



*AMC Montessori Summer 2012
Hands-On Creative Lesson
Planning Newsletter*

The AMC Montessori Newsletter

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Heidi Anne Spietz, Editor

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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_summer_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 right now 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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Article by Heidi Anne Spietz

Up, Up and Away - The Art and Fun of Kite Flying

Each season offers its own unique footprint, and summer is no exception. Spring awakens us to new beginnings with birds busily building their nests. We have the expectation that soon a beautiful flower garden will emerge, as seeds planted in late winter and early spring bud, then bloom, and flood our olfactory senses with a potpourri of delicious aromas.

Then, in mid-June, the air changes. It's a subtle change to be sure, but a definite reminder that the 'dogs days of summer' <http://www.wilstar.com/dogdays.htm> are just around the corner.

On a slightly warm, balmy, beautiful day in Southern California it's difficult to resist the temptation to venture outside and take a break from all of the stress of working, driving and 'just living' in Southern California. Many Southern Californians spend the weekend near or around Seal Beach, California. This town is known for its historic, quaint downtown shopping area that is just a hop, skip, jump or short bike ride away from the beach.

During the summer months, the beach usually provides the cool refuge needed to escape the unbearable heat. At Seal Beach, an eclectic mix of 'locals' with tourists, provides entertainment for those who wish to rest awhile on benches sprinkled along the sidewalks..

If you are ever fortunate enough to visit downtown Seal Beach, be sure to leisurely walk down Main Street and the neighboring boulevards. Spend some time popping in and out of antique shops and art galleries. Of course, you must stop at one of the inviting eateries and treat yourself to a light meal, smoothie, frozen yogurt or ice cream cone.

Then, take a stroll down to the beach and walk on the pier, where on some beautiful sunny Sunday afternoons, you can see the magnificent backdrop of the sunlight cascading on the sailboats in the foreground. In a matter of seconds, though, your eyes become fixed on the colorful array of beautifully designed kites, each providing its own special 'dance' for viewers to enjoy. The kites seem to beckon you to come and join in the fun. And, of course, you can't resist....

If you are lucky enough to be near the pier the second Sunday of each month, you will likely see a bevy of kite flyers from the The Up, Up & Away Kite Club participating in an informal gathering. However, before actually attending the club meeting, I decided to spend a beautiful, summery Saturday morning doing some research on kite flying.

I first visited the Up! Up! and Away Kites! Shop conveniently located on Main Street in downtown Seal Beach. Shop representative, Tara Baptist, was scheduled to give demonstrations near the Seal Beach pier, so I was fortunate enough not only to be able to visit the shop but see a demonstration as well.

Tara, who has also experienced the thrill of paragliding and hangliding and is interested in becoming more involved in kitesurfing, quickly provided me with an overview of kites and their many uses. Watching Tara quickly send her kite airborne made me reflect back to when I was a child and experienced the fun of flying kites with family and friends.

People enjoy flying kites because many are easy to fly, pretty to look at and provide inexpensive entertainment. Tara pointed out that here in Southern California, Seal Beach and Huntington Beach are the perfect kite flying spots because of the wind conditions. Ideally, the wind speed should be around 10 mph.

Do you remember the paper kites that many of us made and used when we were children? Well, advances in science, for the most part, have changed all of that. Today's kites are often made of durable nylon and kevlar materials, although many who are making homemade kites are using other materials as well. Tara informed me that the types of kites purchased are really just a reflection of the needs of the patron. At the Up! Up! and Away Kites Shop, you and your family will find a wide selection of kites for every flyer level. The names or terminology of the kind of type used is directly correlated to what the kite can actually do. Naturally, the more sophisticated the kite, the more you will pay.

Prices, for the most part, can range anywhere from \$20.00 to \$400.00.

After the demonstration, Tara and I walked a short distance back to the Up! Up! and Away Kites Shop where Tara provided me with a tour of the current inventory, (easily over 1,000 items), and I was able to learn more about the higher end models as well. Tara steered me to her computer, and used the web browser to bring up the Prism Kites <http://www.prismkites.com> website. At the site, readers can learn more about stunt kites, power kites and single line kites. Although the site is primarily for retailers, novices will glean a lot of information as well.

If you are fortunate enough to be in Seal Beach this summer, stop by the Up! Up! and Away Kite Shop located at 1399 1/2 Main Street, Seal Beach, CA 90720 - (562)596-7661 and talk with Tara and the other representatives. Tara's outgoing personality is such a plus, but what you will truly appreciate is her knowledge about the science of kite flying. She will take the time to fully answer your questions so that you can make informed purchasing decisions for you and your family members.

Perhaps you just skimmed this article and have already checked out the recommended kite flying links mentioned a bit later here. Are you still not convinced that kite flying is something you wish to invest your time and money? Maybe you aren't quite ready to get your feet wet, or just want to first vicariously experience the thrill of kite flying by watching others. The key phrase here is *just relax!*

Spend part of your day at a kite club meeting. Some clubs may require you to preregister or impose some other prerequisite. The Up Up & Away Kite Club does neither. See <http://www.kiteclub.org/index2.htm> for meeting dates. On the day you visit, you will be greeted by a group of people who are warm and personable. President Janis Sabic and husband Jay Sabic are very conversational and make every newbie feel very welcome.

Although many of the kite flyers I spoke with mentioned that they always purchase their kites, some are inspired to make their own. Steve Bird, whose beautiful homemade red cody box kite steadily glided through the air during most of our conversation, became interested in kite flying about three years ago. He attended the 2006 Seal Beach Annual Kite Festival and decided that this would be a hobby worth *doing*.

Steve told me that people interested in making their own kites could easily do so by obtaining free plans via the Internet. By performing a simple Google search using key phrase *kite making*, you can quickly locate basic information to help you get started.

Interestingly enough, many kites are made from ripstop nylon, which, according to Steve, can be found at any fabric store for about \$4.99 to \$6.99 a yard. (You'll need about 1 1/2 yards to make the kite.) Other materials are also easily accessible and affordable. Steve mentioned that nylon cording can be purchased at any hardware store and snap swivels are readily available at fishing supply shops.

Steve suggests that beginners start by using the delta kites. He feels that many beginning kite flyers can become discouraged if they use the diamond kites, as these kites often end up in trees or power lines. The delta model, on the other hand, is shaped so that the beginner can actually enjoy the experience of keeping the kite airborne.

Educate yourself about kites before making any investments. Steve suggests that consumers also use the Internet to find out more about online kite stores and explore eBay for comparison shopping.

Learning about kites and kite construction can make for some interesting integrated math, sewing, art and climatology lesson plans. Take some time to explore the following sites for more information about this interesting topic. Who knows? Summer 2012 may be the perfect time for you and your family to discover this enjoyable new hobby.

Kite Resources on the Web

<http://www.kiteclub.org/index2.htm>

Up, Up & Away Kite Club

(Information about The Seal Beach Japan America Kite Festival, September 16, 2007, can be found there as well.)

<http://members.tripod.com/~TKOGunn1/kiteclubs.htm>

Kite Clubs Throughout the World

<http://sewing.about.com/cs/kitemaking/index.htm>

Brooxes Basic Box Kite

<http://www.blueskylark.org/zoo/terminol.html>

Kite Safety

<http://www.grc.nasa.gov/WWW/K-12/airplane/kitesafe.html>

More Hands On Fun

Classified Seashell Activity

There is so much to see on Main Street in Seal Beach, CA. Housed just a few doors down from Up, Up and Away Kites! is the California Seashell Company. Here you can purchase an assortment of seashells for your special Montessori seashell classified reading activity. The two of you will enjoy browsing through the large inventory of shells and eventually selecting the seashells that will be used for this Montessori exercise.

Find out more about classified reading activities by reading **Montessori at Home: A Complete Guide to Teaching Your Preschooler at Home Using the Montessori Method** and **Modern Montessori at Home: A Creative Teaching Guide for Parents of Children Six through Nine Years of Age**.

<http://www.amonco.org>

If you can't make it out to Southern California this summer, you can still order many products online by visiting the company's website

<http://www.caseashells.com>

For additional FREE seashell classification exercises please visit the following websites:

Seashell Classification Material

<http://www.amonco.org/montessorispring1998.html>

Clipartguide.com

http://www.clipartguide.com/_search_terms/pd_seashell.html

AllAbout Seashells (You may have to copy and paste this link.)

http://www.all-about-seashells.com/article/index.php?_cmd=view&q=sea+shell+name

Seashell Identification in Alphabetical Order
http://www.seashell-collector.com/beginners/family_id.htm

Seashell Crafts
<http://hubpages.com/hub/Crafts-With-Seashells>

I am a Seashell - A Poem A Day
<http://witsblog.org/2008/04/17/i-am-a-seashell/>

Make Your Own Reading Books - Part I
http://www.amonco.org/fall_sup1.html

Make Your Own Reading Books - Part II
http://www.amonco.org/fall_sup2.html



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

Music Project Submitted by Lisa

MAKE A BAND!

You can make your own set of band instruments with items from around house. Coffee cans can become drums and yogurt containers with beans wonderful shakers. Follow the instructions below and with a little help from an adult, you can have a band in minutes.

COFFEE CAN DRUM

Materials: Coffee can or other large can, rubber bands, duct or masking tape, white glue, heavy plastic or cotton cloth one or two inches wider the can.

1. Remove both ends of the can. Check the ends of the can for rough. Cover with tape if necessary.
2. Stretch the cotton cloth or heavy plastic across an end of the can and secure with rubber bands.
3. Secure the edge of the material with plastic or duct tape.
4. To get the best sound from a material top, paint the material with a layer or two of white glue. Allow glue to dry thoroughly between coats.

YOGURT CONTAINER SHAKERS

Materials: Yogurt containers of any size with lids, rice or beans and glue.

1. Wash and dry the yogurt containers.
2. Fill the container one-third full of rice and beans. Snap the cover on and shake. Adjust the amount of filler until you find a sound that you like.

Materials: Ten to twelve keys of various sizes, fishing line or other sturdy thread, coat hanger, masking tape and scissors.

1. Cut an eight inch piece of thread for each key.
2. Knot one piece of thread through the key ring hole at the top of each key.
3. Tie the other end of the thread around the bottom of the coat hanger. Hang keys about one inch apart.
4. Cut a piece of masking tape the length of the bottom of the coat hanger. Secure tape over the knots of all keys. Play by running your fingers across the keys so they gently bump into each other.



About Kidsongs.com

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

Introduce your little ones to the wonderful world of Kidsongs sing-along and DVDs and let the fun begin! Your kids will be singing and dancing along all the classic children's favorites like, "She'll be Comin Round the Mountain", "This Old Man", "Skip to my Lou" and "If You're Happy and You Know Each entertaining and educational music video episode has at least 10 songs featuring live action performances by the Kidsongs Kids and is produced Grammy, Emmy and Parent's Choice Award winning producers.

Visit <http://www.kidsongs.com> today to experience this treasury of music join in the sing-along fun the whole family will enjoy!



Borenson and Associates

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Math Activities Contributed by Dr. Borenson

Activity #1

As people pass by outside your home, you ask them what day of the week they were born on. (Assume each person knows this information.) What is the minimum number of people you must stop to ask this question before you can be absolutely sure that at least three of them were born on the same day of the week?

[No advanced mathematics needed to solve this problem. But it does require thinking. It is suggested you actually experiment with this by actually asking people or listing to a set of imaginary responses to see

what the tabulation looks like. Some people answer three people, others say an infinite number. Both of these answers are incorrect.

Activity #2

1. What is the value of “x” that will make both sides of this equation equal:
 $2(2x+5) + 3 = 2x + 23$

In other words, what is the number which when doubled and 5 is added to the result is again doubled, then 3 is added to that total, will result in twice original number, increased by 23?

2. What is Mario’s age now, if 8 years from now he will be three times as she was two years ago?

Activity #3

1. What is the value of “x” that will make both sides of this equation equal:
 $2(2x + 5) = 2x + 16$

In other words, what is the number which when doubled and increased by 5, and the result is again doubled, will result in twice the original number, increased by 16?

2. The sum of three consecutive even numbers is 2 less than four times the smallest of these numbers. Find all three numbers.



About Hands-On Equations®

To provide your child, grade 3-8, with an interesting hands-on mathematical learning experience with basic algebraic concepts (which would make it easier for him/her to solve the above problems), look into HANDS-ON EQUATIONS® developed by Dr. Henry Borenson at the [!http://www.Borenson.com](http://www.Borenson.com) website.

The Hands-On Equations Verbal Problems Book containing more than 250 number, age, coin and distance problems is now available!



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Activities Submitted by NAMC

Mother's Day in the Montessori Classroom

<http://montessoritraining.blogspot.com/2008/05/mothers-day-2008.html>

Friendship Flower Activity

http://www.amonco.org/friendship_flower.pdf

Rhythm Sticks in the Classroom

Making rhythm sticks with your children and creating your own 'dragon boat team' can be a fun way to learn about the history of this worldwide event.

The History of the Dragon Boat Festival

The Dragon Boat Festival is a traditional event that takes place all over the world. It is typically held in late May to mid-June each year, and honors the Chinese patriot-poet, Qu Yuan, who lived over 2,300 years ago.

Legend has it that Qu Yuan was a poet and statesman who saw corruption in the government and pushed for reforms. His advice was unheeded by the King, who banished Qu Yuan from the state as a result. In exile, Qu Yuan expressed his love and concern for his country through poetry and eventually, perhaps out of despair, threw himself in the Mei Lo River. The fishers on the river were unable to save Qu Yuan, and so paddled and splashed, and threw tsung-tze (rice dumplings) into the water to draw the fish away from Qu Yuan.

Since that time, Dragon Boat races are held to commemorate Qu Yuan. The boats themselves have a dragon head at the front, which is meant to frighten evil spirits.

Each Dragon Boat also has a drummer that sits at the front and beats the heart of the dragon, leading the paddlers in unison to victory.

Create your own rhythm sticks and practice beating the heart of the dragon together!

Making Rhythm Sticks



Purpose

To discover, make, and play rhythm sticks; to practice motor skills, listening, and keeping a beat.

Material

Pre-made pair of rhythm sticks.

Sets of wooden chopsticks (dowels may also be used for heavier rhythm sticks).

Paints and brushes.

Music journals and pencils.

Presentation

- Most Montessori teachers introduce this concept in Year 1. This activity may be done in parts over several days.
- Announce to the students that they are going to have an opportunity to create a

percussion instrument.

- Show students a pre-made pair of rhythm sticks and demonstrate how to play a few different rhythms with them. Explain that rhythm sticks are used to keep a beat.
- Invite the students to examine the rhythm sticks then demonstrate how to make rhythm sticks by carefully separating a pair of new wooden chopsticks. With paint and brushes, make a simple, yet vivid design down the length of the sticks. Say that you will need to allow the paint to dry before playing the rhythm sticks.
- Distribute the wooden chopsticks (or dowels, if using instead of chopsticks).
- Invite the students to make their own rhythm sticks by painting designs on the chopsticks.
- Allow time for the paint to dry.
- After the paint has dried, invite the students to take turns leading everyone in tapping out different rhythms on the rhythm sticks.
- Choose a place in the classroom for storing the rhythm sticks for another time.

Extensions

- Tap the beat to recorded music from cultures around the world.
- Invite students to choose a familiar song to sing while keeping the beat with the rhythm sticks.

Recipe Submitted by Dale

FRIENDSHIP SALAD

Materials

- A cutting board (for each child in the group).
- A knife (for each child in the group).
- Large container to hold the whole pieces of fruit.
- Large bowl in which the cut pieces of fruit will be placed.

INGREDIENTS

Different types of fruit such as: apples, pears, peaches, grapes, bananas, melons, strawberries, kiwi, mango, oranges, etc.

Note: It is recommended that you use a lemon juice or freshly squeezed lemon prevent the fruit from browning.

2. Instruct the children to place the piece of fruit that they brought in the

- bowl on the table designed for preparing the friendship salad.
3. Remind the children to wash their hands before beginning.
 4. To begin making the Friendship Salad, invite a child to choose a piece of fruit from the bowl that he wishes to prepare.
 5. If the fruit requires washing, instruct the child in the proper method of washing a piece of fruit.
 6. If the fruit requires peeling, invite the child to peel it, placing the peel in the designated garbage can or compost.
 7. Next, place the fruit on a cutting board and carefully cut it into bite-sized pieces.
 8. Place the bite-sized pieces in the large bowl designated for holding the fruit.
 9. Remind each child that when he has finished cutting the piece of fruit chosen, he must clean the cutting board and knife, leaving the area tidy for the person. He must also place any seeds or peels in the designated

Activity Submitted by Dale

SPRING TEA

This is a great way for children to experience the reward of planning, preparing and executing a social event for special people in their lives in which they can exercise their skills in social graces and courtesy.

As a class, each child should make individual invitations to invite someone special to a Spring Tea. The children will decide on a menu for the Spring Tea (e. fruit/vegetables, muffins, scones, etc.). The children are responsible for preparing guests' needs are met. They listen carefully to requests and serve their guests passing around trays of food and offering to pour the beverage(s). At the conclusion, each child should thank their special visitors for attending and give them a thank-you card when saying goodbye.

If this is a small affair, the child could also be seated and join the tea, remembering his/her duties as host.

Rehearsing the tea ahead of time and discussing proper mealtime etiquette, manners, conversational skills, and unexpected events such as spills is a great way to prepare the children. Role-playing can be an excellent part of the preparatory work, as well.

North American Montessori Center

Website: <http://www.montessoritraining.net>

Submitted by Dale Gausman

Montessori Insights and Reflections of a Preschool Student's First Year

Year-End Activities – A Family Picnic

It is once again that time of year when we reflect on what we have accomplished as a school community and we start thinking about arranging a few year-end activities for the children and their parents. A few activities that I have implemented in the past include:



- A year-end concert
- A sports day
- A multicultural potluck
- A year-end family picnic
- A special field trip/going out activity
- An end-of-the-year craft project
- Kindergarten graduation



For the past few years, we have organized a field trip in the month of June. This year we are planning to go to the Honeybee Center as a way to enrich our study of Honeybees. You will hear more about this in an upcoming blog.

Another tradition is our year-end picnic which is always enjoyed by parents and children alike! We have a beautiful park near our Montessori preschool that provides us with the perfect location for a family picnic. We send home a note a few weeks in advance post a sign-up sheet as well so that each family can sign up to contribute a specific item to share with the group (salads, desserts, fruit platter, veggie platter, drinks, etc.). There is always an abundance of yummy food and our Montessori preschool always supplies the hot dogs, buns and condiments.

We all meet at the park at 10:00 a.m. For the first 45 minutes or so, the children are free to play at the playground or in the large grassy field. Around 11:00 a.m. we begin the races and we explain to the children ahead of time that it doesn't matter who wins or who loses -- it is about having fun with our friends! The races are always a highlight of the picnic and the children especially love the fact that after each race they are given a ribbon to be pinned on to their shirts! The races that have been the most popular over the years are:

- Sac race
- Obstacle race
- Dress-up race
- 3-legged race
- Marshmallow on a spoon race

The children usually work up quite an appetite during the races, so we have our picnic lunch shortly thereafter. Family members join the children and we all enjoy a special picnic together.

After lunch, we play some more and the children enjoy activities such as blowing bubbles, playing soccer, face painting, tattoos and a trip into the forest to find the "magical gummy tree." Each year we prepare little bags of 3 or 4 gummies and hang them on a bush in the forest. The children love searching for the Magical Tree and are always intrigued with how the gummies get there each year -- A Montessori Mystery!!!

As much as possible, NAMC's web blog reflects the Montessori curriculum as provided in its teacher training programs. We realize and respect that Montessori schools are unique and may vary their schedules and offerings in accordance with the needs of their individual communities. We hope that our readers will find our articles useful and inspiring as a contribution to the global Montessori community.

North American Montessori Center: <http://www.montessoritraining.net/>



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End of Part 1

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

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

Looking for additional hands-on lessons? Don't forget to read the companion newsletters. Just visit

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

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

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

and

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