

## Articles in this issue:

### Page 1:

- **Montessori Lessons**

### Page 2:

- **Geometric Solids: A Reference Guide**

### Page 3:

- **Montessori Materials: The Bead Cabinet**

### Page 4:

- **Q & A: Gifts**

*Ingrid Weland*

*Editor*

*Subscription information  
or to submit an article  
contact Editor at:*

*pentopaper@cox.net*

*(402) 502-9118*

*This newsletter is a quarterly  
publication available during the  
school year. Subscribers may  
reprint the number of copies  
required for their school's use  
only.*

*© 2007, I. Weland*

## Montessori Lessons

When your child comes home and says they had a lesson at school do you ever wonder what kind of lesson? The Montessori Directress offers an environment that is prepared for the child. The Directress also prepares lessons. Lessons are based on Dr. Montessori's curriculum and the extensive training Montessori teachers go through. The curriculum is dynamic and is in an ever changing and growing state. The Directress may give a lesson one year and elaborate or change it slightly for the next year. This is especially true in the Cultural subject areas where new information is received. There are three formats:

1. **Class presentations:** meetings, games, music, movement, stories, and poetry
2. **Small group lessons:** small groups of children gather for a common lesson
3. **Individual lessons:** tutorial, remedial, and accelerated work

The classroom consists of several different areas: practical life, sensorial, language, mathematics, and cultural. Most practical life lessons are given individually. Examples of lessons include the bow tying frame, pouring, and bead stringing. Food preparation is often done in small groups.

The sensorial area of the classroom typically begins with individual lessons but children are able to work

in pairs for some of the work. A lesson on the cylinder block is typically individual but two children might mix the two sets of cylinder blocks as an extension of their initial lesson.

In a 3-6 year old classroom most, if not all of the language lessons are given individually – sound lessons, matching cards, and writing. Once the child advances to parts of speech work (typically at the end of the 3-6 program or at the elementary level) the parts of speech lessons become small group.

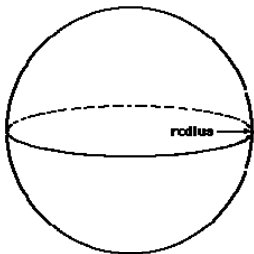
Depending on the training of the Directress, math lessons are given individually or in small groups. Some lessons, such as the golden bead addition (Bankers Game) requires several children to work together. The Directress observes each child's ability to handle the mathematic concept to determine their readiness to move on to the next skill.

Lastly, cultural lessons are typically given through class presentations such as dramatic storytelling, reading stories, and exposing the children to different cultures through song, dance, and pictures.

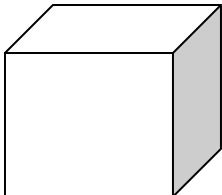
In a Montessori environment the Directress encourages the children to teach each other so all of the lessons are not coming from her. The Montessori environment offers a nice variety of lesson presentations to meet many different learning styles and needs.



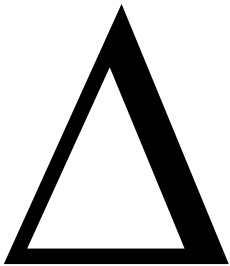
**A Handy Reference Guide to Geometric Solids:** (Solids are three dimensional)



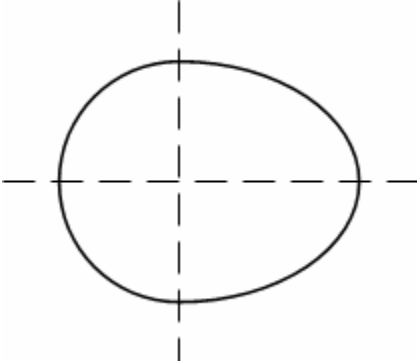
Sphere: Greek sphairo (ball)



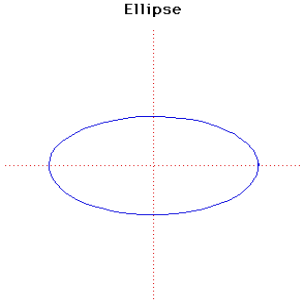
Cube: Latin cubus



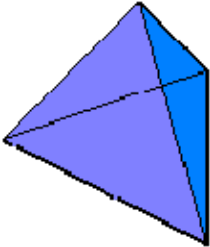
Pyramid: Egyptian pi-mar



Ovoid: Latin ovum (egg)



Ellipsoid: ellipse (circle with something missing)

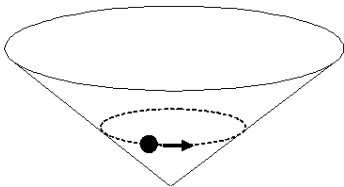


Triangular based prism:



Prism: Greek prisma  
(to saw or break into small pieces)

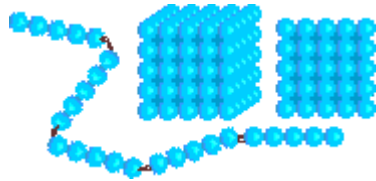
Rectangular based prism (square based if on end)



Cone: Latin conus



## The Montessori Bead Cabinet



### Bead Cabinet:

Below is a picture of a bead cabinet. The bead cabinet consists of two sets of chains for each number, 1 to 10 – the squaring chain (pictured above on the left) and the cubing chain. Also included are the squares of each number (pictured above on the far right) and the cubes of each number (pictured above in the middle). The bead cabinet materials shown above are for the number 5. Children are exposed to the bead cabinet in a sensorial way. That is, they handle the material and lay it out, but may not be ready to learn to count the beads. The child can practice counting from 1 to 1000 using the chains. After learning to count the beads on the chain, a child would learn to use the chain to skip count. So the five chain would be counted 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25. This helps prepare the child for multiplication. As the child becomes confident in counting the child adds small slips of paper that have the corresponding number written on them. The squaring chain is then used to show children how to make a square. As the child advances he is introduced to counting the cubing chains. The child can now count beads up to 1,000. The 10 cubed chain is quite lengthy and most children look forward to working with such a large piece of work!

The 1000 chain is also utilized for an impressionistic cultural lesson to show a visual representation of the history of time. For the year 2008 the children would be shown 2-1,000 chains and an eight bead bar. The child is shown a history of time and Common Era and Before Common Era.



## Questions from Montessori Parents



**Q:** With the upcoming holiday season, I would like to buy a gift for my child without spending a gross amount of money. What suggestions do you have and how many gifts should I get him?

**A:** Children do not require a lot of gifts to be happy and most young children are happy with quite simple gifts. When looking for age appropriate gifts, here are a few suggestions:

### Infant/toddler:

- **Books, books, books!** I can not stress enough how important books are to a young child! Buy books for your child knowing they may not last for years (infants can be particularly hard on books, even board books), but what a wonderful sense your child gets when they handle a book. For infants and toddlers books that have lots of repetition and pattern are recommended. After a few bedtime readings of the same book, your child may even 'read' with you!
- Another idea for this age group – **movement activities or toys**. Buy something that will keep your child physically moving during long winter months or rainy, indoor days. For infants and toddlers your gift may be a rocking horse or other animal that moves with the child. Remember to let your child play with the box, especially boxes big enough for them to crawl into – that may provide

many more hours of entertainment.

### Children's House (3-6 age):

- **Books** are another great gift for the 3-6 year old child. During your child's early years, foster a love of reading. Stay with repetitive and patterned books that have a clear rhythm. Choose stories that relate to their life (holidays you celebrate as a family, for example). Avoid scary stories for this age group as children have a difficult time keeping fantasy and reality apart.
- **Montessori materials**. Dozens of Montessori companies sell materials designed for home use. Wouldn't your child love to do banana slicing work at home? Some Montessori materials can be reproduced by shopping around. Look for objects (tools) that are child sized and made of good quality. Children can be extra hard on tools and they will want to use them often! How about a tool set to help Mom or Dad with chores around the house.
- **Puzzles** are a great choice. You can start with wooden puzzles for the young child. Some wood puzzles have a magnet and a fishing wand so the child can pick up the piece without touching the puzzle piece. As your child advances he or she can move on to puzzles that have smaller pieces and are more complex.





