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# The Sandpaper Letter

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## Children fall into the Routine of the New School Year

### A Beautiful Lunch

First, it has been great to see so many healthy lunches come to school in lunchboxes filled with reusable containers and wrap a mat! Montessori promotes a Trashless lunch. The children are learning how to open containers and even asking other children for help before a teacher. They are able to put their own milk or water into their cup and use metal cutlery. After counting the number of children staying for lunch, the lunchtime helper sets the table with cloth napkins. We also have food compost and paper recycle box. More than 75% of the garbage we create each day is compostable or recyclable!

After lunch in the classroom, I help the children pack up "keep able" food that has not eaten so you can see what they didn't eat. But this gives you an idea of the right portion size for them. Sometimes they say "I don't like raisins and my mom gave me raisins". I'm sure you don't put food in your child's lunch that they don't care for but it's cute to hear them.



Shown in a "Bento" box but ideas for a creative, colorful lunch!

Here are "new" ideas that might help you change up lunch. They are from the most recent Stop & Shop mailer!

#### 1. Pack a rainbow

Color can be as stimulating for children's taste buds as it is for their eyes. Try shopping with a color list rather than a produce list. For example greens, purples and oranges are vibrant through kiwis, purple grapes and mangos.

#### 2. The lunch box as a Bento Box

Pack several small containers and fill each with different food. Put several

fresh options like baby carrots, cheese cubes, red pepper strips or long shelf life choices like dried fruit, canned pineapples or applesauce.

#### 3. Make lunch a theme

Put food in that relates to each other making a theme. Challenge your child to figure it out. A hardboiled egg, sausage, waffle with syrup and berries is breakfast. A bagel, blueberry yogurt, black beans and berries... "brought to you by the letter B. Try circle cut sandwiches, melon balls, grapes and pretzel spheres. Everything is a sphere.

#### 4. Dipping for Fun

Children love to use dips and sauces. Try carrots and humus, celery with ranch dressing, French toast sticks with syrup, chips with salsa.

#### 5. Make everything a finger food

How about quarter cut sandwiches, melon balls, grapes, cheese cubes, pineapple spears, crackers etc...

#### 6. Add one new food

When packing lunch add one thing your child hasn't tried before, or tried in a long time. If it's only one new food, they may try it.

## All About Circle Time

Circle time is important for young children. It is a time we gather as a whole community. Children are introduced to new concepts and work in a group setting while learning to listen, share, take turns, speak in a group, ask questions etc... At around 9:20 circle begins.

Children are called to gather by the gentle sound of a rain stick. We sing a hello and welcome song. Children are encouraged to sing like a chorus so one voice isn't heard alone.

The helper from the previous day picks a new child's name out of the bag. The helper points to the calendar days and leads our counting. In Sept. we used cardinal numbers. In Oct. we'll use Spanish; in Nov. Chinese. We also do ordinal counting. We recently added a "What's the Weather song" and we change the moon phase.

We go over three ground rules (read by our Kindergartener Ida) then the helper can share verbally-some story, event etc... Children raise hands and ask questions, learning patience and taking turns. We are encouraging who, what, where, why questions rather than yes or no. The helper then gets a mat for the lesson presentation. Sometimes new work is shown and we discuss curriculum through conversation, songs, books, lessons and things I show. Children learn to take turns in sharing.

The helper of the day also pumps and pours the water from the child sink into tubs for washing snack glasses. At the end of the morning they call each child's name one by one using the initial sound. Every child loves being helper!

## Literature Bags

As part of my Emergent Literacy course this semester, I am making a Literature bag. These bags are made

for a child to take home and share with their family. Each bag has a book and directions inside for activities children can do with the parents. I will create at least one activity for each of the three age groups (3, 4 & 5 year olds/reading and non reading child).

Each bag is based on a theme. I am making one that coincides some of our October curriculum and will be ready in a few weeks. We will get a copy of the other 20 students Literature bags so my plan is to create more over time. This is a great way to promote literacy in the home as well as connect the parents to the classroom curriculum.

## Up Coming Fall Activities

### Chinese Lessons

We will be offering Chinese this year. The ten week session begins on Monday, Oct. 5<sup>th</sup> and runs through Monday, Dec. 14<sup>th</sup>. Morning children can stay for lunch (11:50-12:20) for a nominal fee then participate in the lesson from 12:20-1:00. All children are welcome.

### Fall Field Trip

A Shartner's farm field trip is scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 13<sup>th</sup>. We will meet at school at 9:00am and carpool to the farm in Exeter. There will be a hayride ending with a stop at a pumpkin stand where children can bring a small one home. The tour will be educational and the children will learn about the growing of food and farm life. Please let me know if you would like to chaperone. Parents do not necessarily need to attend. Shartner's prefers 1:10 adult student ratio. I said we would have at least three for transporting the children. I could call to add a few more. Parents' cost is \$5.50/person. This trip will be too old for younger siblings.

### School Pictures

School pictures will be done by Acacia Graphics this year, Andy's

business. We are planning it for Thursday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>. The class photo will be shortly after 9:00 when the whole class will be there. Individual photos sessions will be done throughout the morning. Pictures will be available on line after the photo sheet and price sheets will be available then. Please let us know if you do not want your child's picture taken.

### Parent Resource Group Meeting

Our first meeting will be on Thursday, October 15<sup>th</sup> from 7:00-8:00. I will give a short presentation on a topic of the Montessori method and then we will discuss curriculum, events including community outreach. We will also choose one or two classroom liaisons who are "go betweens" for the parents and teachers. They help organize events and can bring feedback from parents. It's a time for parents to be part of what's going on in the program. All parents are encouraged to attend.

### Small Hands Fundraiser

The second part of the meeting will be the Small Hands Catalog Fundraiser. A Montessori company offers a resource catalog for families each fall. It is filled with hundreds of Montessori items and materials that can be used at home with your child and support the Montessori curriculum. They also offer high quality, award winning developmental and educational toys and games. I will have some of the materials in the catalog on display for you to see firsthand. I will hand the catalog out the week before.

This is a great opportunity to buy some high quality Montessori items for your child as well as holiday gifts for friends and relatives. The other wonderful things about this program are that Montessori of Greenwich Bay will receive 10%-15% of total sales as a credit toward their Main catalog. The past two years the sales

have been high enough so that there were no shipping charges which saves 15%. There is no tax as well. Please mark your calendars with this date!

**United Nations Day Celebration**

This Celebration is a tradition in a Montessori classroom. It's a celebration of diversity. We will have a multi-cultural lunch on Thursday, October 29<sup>th</sup> 11:50-12:40. Parents are asked to bring in a dish from their culture or heritage. The children will be decorating flags depicting things from their culture and are encouraged to wear "dress" or costume from their ancestors native countries I may have extra outfits so let me know if you are in need.

Since Halloween and commercial holidays are not celebrated in an authentic Montessori environment, this gives the children something to celebrate and a chance to dress up with their school friends. All children can participate and siblings are welcome.

**Fall Conferences**

These will be held on Wed. Nov. 18<sup>th</sup>. I'll have a sign up in the classroom. If at all possible, please try to come on this day as it is set aside specifically for conferences. There will be free child care from 9:00-2:00. If you aren't able to make the times listed, please let me know. Conferences are 20 minutes.

**October Curriculum**

October is a busy month as we welcome the change of season. Fall is integrated into the different areas of the classroom. If you plan to observe your child sometime in October, before the November Parent conference, you will notice this.

October Curriculum includes:

- Autumn/Seasons
- Apples- types, applesauce
- Squirrels (Lang. & Math work)

- Parts of a Leaf
- Leaves- identifying & matching
- Leaf man collage
- Pumpkin washing, carving, baking seeds, Math work
- Bats
- Spiders (arthropods & webs)
- Skeletal System
- Columbus Day
- Fire safety
- Moon Phases
- Flags for United Nations Day
- Address in the Universe
- Big Bang theory
- Asia Continent study

Science discrimination/classification work: Living/Non living.

**November Curriculum**

Themes this month will center on giving, sharing and manners. We will also read books and talk about feelings. In Sensorial we introduce the sense of smelling through the olfactory bottles and smelling discrimination work. We will also learn about:

- American Indians
- Quilt Making
- Sewing burlap
- Seed pods
- Hibernation
- Animals and their homes
- Mammals
- Coffee grinding
- Wash the gourd
- Community helpers
- Thanksgiving
- Feelings, Manners, Giving
- Cranberry bog

- Corn picking
- "Make" a blueberry pie
- Brushing tooth with large brush
- Spice discrimination through smell and pictures
- Types of squash/matching

Science discrimination/classification work: Land/Water/Air and Animals.

**Fall Calendar**

**October**

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu
5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>
12 <sup>th</sup> Colomb. Day- No School	13 <sup>th</sup> Shartner's Farm Field trip	14 <sup>th</sup>	15 <sup>th</sup> PRG Mgt. Small Hands Fundraiser
19 <sup>th</sup>	20 <sup>th</sup>	21 <sup>st</sup>	22 <sup>nd</sup> School Pictures
26 <sup>th</sup>	27 <sup>th</sup>	28 <sup>th</sup>	29 <sup>th</sup> United Nat. Day Celeb.

**November**

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>
9 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup> Veteran's Day- N/S	12 <sup>th</sup>	13 <sup>th</sup>
16 <sup>th</sup>	17 <sup>th</sup>	18 <sup>st</sup> Parent Conferences	19 <sup>th</sup>	20 <sup>th</sup>
23 <sup>rd</sup>	24 <sup>th</sup>	25 <sup>th</sup>	26 <sup>th</sup> Thanks Holid.	27 <sup>th</sup> giving Break

**REMINDER**

ALL OUTSTANDING PAPER WORK NEEDS TO BE SUBMITTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. I still have not received some sign contracts as well as important state required papers. Please bring it by the end of the week at the latest. Thank you!



**"Save the Earth" tip**  
Save electricity costs by keeping your fridge at 40 degrees and freezer 0-5 degrees. Any colder uses unneeded energy that you are paying for.