

Montessori Moments Around the School

Friday, January 28, 2011 Today, I attended the funeral of a mountain that was "dead" (located in the front fenced area of the playground). You may have noticed the pile of sand outside Mr. Ben's room...well, the mountain has now been rebuilt and there will be some follow up work on my part to see what else is happening. Arissa approached me with two beads and said that they are the same...one was a unit bead from operations counting and the other was the one bead bar from the Snake Game. Let's not forget about the girls in Ms. Salima's room making I-phones, I-pads, cell phones...out of paper-using their recess time to do this!! See how it goes...I'll keep you posted. Have a great weekend! Kind Regards, Miss Debbie

Tuesday, January 25, 2011 Another Montessori Moment that has to be shared!! A five-year-old girl named Aspen came to me with an observation she made while eating her lunch. She walked into the office and had a Chex Mix piece of cracker and the four bead bar. She exclaimed "Miss Debbie...I made an observation and I wanted to show Ms Sabrina that this little thing was a four bar like I used in the Snake Game." In her hand was a cracker that had a total of four segments...it was also the same size as the four bar. This child could clearly see the mathematical relationship between the two objects...materialized abstraction at its best!! This represents the many ongoing moments that are so unique to the Montessori environment-it cannot be used for any data analysis, but can demonstrate how the environment inspires the child to see things in a much more detailed way and relate real world objects to the concrete materials.

Monday, January 24, 2011 A Montessori Moment! This was a sign posted on the art shelf that contains paints for children to work with at an easel. "Lulu's shelf is closed. You are only allowed to use colored pencils. It was too messy! Thank you!" (there is a picture of a girl holding a sign that says "sorry"). In a Montessori classroom children take responsibility for the room. The adult oversees and maintains the environment, but children also have opportunities to take care of the materials and layout of the shelves. This particular girl was looking after an area in the room that was not meeting her expectations so she shut it down! When I was reading the sign several children walked by and said "Oh, yes, Lulu had to close the paint area....boy was it messy!" She will decide when she feels that children are able to accept the responsibility of keeping the paint area clean. This is a very small example of what a Montessori classroom does for the child. Through responsibility and ownership of the environment, children gain independence. They are learning real-life lessons on the balance of freedom and responsibility! I asked Lulu when she thought the area might open up again and she responded "I don't know?" I asked her what will be her clues to see that children are ready to paint again... She said "maybe at the end of work time when the pencils are nice and tidy-like the lids on, that will show me that the children are ready. Sometimes kids get one work done and then go to paint and do it all day, but I think they need to do more work. I had to leave the pencils open because some kids are working on final drafts, so they need to colors for their pictures." I asked her "Is it a hard job to look after the shelf ?" She replied "Yes, every day I have to roll up the smocks the

right way, if there is paint on the floor I have to clean it up, and make sure it's not all messy and stuff." She will continue to monitor the area and will report back to me when the grand re-opening will take place!! Thanks Lulu for your care, Miss Debbie