



hoboken **montessori** school
inspiring lifelong learning

Pre-Primary 2020-2021
Distance Learning Program

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Our deepest gratitude goes to the
Montessori School of Tokyo
for their creation of this Montessori school resource.
It was an invaluable template for ours.

Learning from A Montessori Perspective

When embarking on a period of learning from home, our aim is to create a Montessori-based framework that serves our students while supporting parents as we all adapt to a different daily routine. It is important to us that our children's activity during this time is enjoyable, thoughtful, challenging and rewarding.

Our goal is to work in collaboration with families to keep alive the culture of learning that is unique to Montessori and to provide families with support and activities that match the developmental needs and characteristics of each child in our community.

How do we establish this at home?

The Montessori method is all about the process. While completion of work is important, it is our approach to it that makes all the difference. Learning is most effective when it is within a greater context. When we connect subjects and concepts we establish meaning, which fuels motivation in students. Above all, we want children to feel connected to their learning, not to simply "complete assignments" while at home.

Learning, together with a sense of exploration, curiosity and discovery, results in deeper and more meaningful experiences for children. This instills a great sense of ownership and responsibility in the child.

The guidelines in this Handbook outline how Hoboken Montessori School's faculty, administration, and staff will support our families throughout this period of upheaval. It is important to us that we maintain our connectedness with our parents and families throughout. We will be in regular contact in a variety of ways and promise to maintain continual communication between teachers and families throughout this period.



Pre-Primary Program Expectations



Students may be expected to:

- Enjoy family life with developmentally appropriate contributions.

Parents are invited to:

- Establish daily routines and expectations
- Remain mindful and respectful about the growing self-esteem and sense of independence that your child is developing
- Help your child with the hardest part of a task (not the whole task)
- Initiate verbal communication frequently, ask questions, and share observations.
- Be consistent; follow routines and provide clear sequences for each activity
- Include your child in household chores
- Support your child's independence in daily life activities
- Be mindful of and allow your child to continue periods of concentration
- If possible, provide opportunities for outdoor activities (gross motor skill development)
- Let go of perfection. What you are experiencing now is not the final goal
- Enjoy and appreciate time with your child
- Communicate with teachers using their work email about questions, ideas, concerns, or feedback that you may have about your child's distance learning experience
- Try your best in adhering to the Distance Learning schedule and join the live sessions to help your child become comfortable

The Pre-Primary Teachers will:

- Give guidance in setting up a daily routine.
- Use Zoom and Seesaw to provide lessons
- Welcome children (accompanied if needed by a parent or caregiver) to live daily circle, small group lesson, and enrichment classes via Zoom. We plan to meet as both a large group, and small groups, to maintain our community by sharing songs, activities, games, lessons and conversation together.
- Share Menu Boards with suggestions for daily activities and materials geared specifically toward our students
- Provide regular videos of Pre-Primary teachers reading popular books from our classroom and performing our students' favorite songs and fingerplays
- Adapt and change our approach as necessary to meet the changing needs of our students, parents and school community

Pre-Primary Distance Learning Overview

At HMS we pride ourselves in the close connection we have with our students and their families. Our teachers and administrative teams are here to help in any way we can.

HMS recognizes the important role our Montessori manipulatives play in the growth and development of our students. To support this, the 20-21 Distance Learning Program will include some tangible teacher-made materials for our Pre-Primary students.

We will continue to prepare weekly activities and supplies that will support the child's distance learning education. These will include, but are not limited to, printable material to support the didactic, hands on, authentic materials in the classroom, printable materials that are needed for weekly lessons, and materials needed to create our themed art projects and science experiments. We understand it may be difficult to have the supplies necessary to complete some of the art and science experiments and we are here to help ease the transition to distance learning.

Supplies and Materials

Technology

- ❖ Seesaw, Zoom and YouTube

Age Appropriate Tactile Books, Workbooks and/or Worksheets

Montessori Manipulatives

- ❖ Art Supplies, Science Supplies and Printable and/or tangible Math, Language and Practical Life Supplies

20-21 Distance Learning Schedules

There will be differentiation between our Five Day, Three Day, Two Day Students as well as Half Day and Full Day schedules for the 20-21 Pre-Primary Distance Learning program. Each student will have live sessions on the days in which they are enrolled. *For example, a Five Day, Half Day student would follow the Half Day schedule Mon-Fri, and a Two Day, Full Day student would follow the Full Day schedule on Tuesdays and Thursdays only.*

Our Full Day Pre-Primary students will receive:

- Daily Live Morning Circle
- Daily Live Small Group Lessons
- Weekly enrichment sessions for Music, Art, Spanish, Movement and Food Prep
- Weekly Live Afternoon Story Time
- Weekly Live Afternoon Experiment
- Two Weekly Live One-on-One Sessions
- Monthly Menu Board and Companion Activities to support the child's Montessori education through freedom of choice
- Comprehensive workbooks and/or worksheets to support our curricular lessons
- Assignments which can be checked by the teachers using the Seesaw platform to encourage accountability
- Pre-recorded videos for lessons and activities on our HMS YouTube Channel
- Art Supplies, Science Supplies and Printable and/or tangible Math, Language and Practical Life Supplies

Our Half Day Pre-Primary students will receive:

- Daily Live Morning Circle
- Daily Live Small Group Lessons
- Weekly enrichment sessions for Music, Art, Spanish, Movement and Food Prep
- One Weekly Live One-on-One Session
- Monthly Menu Board and Companion Activities to support the child's Montessori education through freedom of choice
- Comprehensive workbooks and/or worksheets to support our curricular lessons
- Assignments which can be checked by the teachers using the Seesaw platform to encourage accountability
- Pre-recorded videos for lessons and activities on our HMS YouTube Channel
- Art Supplies, Science Supplies and Printable and/or tangible Math, Language and Practical Life Supplies

Activities for Pre-Primary at Home

Practical Life

The home environment is ideal for Toddler Practical Life activities. Some goals of the Practical Life curriculum include developing the ability to care for oneself and one's environment, learning skills that promote independence, encouraging courtesy, respect and good manners, promoting concentration, manual dexterity and patience, and learning to follow a sequence of steps.

At home, the most important guiding principle is to as much as possible involve your child in the daily life of the household. Rather than directing your child toward toys or screens while you do housework, discover the joy of sharing those tasks with them! Toddlers are natural helpers who derive enormous pride from learning to care for their homes and families.

Food Preparation

- Preparing their own snack: cutting half of an apple (cut horizontally) using an apple slicer, squeezing orange juice, spreading cream cheese or jam on half of a bagel or bread.
- Slicing vegetables and fruit for snack and dinner.
- Pouring their own drink.
- Cleaning up after themselves.

Care of Self

- Dressing and undressing: give your child enough time to practice dressing and undressing by themselves.
- Toileting: It is important to continue with the toilet learning process.

Care of Environment

- Mopping, sweeping, or use of a dustpan and dust brush.
- Helping with laundry.
- Watering plants and leaf washing.
- Window washing, dusting, and wood polishing of large furniture in the home.
- Taking care of pets.
- Loading and unloading dishwasher, dishwashing by hand.

These links provide some wonderful ideas of age-appropriate ways to support your child's Practical Life skills while away from school:

<https://www.themontessorinotebook.com/montessori-activities/>

<https://www.themontessorinotebook.com/age-appropriate-chores-for-children/>

<https://www.howwemontessori.com/how-we-montessori/2017/02/ideas-for-independent-baking.html>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4UyzIs0Xs0U>

Art

Art is a vital component of the Montessori curriculum and a subject area that lends itself beautifully to exploration in the home environment. In making a space for art in your home, consider setting aside a shelf or two for creative materials that your child can use independently. Young children value the process of artistic creation at least as much as the finished product and enjoy the sensory experience of feeling the materials in their hands. For this reason, Montessori art activities are mostly open-ended so that the children can explore them in whatever ways they find meaningful. Remember to avoid criticizing or over-praising their work, which teaches them to value your judgment over their own. Instead, ask encouraging questions such as, "You worked so hard to make that blue shape! What does it look like to you?"

Art activities for Toddlers can include coloring, painting, collage and playing with play doh. Here are some inspiring ideas to help your children continue creative explorations at home:

<https://www.howwemontessori.com/how-we-montessori/2016/09/montessori-toddler-art-activities-tips-and-ideas.html>

<https://www.trilliummontessori.org/montessori-art-trays-for-toddlers/>

<https://eatingrichly.com/shaving-cream-paint-toddlers/>

Gross Motor Skills

Freeze Dance: A perennial Toddler favorite, and as easy as it sounds! Just play some music and dance your heart out. When the music stops, freeze! Repeat, and have fun!

Indoor Ice Skating: If you have wood floors, grab some paper plates (one for each foot). Begin with some music... classical is a great choice! Put one plate under each foot and begin to glide across the wood floor. If you're feeling brave, try a spin or a twirl!

Go on a Bear Hunt: Our students love the book "We're Going on a Bear Hunt." This fabulous book can be easily made into a fun gross motor event at home. You can try setting up an obstacle course throughout your home to simulate each obstacle from the book (grass, mud, river, forest, cave, under the bed covers). If you don't have the book at home, try it with this song: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5_ShP3fiEhU

Balance an Egg (or something similar): Have your Toddler walk around your home holding a spoon in front of them with one or two hands. On the spoon have them balance something, like a small beanbag, a ping pong ball, or (if you are feeling fairly brave) maybe even an egg!

Yoga: Yoga is a great way for your child to increase their strength, flexibility, body awareness, balance and coordination. This website has a list of 58 Yoga poses to try together at home: <https://www.kidsyogastories.com/kids-yoga-poses/>

Walking on the Line: You can make a line on the floor using electrical tape or you can use natural lines found throughout your home, like the outline of a rug, or the line that a shadow makes. Have your child practice walking without stepping off the line. This activity will help your child learn to control their movements and better regulate themselves.

Dance, Dance, Dance: Below are some of our favorite songs to dance to at school:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=64g11MkZavY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vPrmY7labLA>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uCF3vBuxXS8>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4_DfK-ZauQ

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gg068NAnJww>

For more ideas, Pinterest and Montessori blogs provide many wonderful activities. A favorite blog is **Teaching Two and Three Year Old's**, which has some great activities for not only gross motor movement, but for art and sensory exploration as well!

<https://teaching2and3yearolds.com/category/toddlers/>

Language

"I Spy": Begin by saying "I Spy, with my little eye, something that ____"

- is red!
- is tall!
- Rhymes with "hat".
- Begins with the sound "sss"

Initial Sound Games: In a very pronounced way, notice all the things in your environment that begin with the same phonetic sound, for example: "t..t..table! t..t..toy! t..t..teeth!" This often works best if you are the one naming everything in an easygoing, playful way. Simply allowing them to hear your observations increases phonetic awareness. They'll join in if/when they feel ready!

Rhyming Games: Try to think of all the words (real or made up) that rhyme with a given word. (Ex. cat, mat hat, sat, pat, wat, zat!). Come up with silly rhymes for their names, family members, characters from TV shows, etc. (Ex. Daniel, Baniel!)

Three Period Lessons: This is a way of presenting new information to your child, basically in three parts. Choose three objects, such as an apple, banana and orange. The first period is to name the objects, for example: say "apple" and then feel the object, looking at all of the details and offer your child to take a look. Keep saying just "apple" rather than talking about it, then name the other objects in the same way. The second period is to play games, by asking questions such as, "Can you show me the apple?", "Can you put the apple on your head?", or

“Let’s find the picture that matches the apple.”. The third period, generally for children over 3 years old, is “What is this?”. If the child says the apple is the orange, point to the orange and say, “This is the orange, what is this called?” by pointing back to the apple. Then you can teach it again at a later, neutral, moment.

"Bring Me": For this game, ask them to bring you a collection of objects from a specific category. The category can be anything of interest to your child, such as a color, shape, or number of objects. For example: “Can you bring me as many blue things as you can find?” or “Can you bring me something shaped like a circle? Great! Now can you find something shaped like a square?” There can be a designated area for them to collect their items (this is also wonderful for multitasking parents or a game that siblings can work on together!)

Read Some Books: Read at bedtime, mealtimes, or whenever you find yourself trying to think of an activity to do together. Leave a basket or a pile of books that they have access to around the house - even in each room. This allows them to explore their pre-reading skills even if you aren't available to read to them.

Have a Chat: Remember that at this age, sharing conversations with your child is the single most important language “work” you can provide for them. Language acquisition and vocabulary expansion are the most important skills to build with your toddler; doing so will also enrich your bond with your child. Share your observations, talk about your feelings, ask them about their drawings, look up fun facts about dinosaurs and talk about which one is your favorite. The more you converse and use real, rich vocabulary and speech patterns, the more you are allowing their amazing brains to soak up language like a sponge.

Read Together: Let your child choose the books, talk about how the characters might be feeling and wonder together what will happen next. Reading with your child teaches more than literacy and language skills. Your child is also learning that you value their interests and choices and that you love them and enjoy being close to them. Studies show that lifelong readers are those who, as children, simply found reading a pleasurable experience.

Narrate what you do as you go through your daily routines: This helps your child connect words with objects and actions. “I’m washing the dishes. I’m squeezing the yellow dish soap into the warm water.”

Sing songs and do finger-plays.

Math

To support the math skills of Pre-Primary aged children, we recommend an easygoing and low-pressure approach that incorporates discussion of numerals and quantities into everyday conversations and interactions with your child. Pointing out numerals as you come across them in daily life (on street signs, at the grocery store, in recipes and in books, for example) can be exciting for a child who has begun to be aware of numbers 0 through 9 and beyond.

- To reinforce an understanding of quantity, we encourage you to count with your child in a playful way throughout your time together. For example, “How many pieces of broccoli are left on your plate?”, “Let’s count the buttons on your shirt!”, or “Let’s see how many blocks you can stack before your tower falls over!”
- Have conversations about more and less, tall and short, big and small... again naturally as opportunities arise. For instance, you might help them sort their vehicles into two piles and point out that there are more cars than trains or notice that a tree is taller than a building.

The goal is not to quiz your child or focus on memorization, but to help them feel that math provides an interesting and useful way to understand the world around them. Songs like “Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed”, “Five Little Ducks” and “Five Green and Speckled Frogs” are always a delightful way to connect math and music for Toddlers.

When and how can I reach my child’s teacher?

Email remains the best way to contact a teacher. If you wish to speak to a teacher, please send your question/concern to dl@hobokenmontessori.com. It will be directed to the appropriate teaching staff who are not reading emails during their work time with students. Please do not engage in any conversation with a teacher regarding your child’s progress during the group Zoom sessions.

*“We discovered that education is not something which the **TEACHER** does, but that it is a natural process which develops spontaneously in the **HUMAN** being.”*

Dr. Maria Montessori



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