

Curriculum News: Upper Elementary

Bre Cullen, Lead Teacher



Brigitte Daly, Teacher



What we did in December:

The first week of December flew by as we prepared for the Montessori Follies. We walked to the Christmas tree lot (off Route 25) with the proceeds benefitting Boy Scout Troop #12 and picked out the perfect fir tree. The class carried the tree back to school to string lights and hang their pinecone ornaments. We also made pinecone wreaths to hang throughout the classroom. We continued to practice, rehearse, and transform our room into a Harry Potter banquet hall. I was so proud of Upper-El's performance and hard work.

The big question in Upper El has been why we celebrate Christmas and how other countries celebrate Christmas. To answer these questions, we navigated our way into other countries' traditions and religions. The beauty of Montessori is that the students have the freedom to pursue their own interests. We traveled to India, Yugoslavia, Greenland, Scotland, Japan, Australia, Canada, Greece, and back to the United States.

The Students have been writing persuasive essays to share with the class. Jacob has been trying to persuade his peers to purchase a live tree for the Holidays. This topic was so hot that we formed a debate team to weigh the pros and cons of purchasing a live tree. Julia thinks that Santa should move to Ontario, while Skylar thinks Santa should set up his workshop in the South Sandwich Islands. Anthony believes that the Elves need a raise. We had so many interesting discussions following this assignment.

Our classroom has been filled with music as Ms. Shirley prepared students for yet another performance, "String and Sing." We took these songs and caroled to the residents at Heritage Retirement Home. We also distributed gift bags that the students had carefully put together.

Thank you Mrs. Akers and Mrs. Paoletta for organizing our Christmas party. I also want to thank all the parents who volunteered in December! I hope you had a wonderful Christmas break.

What we'll be doing next month:

For the month of January we will be learning about Ancient Greece. Students will also be learning about Greek mythology and the fascinating stories that have survived thousands of years. We will also be sharing a read-aloud after math in the mornings.

Students will continue to develop their individual math skills in the mornings while incorporating some of the Montessori materials. Students will also start to explore simple machines for our science fair that will take place in March.

We will be returning to the Museum of Science and Industry (date to be announced) to explore this topic and inspire students with their projects. Reading, writing and language will be in the afternoons. Students will continue to write and share in their composition books and we are excited to hear about everyone's winter break!

What you can do to support your child's learning:

Winter is the best time to star gaze, go for a walk (if not too cold) and learn about the constellations and stories associated with them. Start brain storming with your child about projects they may want to pursue for Science Fair.

This year we have our bi-annual drama. Many of the plays in the area do not coincide with the school schedule, but it is a great experience to see a performance and see how the performers re-enact on stage. If you can make it to a performance as a family, it would be a wonderful experience. Some of the professional theaters to check out in the area are Drury Lane, Paramount Theatre and the Hemmens Theatre.

On a personal note, I am anxious and excited about returning to the classroom and getting to know the familiar faces in the room and reconnecting with the students I have had in the past. I will be in the classroom each morning while Brigitte will teach in the afternoons. I am looking forward to a wonderful new year and wishing you the same!