

Montessori Pathways Summer Camp news

June (weeks 1 & 2)



Notes from Ms. Alena

Welcome to our Summer Camp *“Adventures from the Equator to the Arctic. Discovering the Biomes of the World.”*



Let me introduce the teachers, who will be working during Summer Camp:

Ms. Christine (morning teacher), *Ms. Katy* (assistant teacher), *Ms. Donna* (assistant teacher), *Ms. Terri* (afternoon teacher for the first two weeks), *Ms. Becky* (afternoon teacher), *Ms. Masha* (assistant teacher), *Mr. Aaron* (assistant teacher), *Ms. Alena* (director and program coordinator).

Ms. Becky is new to our team this summer. Below is her introduction—we look forward to a great Summer Camp with her!

“Hello, I’m Becky Coduto. I have been a Montessori teacher for eleven years and am proud to be a part of Montessori Pathway’s Summer Camp. In addition to my AMS Montessori credential, I have a BA in Human Services from Judson University. I delight in watching students acquire confidence in themselves and independence in their thoughts and actions. In my spare time, I enjoy reading (Owl Moon is my favorite children’s book), running (I’m training for the Chicago Marathon), and spending time in my Crystal Lake home with my husband and 2 daughters (Riley Noel age 13 and Sophia Autumn age 6). I look forward to getting to know you and your children better. Thank you for the warm welcome into your Montessori family.”



Continued on the next page

At the beginning of camp, the students have created a world map, which will be divided into the different biome sections and labeled accordingly as the camp progresses.

We are taking a closer look at the biomes, noting their location in relation to the equator, the affect this has on the climate, and the subsequent variation of plant and animal life within. We are also taking the time to study the uniqueness of some plants and animals of each biome.

The first week began with **many new greetings of friends** who've just joined us: *Miles, Owen, Lincoln, Sonya, Armaan, and Logan*. The current students were very eager to introduce themselves and help their new friends adapt to our classroom and routine. Our new pals quickly became a part of our family, made friends, and began participating in the life of the class.



The children's favorite part of Summer Camp is definitely **water play**, when the weather permits it, as well as lunch in our gazebo. We hope to see warmer weather in the coming weeks!

The first week of camp concluded with a **practice field trip around our community**.

We discussed the field trip rules (holding your partner's hand, staying in line, listening to the teacher, walking on the sidewalk or grass, staying away from roads, etc), the importance of following them and practiced them as we headed to a small park at the end of our street. The kids were very organized and cooperative, careful when crossing the streets and proudly waved "hello" to the local cars that passed by.



Continued on the next page

When we finally arrived, everyone took a spot on the benches and enjoyed some ice cream sandwiches.

Afterwards, they created their own obstacle course with the nearby hill, running to get up and tumbling down.



At the end, we took a group picture and returned to our school. Although the walk was not an easy one (it was quite the distance for the little ones!), the kids were happy with the trip and very proud that they are ready for future walking trips.

We would also like to thank **Tammy Mair**, Treyson's mom, for coming in the second week of camp and making a special project with our Summer Camp students! Each child **decorated his or her own "I Love the Earth" tote bag** with fabric markers and stickers. At the end, everyone received a small souvenir to put in the new bag. It was very interesting to hear how the kids intend to use these bags—"to hold my teddy bear," "to take with me on vacation," or "to take to the store with mom!"



We invite and welcome all parents who would like to participate in the life of the class with a special project or interest. No need to be talented! Just bring your hobby with you!

Next week we await a meeting with *Tim Glander* and his *Magic Show!*

*Best regards,
Ms. Alena*

Continued on the next page

Notes from the morning class



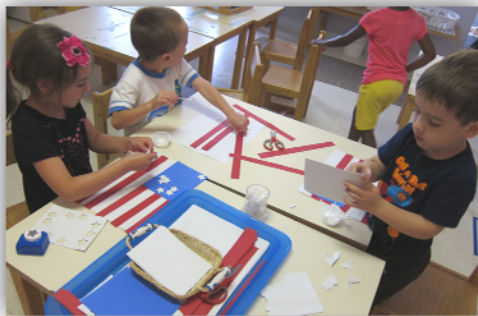
Welcome to our Summer Camp "Biome". A biome is defined as "A plant and animal community that covers a large geographical area. The boundaries are determined by climate".

Our class has established a wonderful working routine within our "biome" of friends, both returning students and new friends. The first few days were met with introductions and presentations and expectations of the classroom. We are excited to begin our journey into the "World's Major Communities" together.

Our first project was **to define the biomes** that we will cover this summer: **grasslands, rain forests, deserts, arctic, and marine.** We added "grass" to the grassland, ferns and leaves and vines to the rain forest, sand for the desert, shells and fish to marine and "snow" to the arctic biome chart. We discussed the differences in climates as well as the animal life that we would find in each region. We enjoyed matching animals to the biome in which they would typically inhabit.



Did you know that in North America grasslands are called "prairies," in South America they're called "pampas," in North Europe and Asia "steppes," and in Africa "savanna." Even though they are all grassland biomes, the animals and climate vary from each continent.



On Tuesday the 14th, we celebrated **Flag Day** by making our own American Flags and reading a factual story about honoring the flag. The flag should never touch the ground and has a special ritual when it needs to be disposed of. It has 13 stripes and 50 stars (which one child chose to number individually!). Although most of our flags don't follow protocol, remember it's the process, not the product, that's important!

We had a couple of rainy mornings that prohibited us from outside time but were a great learning opportunity to review our lesson. We noted the different kinds of grass that could be found in each region: brown, tall, short, green, (and the favorite of lawn doctors, crab grass!)

Continued on the next page

The children started making their own, individual **grassland picture** with their handprint sun, blue sky and animals that we would typically find in this grassland biome.



We also **learned about animals** that are *carnivores* (they eat other animals) and *herbivores* (they eat only plants). We categorized the grassland animals into their proper group and had a lively discussion about what animal would eat which (very funny conversation and great imaginations!)



Friday brought "**Slimy Friday**" where we concocted alien green, bubble gum pink and purple polymer slime. "E-e-e-w," "gross," "cool," it was so hilarious to hear the children's reaction to this science experiment. They were captivated yet repulsed by the goeey, wet but harmless substance. We saved it in bags for future rainy day fun!

Daily, we **continue to work with our Montessori materials** and presentations with lots of added **fun and outside play**. Your children are great helpers and leaders and we are encouraging them to be their best.



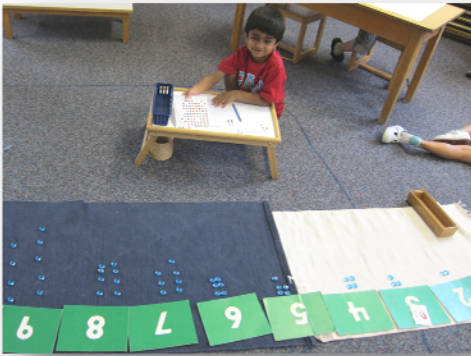
Practical Life: Spooning



Practical Life: Snack Preparation



Sensorimotor: Trinomial Cube



Math: Odd and Even Numbers



Math: Introduction to Fractions



Math: The Hundred Board



Geography: USA Map Puzzle



Language: Compound words

Continued on the next page

Please, remember to apply sunscreen and bug spray prior to school, as we typically try to go outdoors around 8:30am to start our day.

As always, we are open and available to discuss any concerns or questions, and thank you so much for giving your child the opportunity to attend camp!

Most sincerely,

Ms. Christine, Ms. Katy & Ms. Masha

Notes from the afternoon class

The afternoons of Summer Camp are off to a good start. Welcome all you new parents and children! Let me explain briefly what the afternoon class consists of.

After lunch, the children change into their swimming suits. Each child keeps all his clothing and shoes on a small blue towel. We put our water shoes on, put our beach towel around our neck and head out to the gazebo for fresh sun block before **swim time**.



During water play, we set up a small plastic pool with a slide, a “splashing” pool, several smaller “wading” or “resting” pools, water tables and different sprinklers that are changed each time. We hope that the kids will not only enjoy their time outside but also soak up vital vitamins from the sun to prepare for the next winter!

After outdoor play, we **water the plants and gardens** with the pool water after swim time and help keep our outdoor environment before we come in.

Next we change back into our clothes—boys and girls in separate rooms. As the nappers go off to the nap room, the non-nappers go to Ms. Terri’s room to work on our afternoon projects and to prepare snack.



Continued on the next page

On cooler days, we've been enjoying **playing in the sandbox**. Again, it is organized play time with special bins for each kind of sand toy (i.e. sand pails, shovels, molding toys). Each goes into an appropriate bin. Children take their shoes off on a mat before sand time and brush off their feet with special brushes after sand play before putting their shoes back on. The sand has been nice and cool in our toes. (It's also covered to keep out unwanted debris!)



This week we **made a world map** that is on display in the hallway. We traced around the continent maps and will be filling them in as we study the various biomes. We talked about grassland this week, so we cut grass to glue onto the appropriate area of 6 of the 7 continents. We have also been having fun **sorting animals into their biomes**.

We also started **making our own grassland** outside! We placed some grass seeds into soil in an empty sandbox and took turns watering it. Hopefully the grass will sprout soon and the children will be able to "inhabit" the grassland with different (toy) animals!



We read the book *Where the Buffalo Begin*, which is about an Indian legend told by a wise man named Nawa. It involved a little boy named Little Wolf and looking for Bison on the prairie. We drew a step by step **drawing of a Bison and teepees on the prairies** using ovals and triangles. The children's drawings are great! Some of the smaller children made pictures with prairie grass, prairie flowers or insects from the prairie.



The children take turns **preparing the afternoon snack**. We have lots of summer treats so far, including grapes, cantaloupe, bananas, water melon, apples sliced with crackers (i.e. animal crackers, triscuits, graham crackers, etc). We've also had special treats like Rice Krispies and Ice Cream Sandwiches and Popcorn.

Other activities include **making play dough**. We made two new colors this week: purple and green. Each day includes story time, rest time and silent reading, as well as individual and group work time.

Continued on the next page

At the end of each day was we prepare to go outside for dismissal. We first put our room back in order, returning all our work to the proper place. We also water the plants, feed the bird, stack the chairs and wipe off all the tables.

As you can see, your children are very involved and active in the afternoon. They are very capable and do a great job! They love to be “in-charge” of an area and love to show off how beautiful they helped make our room!

Sincerely,

Ms.Terri and Ms. Masha

