical Life area: Spooning, Pouring Grains, Pouring Water, Washing a Table, Washing an Underlay, Mixing Colored Liquids- she creates new colors by mixing the primary colors red, yellow, and blue, Sink and Float – she is sorting objects based on their ability to float or sink in a bowl with water.

Carson likes to look through picture books, works with play dough, Hammering activity, matches picture cards with corresponding toy tools, builds using colored foam blocks, and works with Knob Cylinders Blocks from Sensorial Area – he matches them with their corresponding hole which helps him with his eye hand coordination, discrimination of size, focus and concentration, and prepares his hand for writing.

Hunter is interested in geography. He had lessons on Sandpaper Globe when he learned about land and water, Painted Globe – the concepts of ocean and continent were introduced, The Puzzle Map of the World – he matches all the pieces of the puzzle which are continents and learns their names in a Three Period Lesson. (Three new words are introduced per lesson.) We played the Sound Game and traced Sandpaper Letters which prepare him for writing and reading. He recently learned how to work with the Folding Cloths activity from Practical Life area.

Jenah loves to play with toy veggies, with stacking dinosaurs, to Sort Buttons by color and to build The Pink Tower. She recently had a lesson on Color Tablets Box #1 and #2 where she successfully matched all tablets and learned the name of color grey, the only one she could not identify! Jenah also worked with two Cylinder Blocks at the same time and was able to correctly match 20 cylinders to their vacant holes based on their height, width and diameter.

Luca learned how to sew buttons. He made a fabric bracelet for him and for one of his classmates. He also had lessons on The Binomial Cube – a puzzle with colored blocks from Sensorial Area that represents a math formula; Metal Insets – a material from Language Area that prepares the child for writing; The Geometry Cabinet -This material not only helps the child with visual discrimination of shape and learning new vocabulary (the names of the geometric shapes) it also prepares him for writing and geometry. He also enjoyed making orange juice by hand and sharing it with other children.

Mackenzie likes to cut paper which is a great activity for honing fine motor skills ,and for developing focus and concentration. She worked with Opening and Closing Containers, Pouring Grains, Pouring Water, Washing a Table, and Pink Tower.

Paige likes to play different musical instruments: the lap harp, toy xylophone, and small marimba. She has been working with Mixing Colored Liquids and Thermic Bottles – a material from Sensorial Area designed to develop the sense of touch: two sets of aluminum bottles, four bottles each, with water at different temperatures that are first paired and then graded according to their temperature.

Max loves to work with the Shells activity- matching the shells with the corresponding pictures and observing their details using magnifying lens. He likes to water plants in the garden, build structures using the foam blocks, and Legos, cutting paper, and Sweeping the Floor. He recently had lessons on The Red Rods (Unit of Measure) a visual material from Sensorial Area that introduces the child to the concept of length and The Color Tablets Box # 3 – a visual material that helps the child become aware of variation of color. The box contains 63 tablets for the 9 colors that come in 7 shades. The child grades the tablets for each color from the lightest to the darkest shade.

Zanea likes working with Clothes Pins and Color Wheel matching activity, Letter Puzzles, Tweezers, Tongs, Sorting Buttons, Pouring Water, Pouring Grains, Opening and Closing Containers, Stringing Beads – great activities for fine motor skills, focus and concentration. She enjoys singing and doing Yoga postures.

We want to maintain a safe, fun, and attractive environment to support your children so that they will have the best learning experience.

With all our love,

Ms. Monica and Ms. Sueann.