

Montessori Pathways Summer Camp news

July 25th-August 5th

Notes from Ms. Alena



We're eagerly continuing our final travels around the world biomes. After a second week in the **Arctic/Tundra**, we traveled into the largest biome—the **Oceans**.

Likewise, **we're spending a lot of time outside in the sun and in the water**, cooling off and getting a lot of vitamin D. The school gardens have been yielding a lot of delicious vegetables, which are appearing in our lunch and snack more and more! Some of the kids have even decided to pick a couple for a salad at home!

Other than the biome travels, our **field trips** have been keeping us quite busy.



Armaan's mom, Bhawna, visited us in a traditional Indian outfit. The kids were very excited to see their classmate so dressed up with his mom! It was interesting for everyone to learn a little bit more about **India and its traditions**. Thank you very much for visiting us!

We also took a *trip to the Downtown Crystal Lake Gazebo*, where we enjoyed some **live music and an outdoor picnic**. The band was inspired by our group

of "blue people," as they called us, and improvised a blues song about us! It was quite a hit among the kids and audience too.

Moved by the music, the kids ate a hearty helping of lunch, which always tastes better in a picnic setting! Then, we *visited the Metra station* in groups. The children discovered how rich the station actually is! Everyone quickly recognized a familiar morning smell coming from the café—coffee. The station library was also quite popular, as was the train map (reminiscent of last year's theme!)



Continued on the next page

The kids also enjoyed *walking around the Gazebo* itself, discovering how all the instruments are hooked up to the speakers and getting a “backstage” view. *The older children especially enjoyed taking charge and guiding their younger friends around the gazebo.*



Our school also had a special visitor, the **Aloha Dancer**. Some of our friends remembered her visit last year, which actually was her sister! This year, she came with a new program—***Drums of the World***.

Visiting different parts of the world, we learned how children start their day (by making music with the drums to signify their mood or using rain sticks to call for rain) and how each drum is made. Some of our older children were

already experts from a field trip earlier this year, when a visitor from Africa came to our school and showed us the different drums from there!

Children also had a chance to try out the different *drums* that our visitor had brought, as well as some *maracas* and *rain sticks*, making their own music, just like children around the world. We also learned about *the beginning of limbo* and gave the popular game a try—walking tummy first is harder than it looks, even for such young friends! As the field trip was wrapping up, our visitor asked for a recap of the different places we visited (Africa, Italy, South America, Hawaii, Spain, etc) and instruments (bongos, rain sticks, maracas) we’d seen—and the children did in fact name quite a lot!



As the camp comes to a close, we will have a special visit from a petting zoo.
On Thursday, August 18th, A Zoo To You will be visiting our school.

Children will have a chance to see different farm animals, pet them, and hear how people take care of them and how they differ from wild animals.

On the last day of camp, **August 19th**, we will have a **final art show** **4:00-6:00 p.m.**, displaying the themed projects your children worked on throughout the camp! You won’t want to miss this!

Warmly,
Ms. Alena

Continued on the next page

Notes from the morning class

Before starting our journey to the Arctic/Tundra biome, we enjoyed a quick trip to India compliments of Armaan and his mom, Bhawna. They came to school dressed in their beautiful, native Indian attire, which was handmade and very impressive! We located India on the continent map and discussed the long journey by plane when visiting this country. The children were thrilled to receive a special "goody" bag with an oil lantern craft, as well as other treats that were enjoyed and appreciated by everyone. Thank you for sharing part of your culture with our class.



On our visit to the **Arctic** (North Pole - where Santa lives!) and **Antarctica** (South Pole) we discovered that different species of animals live in each. The Arctic is made up of moving ice masses and we would find polar bears, caribou, arctic fox and wolves there. In contrast, Antarctica is a vast land mass which is home to penguin, seals and not much else. It is so cold and desolate that no humans live there on a regular basis.

Some of the children chose to make an Arctic/Antarctica hanging mobile as well as a cute polar bear craft, complete with white fur and buttons for their eyes and nose.

On Friday the 29th, the class made special "Arctic Ice" treats (snow cones) that had them grinding ice cubes (great gross motor activity!) and adding blue, raspberry flavor. You would have loved to see everyone comparing their blue tongues and lips—priceless. *Thank you to all the families who contributed items for this fun activity.*

In addition, we walked to downtown Crystal Lake's gazebo for music and picnic lunch which was a great way to wrap up the week.



August 1st brought us to the **Marine/Ocean biome** which is home to the richest and most diverse of species. We compared salt water to fresh water environments as well as the different inhabitants in each. There are no sharks in Crystal Lake much to the disappointment of many! We learned about *high tide vs. low tide* (more beach) and looked at amazing creatures that are living there although they're not necessarily animals, i.e. sea peaches, sea stars, sea urchins.

Continued on the next page

We learned to "**stencil**" (dabbing) which is different than "**painting**" (brushing) and created some lovely sea life posters. We also cut out fish shapes which will be painted and have personalized fins using the children's hands.



On Thursday and Friday mornings, outside, we started **tie dyeing our white t-shirts**. The children rinsed their shirts in water, which we then rubber banded and they chose their colors. It was also a great lesson in **color mixing**, for when two or three colors mix; you'll get a different color. Some children believe the more colors used, the better, but they all turned out unique and beautiful. Rinsing them off with the sprayer hose, after the colors set overnight, was like a fireworks show - each shirt was oohed and aaahed as we set them out to dry.

We continue to *work with Montessori classroom materials* and protocol, and as camp comes to a close, *your children have learned lessons that will benefit them in the upcoming school year*. I am sure many of our camp students will be great ambassadors to the new and returning children, for they have navigated and worked in our environment all summer.

It's hard to believe that we're in our last couple of weeks of camp - it has gone by so quickly! We're looking forward to some great times ahead.

Working with Montessori materials

Practical Life area



Dressing frames

(Fine motor skills, concentration, independence, caring for oneself, sense of order)



Helping prepare lunch

(Independence, sense of order, motor skills development)

Continued on the next page



Mirror washing

(Independence, gross and fine motor skills, sense of order, care of environment)



Cleaning after hand washing activity

Sensorimotor area



Metal insets

(Preparation for writing, tracing skills)



Bead Sorting with Pincers

(Sorting, fine motor skills, concentration)



Poking

(Fine motor skills, concentration, pencil grip development, preparation for writing)



Spooning (transferring)

Continued on the next page

Language area



*Building words that begin with the “b” sound
(Preparation for reading).*



Sandpaper letters (preparation for reading and writing, sound-letter association). Helping younger students is a popular way of refining one’s own skills— one of the benefits of a multi-age class.



Finding the missing sound (phonetic skills)



*Matching cards: Names of animals
(vocabulary development, reading skills)*

Math area



Tens Board

(Understanding the formation of two-digit numbers, association of quantity and symbol).

Continued on the next page



45 Layout
(Introduction to place value up to thousand)

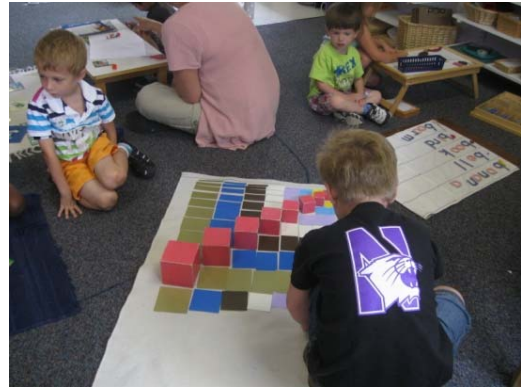


Table of Pythagoras and Extension with Pink Tower (Preparation for multiplication, visual discrimination of dimension)

Science area



Geography: Map of Africa



Seeing classroom materials "in-action": toad observation



Extension for Air, Land, and Water Activity: Types of Transportation
(categorizing, vocabulary development)

*Working with 3-part cards:
parts of horse and parts of frog
(Vocabulary development, preparation for reading,
learning parts of the animals)*



Art area



Most sincerely,

Ms. Christine, Ms. Katy, Ms. Masha & Ms. Alena

Notes from the afternoon class

Is it really August already? Time flies when you're having fun! We have enjoyed our camp time together learning about the Arctic and the Oceans. It has been quite a journey to explore the many amazing and different biomes there are here on planet Earth.

Outside water play time continues to be a highlight of our day. The pools have kept us nice and cool all summer long. The children played **water basketball** and organized some group games that were fun for everyone.



Continued on the next page



We continue to care for our gardens and enjoy nature's colorful background. The giant sunflower is our favorite! On warm afternoons it is always fun to build castles and tunnels in the sandbox and play **Neighborhood Sounds Bingo** in the gazebo.

Two weeks ago we discovered that the **Arctic/Tundra** is the coldest of all the biomes. Its climate is characterized by cold winters and cool summers. Precipitation mostly comes in the form of snow. High winds often stir up snow, creating the illusion of continuous snowfall. On our world biome map in the classroom, we also included the Alpine Tundra and the Antarctic region. There are, however, very specific differences in each area. For example, polar bears only live in the Arctic and penguins only live in Antarctica.



In Creative Art we used sponges to **paint the ice blocks on igloos** and added colorful streaks of light to look like the **Aurora Borealis** in the Alaskan sky. We folded and cut paper snowflakes and stenciled penguins in swirling twirling glittery snow.



Together we read *Mama Do You Love Me?* and learned about the unconditional love of a parent and some of the lesser known Arctic animals such as the lemming, the musk ox, and the puffin.

This week we dove into the **Oceans biome**. More than 3/4 of our world is covered with water, which is why from space it looks like the "Blue Planet". The world's largest ocean is the Pacific Ocean, covering about 30% of the Earth's surface. Our oceans are home to more life forms than all other biomes combined. It is a place of great mystery and wonder and the children have thoroughly enjoyed learning about it together.

Continued on the next page

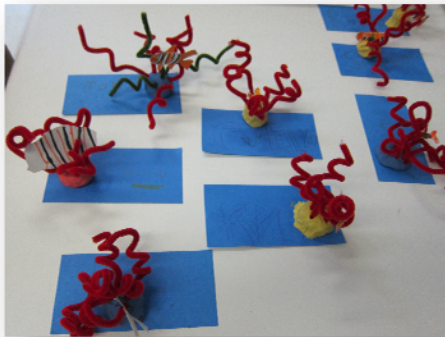
After reading *Mister Seahorse*, we learned that *stickleback fish fathers*, *pipe fish fathers*, and *tilapia fathers* all care for their eggs until they are hatched.

We painted **watercolor seahorses** and placed them in beds of vibrantly colored reeds.



We **sculpted sea anemone** with clay and pipe cleaners to create a home for our clown fish. Clownfish are the only fish that do not get stung by the tentacles of the sea anemone. A

slimy covering protects them while they eat the algae in the anemone.



We also created “**Under the Sea**” finger puppets, stenciled shark paintings, and textured swordfish pictures.

After a vote, the children decided to use blue yarn in the shape of waves to add the Oceans biome to our world map. It looks beautiful! Together we will be completing it and adding a key so it is ready to be displayed at the Art Show on August 19th.

Next week we will be continuing our look at the magnificent oceans. Bring your goggles! See you then!



Sincerely,

Ms. Becky and Ms. Masha