



*AMC Montessori Fall 2009
Hands-On Creative Lesson
Planning Newsletter*

The AMC Montessori Newsletter

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Heidi Anne Spietz, Editor

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<http://www.amonco.org>

The AMC resource participants have generously shared hands-on activities that you will want to use in coming months. You'll be impressed with the ingenuity and creativity expressed in the recipes and crafts they have chosen to share with you. Use their ideas to foster interest in science, social studies, art, mathematics, and other academic hands-on learning activities. Integrate the recipes and crafts into your multicultural lesson planning as well.

Hopefully, you will let the participants know how much you have enjoyed their recipe(s) and craft(s). Visit the websites listed throughout the newsletter. You'll find additional helpful lesson information at these sites.

American Montessori Consulting is not responsible for any of the crafts or recipes posted here. All of the crafts and recipes are copyrighted and are the property of the participating AMC resource organizations listed in this newsletter. For questions concerning their individual copyrighted material, you need to visit the website listed in association with the craft(s) and recipe(s) that interest you and obtain the telephone number and/or e-mail address of the contact person(s).

If you would like friends on special listservs to know of this newsletter, please request that they download the newsletter directly from

http://www.amonco.org/montessori_fall_handson.html

Use special precautions when involving children in any craft or recipe where there is a potential for harm. Some children have special food allergies and/or other medical conditions like diabetes. Small children need supervision. Scissors, hot glue, hot stoves and ovens, and other elements in making some of these recipes and crafts need to be considered. Please consider carefully the age and maturity level of the child before allowing him or her to participate.

Be sure to visit each resource participant's site to see the marvelous selection of educational offerings you can use in your school and home classrooms. You'll also find creative, unique educational gift items that are sure to be enjoyed by the special young people in your life.

The following creative ideas are from the AMC Montessori Resource Center <http://www.amonco.org/directory.html> participants. Visit their websites for additional innovative ways to reach your students throughout the school year.



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Birdcage Press

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Combine Learning and Fun at Art Museums

by Wenda Brewster O'Reilly, Ph.D.

Are you looking for ways to make your next art museum visit fun and educational? Here are games you and your children can play. Each game gives kids a purpose for looking more closely at paintings and sculptures. The games can be adapted for family or school visits to art museums.

Treasure Hunt

Before your visit, collect pictures of art in the museum's collection. Most museum websites have images of their collection you can print, or you can visit the museum gift shop and buy postcards before your visit. Have each child select a few pictures then start the treasure hunt. If the museum is a big one, you'll need to select works of art in a particular section or plan your route to fit what each child is hunting for. Once you are in the right set of rooms, start the hunt. Children get excited when they find "their" painting or sculpture.

Once they've found their treasure. Ask them if the picture is a good representation of the work of art. Are the colors the same as in the painting? Does the picture show the whole work of art or just a detail? What do they like best about the work of art?

Art Collector

In this game, everyone picks a favorite painting in each room they visit. Then they select their top ten to include in a collection of their favorites. Each child can make their own list or kids can buddy up and two children can decide on a list together.

If you are taking a younger child to the museum, you can be your child's secretary, writing down the ones they pick as their favorites. You can also ask them why they like each one and write down their answers. The game – and museum visit – is over when each child has collected a certain number of favorites.

At the end of your visit, you can go to the gift shop to find postcards of any favorites to take home as a keepsake.

I Spy an Eye

Nothing is as fascinating as eyes. They can say so many different things. Even very young children are captivated by a person's eyes. Make a game of finding the paintings with the best eyes and hunt for as many different kinds of eyes as you can find.

When children select a painting, ask them what the eyes tell them about the person. Or notice how many brush strokes it took to paint the eye.

Children will have fun scanning the art in a room to find the one with eyes that intrigue them. Answering questions about what the eyes say creates a reason to stop and look more deeply at the painting.

Scavenger Hunt

Give each child a list of things to find in paintings then choose a museum room, or set of rooms, in which to play the game. The child who finds the most things on the list wins. Another winner is the one who finds the most things in a single painting. If you are playing the game with several children, make a rule that no one leaves a given room until everyone is ready to move on.

Here is list of things they might look for:

baby
basket
bird
boat
bowl of fruit
bug
child

claws
earrings
fancy headdress
fire
flowers in a vase
furry animal
glasses
horse
house
jug
lion
man's hat
monster
moon
musical instrument
mustache
pictures within a picture
rope
sea
skull
snake
something bright red
something gold
stripes
sun
sword
wings
woman's hat

You can vary the list to fit the museum you are visiting. To get ideas, see a sample of the museum's collection on their website. This will also give you a better idea of what you want to see. Perhaps your children would like to help make up the list before their visit.

A few more tips...

1. Plan a short visit.

Set a time limit and let children know what it is...or break the visit up into manageable time chunks: "We'll visit the museum for half an hour then have a

picnic lunch in the courtyard.”

2. Don't look at every painting.

You and your children will be exhausted within half an hour if you try to look at every painting in a room. Instead, pick a few favorites and look at them more closely. Playing a museum game helps you to hunt for your favorites and then spend time with them. The games work for adults as well as children!

3. Play art games at home.

Play art games at home or in school before visiting an art museum. This will help children associate art and museums with having fun, and they will become better observers of art.

Look for a game that involves memory and observation, but which is not just a disguised test. Kids hate games where the person who knows the most always wins. They love games in which they can beat adults or older children by using their great memories and some luck.

For example, play “**Go Fish**” for art or play “**Concentration**” with three art games from Birdcage Books. Each game has won a Parents' Choice Gold Medal:

The Renaissance Art Game

The Impressionist Art Game

Van Gogh & Friends Art Game

Or spot the difference between real art and forgeries with Art Fraud Detective, by Anna Nilsen.

4. Above all, have fun.

Art museums can open up worlds of interest in different cultures, the way people lived in past eras, and different ideas of beauty. The best way to ensure that your children will continue to visit museums as they grow into adults is to make their early visits fun.

BIO

Wenda Brewster O'Reilly and her school-age children designed The Renaissance Art Game, The Impressionist Art Game and Van Gogh & Friends Art Game. They began designing art games to make their own museum visits more fun. Each game comes with an art book filled with fun and fascinating facts about the artists.

Wenda O'Reilly wrote the books and her children and two friends edited them. The young editors made sure every paragraph was interesting for children. Dr. O'Reilly holds a masters degree in education from Harvard University and a doctorate Stanford University School of Education.
See these pages:



About Birdcage Books

For stories about Renaissance artists, go to this link and click on any of the SAMPLES listed in the left nav bar. For each sample, choose READ THE TEXT:
http://www.birdcagepress.com/lc_artists.html

For stories about Impressionist artists:
http://www.birdcagepress.com/lc_artists.html

For stories about Van Gogh, Gauguin, Cezanne and their friends:
http://www.birdcagepress.com/lc_artists.html

Each game includes museum-quality playing cards and a companion art book. Children play "Go Fish," to collect all the works of art by each artist. As they play, they learn to recognize different styles of art. The 80-page, full color art book presents fascinating facts about each artist and painting in the game. It also teaches history through the lives of the artists. Fun and educational for all ages. Find a special
Visit us at <http://www.birdcagepress.com>



Lab Essentials

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Website: <http://www.labessentials.com>

Ever Been On a Microscope Safari?

There are very few hobbies where your initial start-up costs are nearly your only costs. But with your purchase of a microscope, some slides and reasonably priced accessories, you are ready to begin your adventure. Too many, though, after viewing a few prepared slides and common specimens around the house, allow the novelty to wear off and push their microscope aside for other interests. If only they knew what awaited them with just a little bit of imagination. Let's take a look at going hunting for "small" game.

Look to the water's edge of any pond. There you will find a tangled mat of hair-like green filaments. Your first thoughts: slime-repulsive-yucky. Perhaps, but what you see is really a beautiful and most clean plant. Take a wide-mouthed bottle, and, after loosening a small piece, float the mass along with some pond water into your bottle. Do not lift the mass from the water, for you will lose a good portion of your specimens-- they will simply slip back into the water. Now, using a dropper, place a drop or two onto a well slide. A well slide has an indentation in the middle for specimens such as this. It allows you to see the specimen and to view it in its natural setting. A standard slide would allow the water to run off, and if you place a cover slip over it, you could damage the delicate specimens.

Here's the fun part! Starting at lower magnification, you will be amazed at the variety of different creatures you will see. You may find large numbers of the same kind of specimens or hardly any two alike. Our suggestion is to visit your local library and check out a good book on plant and animal life. Not only will this identify your specimens, but you will also learn the scientific name for each. Many do not have common names, only their scientific names, and each species has been carefully named. Isn't it best to learn the correct name? Using the scientific name is a mark of efficiency and an orderly mind. Make and keep a log of your discoveries for future reference.

Literally hours can be spent studying the life that teems in pond water. But don't stop there. Sample water from other locations: a stream or lake, the ocean, wherever you find natural bodies of water. Pond life may provide the most abundant life forms, but other locations will offer you diverse specimens to locate and identify.

Don't limit yourself to just the study of water borne specimens. Take the time to study various insects. You will be amazed by the delicate parts of an insect's wing or leg. An everyday leaf, pine stem or seed pod offers marvelous opportunities. Nature has provided you an endless supply of possibilities.



About Lab Essentials

Lab Essentials, Inc. is a supplier of quality educational, laboratory, medical and clinical products. A representative shared the following:

"Our customers include public and private schools, homeschoolers, local, state and federal governmental agencies, universities, hospitals, medical clinics and research facilities. You will find a **complete line** of educational, laboratory and inspection microscopes, as well as accessories and video imaging devices by visiting, <http://www.LabEssentials.com> , as well as helpful information in choosing the right instrument for your application and comprehensive instruction on the proper use of your microscope. Our Explorer, Observer, Achiever and Revelation Series microscopes are offered with a one year warranty on the electronics and a lifetime warranty against manufacturer's defects. Lab Essentials, Inc. pays freight via UPS Ground on all orders over \$50.00 to the continental USA. Visit <http://www.LabEssentials.com> today!



Garden Artisans

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Website: <http://www.gardenartisans.us>

Recipe Submitted by Janet

Nectar Recipe for Hummingbirds

Hummingbirds feed on flower nectar and insects. To make your own nectar, the correct solution that resembles plant nectar should be:

1 part sugar

4 parts water

Boil the water first, then add the sugar. The boiling water will ensure your nectar stays fresh longer and retards fermentations. Add the sugar to the water after it has boiled. Don't boil the sugar and water together. Doing so will cause some of the water to evaporate and will create nectar that is too concentrated. If the nectar is too sweet it can damage a bird's liver.

DO NOT USE:

1. Red food coloring or dye
2. Artificial sweeteners which have no nutritional value
3. Honey which ferments quickly and causes a deadly fungus

Place your feeder in the shade and keep out of direct sun and wind. Be sure to clean your feeder regularly and replace the solution every week. Clean your feeder with hot water or a 10% bleach solution. Rinse thoroughly and allow to dry completely before refilling. Change your solution every two to three days when the weather is hot or consistently over 60 degrees.

While at the site, be sure to read [September 2003 - Remembering the Wildlife in our Fall Cleanup](#), [October 2003 - Planting Bulbs for Spring and Summer Color](#) and [November 2003 - Collecting Seeds - Great Fall Fun!](#)

Visit <http://www.gardenartisans.us/index.asp?PageAction=Custom&ID=28> to view the fabulous collection of Archived Newsletters.

- January 2004 - House Plant Survival
- February 2004 - Plant Dormancy - a brief respite
- March 2004 - Bird Psychology
- April 2004 - The Hummers are Coming!
- June 2004 - Companion Planting
- July 2004 - Perennial Geraniums
- January 2003 - Planning an Outdoor Wedding
- February 2003 - February Cleanup - Pruning Tips
- April 2003 - Shade Gardening
- May 2003 - Creating Walls of Color and Ceilings of Scent for your Outside Rooms
- June 2003 - Daylilies - A Wonderful Addition to any Garden!
- August 2003 - Creating the Desired Mood for your Outdoor Rooms
- September 2003 - **Remembering the Wildlife in our Fall Cleanup**
- October 2003 - **Planting Bulbs for Spring and Summer Color**
- November 2003 - **Collecting Seeds - Great Fall Fun!**
- January 2002 - Planning an Herb Garden
- February 2002 - Create a Spectacular Floral Display
- March 2002 - Germinating Seeds & Seedling Care
- April 2002 - Butterfly Gardening
- June 2002 - What Mulch Can Do For You!
- July 2002 - Stressors that Affect our Plants
- September 2002 - Harvesting Herbs
- October 2002 - Attracting Birds to your Winter Garden
- November 2002 - Dwarf Conifers & Ornamental Grasses
- January 2001 - Vines
- February 2001 - Plants that Attract Birds
- March 2001 - Designing Your Outdoor Room
- April 2001 - Aurinia saxatilis - Basket of Gold
- May 2001 - Landscaping for Conservation
- June 2001 - Xeriscaping
- July 2001 - Monarda didyma - Bee Balm
- August 2001 - Landscape Lighting
- September 2001 - Collecting Seeds - Fun for the Whole Family
- October 2001 - Quiet Places - Listing of Bulbs for all Seasons
- November 2001 - A Winter Gem - Heaths and Heathers

December 2001 - Drip Irrigation



About Garden Artisans

We all know the quality time we spend with our children is important. Whether it is learning about plants that attract birds and butterflies to your garden or spending time together with an arts and crafts project, children will always benefit from the time we spend with them.

Garden Artisans offers many helpful tips on how to bring nature's bountiful learning experiences to your own backyard:

Visit <http://www.gardenartisans.com/kids.html> **Kid's Arts and Crafts** This section has fun and easy projects parents and children can do together: weave your own basket, build a birdhouse, paint your own apron or create your own puppets.

Garden Artisans - Come Visit! <http://www.gardenartisans.us>
He who plants a garden finds happiness - Chinese proverb



**Read the other parts of this creative hands-on lesson
planning newsletter by visiting**

http://www.amonco.org/montessori_fall_handson.html

End of Part 9



