

# NEWS LETTER

## April SHOWERS



**P.O.K.I.  
PARENTS OUT KIDS IN**

Spring Flowers!

Look for Re-Enrollment Packets!

Summer School Applications  
Due April 26

Parent/Teacher Conferences  
May 13-17

Parent Open House  
Wednesday, May 22



**MIDDLE SCHOOL  
BIMONTHLY BABYSITTING EVENT**



Happy spring to all of you. This is a very busy and exciting time of the school year. During this time there are many special events such as re-enrollment, Elementary and Middle School students going to camp, parent conferences, standardized testing for the Elementary students, Back to School Night, Public Open House and beginning of preparation for graduations. Please take extra time to read our newsletters, information boards, calendars and notices in the sign-in books so that you can stay informed and up to date on all these Meher happenings.

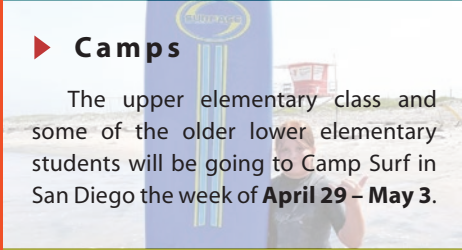
Please return your summer school sign-up form as soon as possible so that we can start planning our classes and so we know how many spaces we will have available for new students waiting to join our school during summer. If there are any question I can answer for you or anything you need, please feel free to contact me. I'm here at your service.

Peace and Love, Adela Muñoz

### ▶ Parent Conferences

Our second set of Parent Conferences will take place the week of **May 13–17**. Sign-ups the week before will show the times available for conferences. At the conference you will receive a written progress report. However, you certainly do not have to wait for a formal parent conference to talk to your child's teacher. Teachers always have time for informal conferences. Just ask.

### ▶ Camps




The upper elementary class and some of the older lower elementary students will be going to Camp Surf in San Diego the week of **April 29 – May 3**.

### ▶ Summer School

Summer school forms went out and are due back by Friday, April 26th. We're having some fun and educational field trips. Summer School dates are June 17 – July 26.

### ▶ School Shirt Day



Don't forget! **Friday, April 26th**, is Meher's School Shirt Day! Let's have 100% participation so every class can have a celebration.

### ▶ Parent Open House

Come one, come all!!! To our annual Parent Open House on Wednesday, May 22nd, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. All students, parents, grandparents, and other friends are invited. This Open House is a special time for your child to show you his or her work.



Hello everybody! I'm here once again with interesting news about the last two weeks of March and the upcoming April activities in the classroom. The remaining months for this school year are coming so fast; before we know it, it will be graduation day!

Let's slow it down; we have another child added to our class last March 11! Her name is Leila Freire. She is a happy and independent child who loves to come to school and have fun learning in class. She's the second youngest in our class. All our children in class were so excited and we welcomed her with open arms. Older children take turns to help her everyday most especially when going down the stairs to our classroom. Within two weeks time she has adjusted to our classroom rules and routines. She loves our "circle time" where we sing songs and listens to stories I read or are read by a volunteer graduate in our class.

The children in our class were so happy and fortunate to experience the different growth stages of caterpillars and ladybugs. They were given to our class by Mrs. Munoz Friday, March 8th. Every day the children check the containers they

are in and would see how fast they grow. They notice that caterpillars grow faster than the ladybugs. But both undergo the same four stages of metamorphosis: egg, larva, pupa and adult. Upon hatching from the egg state, both insects emerge as larvae and are ready to eat. Then both undergo complete metamorphosis and become a beautiful butterfly or a tiny red and black polka - dotted beetle we all know as ladybugs. Before becoming an adult, we estimated at least 14 to 21 days of pupae stage. The first week of April, we released them in our garden area in the woodchips.

Our St. Patrick snack party was fun. We had a pizza lunch and healthy snacks in the afternoon. The children received tons of treats from their classmates and teachers too! These treats together with their St. Patrick bracelet and wall banner projects were all placed in their big brown bag that they themselves decorated.

After a week of working with Ms. Tenold's children on a joint project, my graduating children showed their finished works to their parents, friends, relatives, administrators and teachers at our Partnership Breakfast. Our lower elementary

breakfast was a day of bonding and welcoming our future graduates and their parents in Ms. Tenold's class. Every year different projects are made by both the graduating children in our class and that of Ms. Tenold's. They are so proud to show their projects that they have worked on with the children in Ms. Tenold's class to their parents and relatives. In the background, I could hear parents' comments: "Wow! This is so beautiful!" I am proud of you! You've learned a lot already or "Oh my! You did all these"...plus questions they asked their children regarding their projects. The food was delicious and parents were happy to learn that this lower elementary breakfast is done once a year at our school! Our graduating children, their parents and I would like to thank Mrs. Munoz and Mrs. Chavez for a very successful Partnership Breakfast.

We had an egg hunt and Easter Snack Party on Friday, April 12th. The children prepared Easter decorations and projects that went home after our party.

Older children in our class are learning about sentence pattern, amphibians, reptiles, mammals, fungi, and living and non-living things. In Math, they are working on multiplication and division tables. Younger ones are geared towards mastery of their large and fine motor skills, and socialization. As a whole the class runs smoothly and the children are bonded, respected, fully adjusted, comfortable

and independent as they do their classroom routine every day.

I would like to thank Mrs. Suh and Ms. Martinez for helping with the peace, order and safety of our children in the classroom, while at the same time maintaining the cleanliness and arrangement of the materials in the prepared environment. To you ladies, a round of applause for a work well done!

I hope everyone had a restful Spring Break.

With all our love and gratitude,  
Mrs. Rivera, Mrs. Suh, Ms. Martinez  
and the children in our class



***"One test of the correctness of educational procedure is the happiness of the child."***

***—Maria Montessori***





### Last Month's Highlights

**The Partnership Breakfast** was a well-attended event with all the parents and relatives of our graduates who came to see the display and joined us for a sumptuous breakfast. A huge thank you to Ms. Tenold and the children in her class who hosted the event and to Mrs. Munoz and Mrs. Chavez who helped prepare and coordinate the lovely affair. It was a memorable day being able to see the children explain their projects. So proud for all of you.

### **Busy Creatures in our classroom:**

The children were so delighted to observe the life cycle of both the Ladybug and the Butterfly. The ladybugs came as larvae that appeared like tiny black dots which we placed in a little dome. The children watched how they grew and kept track of how many we had even alerting the adults when a few escaped from the dome. Daily they kept track of how they were changing into pupae and later, developing dots in their bodies. The butterflies came as caterpillars which later in the week started to crawl up the lid of the container and wrapped themselves in a cocoon. We did a countdown each day (for 10 days) anticipating for them to transform into butterflies.

On the first day of April, we got a pleasant surprise when all 6 butterflies came out and all the ladybugs grew. So it was time to release them in the garden. Everyone was excited. A few of the children had the chance to have a ladybug crawl on their hand.

Ms. Lopez has started to give and present individual lessons to the children, as part of her teaching practice and to fulfill the requirements for her course. This month both of us will continue to switch roles even at circle time.

In celebration of Earth Day (April 22nd), we talked about ways to keep our planet earth clean and green by disposing of trash properly, recycling and planting trees. In our art projects, we utilized recyclable materials like paper rolls and cereal boxes.

At this time of year, parents often come to a crossroads and decisions are being made regarding future school placements for their child. Maybe you can look back and think why you chose a Montessori education. Obviously there is no one right answer for every child. Here's something to think about: ".....Perhaps the biggest benefit of a Montessori education is that **it teaches children how to learn instead of just what to learn.** It instills in them a life-



long love of learning, which prepares them to successfully go in any direction their skills and interests may take them."  
(from the article: "Benefits of Montessori" published from M:themagazine.com in 2006.)

Till Next Time ,  
Mrs. Roque and Ms.Lopez

### Songs In the Classroom:

"Ladybug" Words and Music  
by Frank Leto

Ladybug, ladybug (echo).....  
landed on my thumb (echo),  
crawled up to my wrist (echo)  
And crawled up to my elbow (echo)  
Ladybug, ladybug (echo)....  
crawled up my arm (echo)  
And then it flew away (echo)

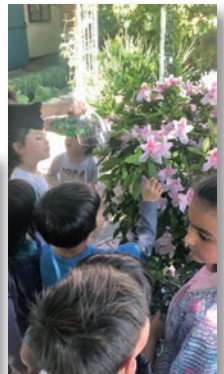
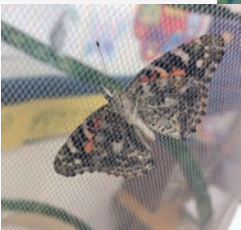
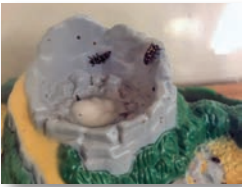
Oh ladybug ,oh ladybug,  
oh won't you be my friend  
Oh ladybug,oh ladybug,  
won't you come and visit me again.

### "Busy Creatures" by Eileen Diamond

Woodpecker, woodpecker,  
tapping on a tree  
Woodpecker, woodpecker, tapping  
busily.  
Pecking your beak till the bark  
wears away,  
Busy woodpecker, tapping all the day.

Buzzing bee, buzzing bee,  
buzzing in the air,  
Buzzing bee, buzzing bee,  
buzzing everywhere.  
Taking the pollen from flowers  
you can see,  
Making honey, you're such a busy  
bee.

Grasshopper, grasshopper,  
chirping as you hop,  
Grasshopper, grasshopper,  
do you ever stop?  
Hungrily eating the plants  
that you take,  
Busy grasshopper, what a noise  
you make!



**Class News**

We had a wonderful Partnership Breakfast at the end of March. I got to meet all of the families of the graduates from the primary, and we got to celebrate the children's collaborations together - all the parents, teachers, students, and even some extended family. The work the students did together included grammar, division, the Timeline of Life, the continents, and the history of the universe.

**Curriculum News**

This month we are studying the flower and we take a special day - the first Thursday of each month - to focus especially on that part of the plant and plants in general and spend time in the class garden together. A Big Thanks to Mrs. Gonzalez for keeping the garden going all year long and helping the third years have a part in its maintenance as well. As a class, we are also studying the painting "American Gothic," a 1930 painting by Grant Wood, and children have the opportunity to study it, color a blank one, and draw their own version of it by free hand. They also read and learn about the artist, time period, and themes of the artwork. We have a different artwork/artist each month.

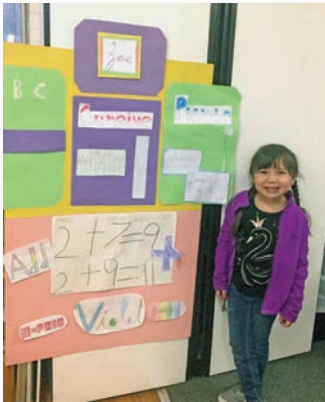
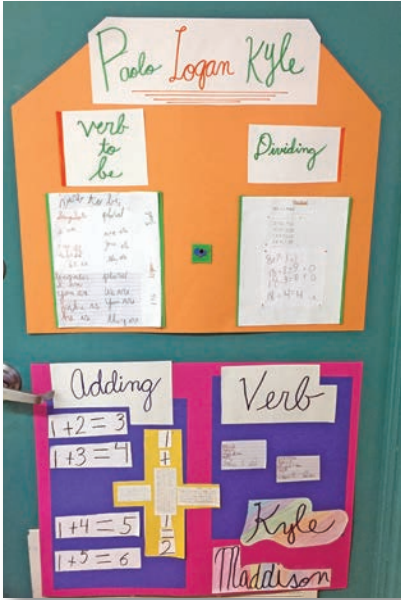
Those topics I mentioned above start as whole group lessons and the children can form smaller groups from there for further study. Other lessons on different topics may start as small group lessons based on the learning ability and interest of the child at the time. Examples of this from this month are multiplication, verb tenses, and animal structures. Furthermore, some work is

done by an individual or group and then shared with the rest of the class. There are a couple of children that are so interested in our pet bearded dragon that they want to care for her, interact with her, share her with the class, and learn all sorts of facts about reptiles and then teach the information to the class, such as that there are over 6000 species of reptiles in the world and the heart is an organ which pumps blood. What's more is our class can also learn from the Upper Elementary who share their knowledge with our students. Four students from Upper Elementary planned a time recently to come share the information they learned and reports they did about Northwest and Iroquois Native American tribes. The UE students had a well-planned presentation and stayed over an hour, each taking a turn to speak, and then answering questions and clarifying what some words meant that they had used in their reports. Thank you Rafaela, Andrew, Andy, and Joyce! They inspired students in our class to also study about Native Americans. After the UE left, some of my students asked me if they can learn about the same thing the UE did. I said, "Of course!" And we got to work."

**Calendar News**

Thank you to those families that took care of our class pets during our Spring Break. That was a huge help. The Upper Elementary (including our 3rd years who will be in Upper Elementary next year) will spend one week at the end of April at Camp Surf, an outdoor education camp.

Ms. Tenold





The Spring Partnership projects were a great success, and we all really enjoyed sharing breakfast together. Ms. Tenold's third year students worked on research projects, creating games, and sculpting animals with our students. Our graduates spent many days at the Middle School writing a play and performed a hilarious skit for the audience for their Partnership Breakfast. They also shared their BioMimicry work with their families, and discussed their work so far this year. All in all, the Partnership projects and breakfasts were a really special time.

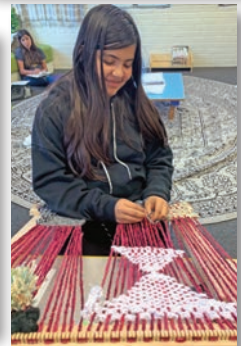
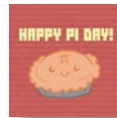
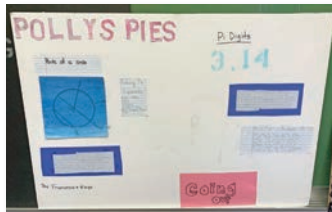
The classroom has been enjoying lessons on decimals, percentages, analogies, solstice and equinox, artistic pencil techniques, weaving on the loom, cube roots, ratio, proportions, pre-algebra, poetry, and interdependencies and ecosystems.

On March 13, we celebrated Pi Day as a class. Beforehand, students challenged one another to try and memorize as many digits of Pi as possible and we had a friendly competition to see how many we could remember! Impressively, everyone participated and many of them were able to memorize a great amount of the digits. TJ took first place, as he memorized 124 correct digits of Pi. We also enjoyed eating pie together as a celebration for the day. After a lesson on the circle and Pi, Kaya and Francesca went on a Going Out to Polly's Pies in Montebello,

learned about how to make pies. They baked two of them from scratch in the classroom for the class to enjoy on the holiday. It was a fun day!

We are preparing to attend Camp Surf this month, and are really looking forward to it!

Happy Spring to everyone.



Hello Meher families ... as of April 2, there are 45 school days left. Yes, the girls are counting! Our last month was dominated by three projects/events: one was P.O.K.I (Parents Out Kids In), the Middle School's bimonthly babysitting event; another major undertaking was the Partnership Breakfast - Meher's Montessori's annual event; and our last project this month, just completed April 1, was the Youth Global Design Challenge - a competition Mr. Chavez entered us in late last year.

### **P.O.K.I**

Even if you don't know anything about the student's baby-sitting service, P.O.K.I, at the very least, you have seen our flyers scattered about the elementary school colorfully announcing - "Take a break, go out on a date!" However, the best way to learn about P.O.K.I is to ask a child who attended a P.O.K.I evening. Vanessa, a Middle School student, said that one child attending a P.O.K.I evening insisted that P.O.K.I should happen every week! This would no doubt be fun for the kids, but already, as a bi-monthly babysitting service, it's a lot of work! Julia, one of our eighth graders, said, "preparing for the evening is stressful! First, the four of us have to agree upon, a theme (past themes have been Disney characters and Superheroes); we have to gather materials so we can craft theme-based games, decorations, and foods; we have to design and print flyers and banners;

we have to coordinate logistics with teachers and the administration. And while all this preparation is going on, we still have homework and other projects to finish. In the end though, it's all worth it, because of the money we raise and being able to feel like leaders. Although, after watching the kids, I am exhausted and can't wait to go home. Honestly, it makes me see how much we take our parents for granted!" Vanessa added, "While we are relieved that the night is over, we are also sad that it's ended!"

### **Partnership Breakfast**

This Partnership Breakfast project - a joint venture between the upper elementary graduates and the Middle School students - manifested itself on a stage this year. Julia, who was very active in creating the dialogue and directing the actors, describes her experience below.

### **Julia's take on her last Partnership Breakfast!**

For this year's Partnership, we collaborated on a play with the 6th graders. The first day we bounced from idea to idea, none of us agreeing on what to do, before we finally settled on doing a play. Now we had to come up with a theme and a plot, so all the students sat around a table and each one proposed their idea. Not able to agree on one idea, we decided that everyone would create a character, then partner with another person and create dialogue between their characters. In this way we hoped to find a theme, which we

## PARTNERSHIP

eventually did – the experience of a guidance counselor who had just graduated from college and landed her first job at a high school.

Creating the play's structure, writing and rewriting the dialogue, rehearsing (over and over), debating where the actors should stand and how they should deliver their lines made the overall experience stressful, but fun. In the end, the parents appeared to find the production very funny, which was our goal, so we very much enjoyed their reactions. As for me, this being my last Partnership Breakfast, I don't regret any of it.

### Youth Global Design Challenge

The students, after five short months, submitted an inspired design into the Youth Global Design competition. Jordan and Nirali tell a little about what they did below.

### Jordan and Nirali's speak about the class' submitted design

Mr. Chavez, in our design class, spent a lot of time discussing climate change and its impacts and potential impacts, which led us to focus our attention on melting glaciers.

Glaciers are melting because of global warming, which are causing sea levels to rise. If it continues, the water will slowly creep up the Southern California coast. As a solution to this problem, we used the functions of orchids and rhizomorphs (a fungi attached to plant roots that act as a communication system between plants) to develop a system that collects, filters, and distributes rising water.









We submitted the project to The Biomimicry Institute the first week of April. The students worked very hard on this! I am extremely proud of most of their efforts. Attached is a picture of the project as well. A video overview of the project can be viewed at [mothermuse.org/ydc19](http://mothermuse.org/ydc19).

In our Biomimicry & Design class, the 6th years and our Middle School group recently culminated and finalized a year long project. This year we have been working on developing a design solution inspired by Biomimicry that addresses Climate Change. Specifically, the group chose to focus on the potential issues surrounding glaciers melting. They established the cause and effect relationships between glaciers melting and local coastal flooding to bring the issue close to home. They then focused their efforts on looking to nature for inspiration on how to capture and distribute water locally if the states water infrastructure were to be damaged due to coastal flooding.

After researching a variety of biological strategies, they choose to use the aerial roots of Orchids and the water distribution and communication strategies of Rhizomorphs in Mycorrhizal fungi to develop a design concept called The Magnifitube! The process was an exercise in design thinking, research and creativity.

The Magnifitube is a water capture and distribution system. The Orchid inspired capture system consists of water absorbent tubes that can collect fog, dew, rain, and moisture. The tubes can be placed on existing man made structures and connect with an underground system of smart bio plumbing. The smart bio plumbing was inspired by how Rhizomorphs in Mycorrhizal fungi distribute water and how the Mycorrhizal fungi network... aka the Wood Wide Web... can communicate with itself. We modeled the communication strategy of these organisms to give our system the ability to assess water quality, allocate water to specific areas such as agriculture, existing water treatment plants, homes, and even integrate into existing legacy plumbing systems.

The team has entered their work in 2019 The Biomimicry Institutes Youth Design Challenge and you can view a video overview of the project by visiting [mothermuse.org/ydc19](http://mothermuse.org/ydc19).

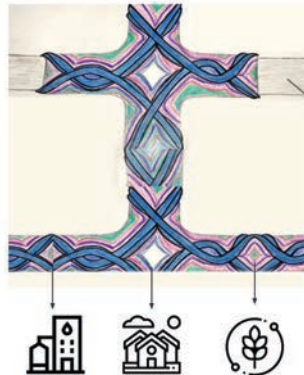
Good Luck Team!  
Estepan Chavez

## Magnifitube

MOISTURE COLLECTING TUBES ON LIGHT POLE  
INSPIRED BY ORCHID AERIAL ROOTS  
CAN ATTACH TO ANY VERTICAL MAN MADE STRUCTURE



FROM CAPTURE



SMART BIO PLUMBING INSPIRED BY HOW RHIZOMORPHS IN MYCORRHIZAL FUNGI DISTRIBUTE WATER  
INTEGRATES INTO LEGACY PLUMBING  
CAN COMMUNICATE WITH ITSELF  
WATER MANAGEMENT  
WATER DISTRIBUTION  
WATER ALLOCATION  
ALLOCATES TO  
WATER TREATMENT PLANTS  
HOMES  
AGRICULTURE







**P. O. K. I**  
(Parents Out Kids In), the Middle School fundraiser baby-sitting service.



Happy Spring!!

### Last Month

March seemed to fly by in a blur. We spent the month learning about and exploring Irish culture in honor of St Patrick's Day. We capped off our Irish exploration by making Irish Soda Bread to celebrate the previous month's 100% participation in School Shirt Day. I would like to thank Jeff Van Ness (Milo's dad) for providing the class with Irish butter, to really complete the taste experience.



We read books about women who were the first in their fields, who persevered, and who never gave up, to honor Women's Month. We also added caterpillars and a praying mantis pod to the classroom to get ready for spring. The children are all excited for the butterflies to emerge out of their cocoons. Right now, the praying mantis pod looks like a walnut, but once 200+ baby mantises burst out, I imagine they will be very excited about those as well.

### In the Classroom

Maps! Maps! Maps! We have a sudden interest in coloring and labeling maps. The children like to do this in pairs,

which is a fantastic way to practice problem-solving skills such as setting up the work together, organizing their workspace, and sharing the control map.

The graduate children are continuing to work on grammar and the parts of speech. We have been exploring antonyms and synonyms, as well as articles, nouns, and adjectives. Next up are verbs and adverbs. And our younger children are demonstrating independence and confidence with the way they are navigating the environment and handling the materials.

### Coming Up

Now that we are in April, we are entering the home stretch before Graduation. Graduation will be on Thursday, June 13th, at 10:30 this year. The children started practicing their songs when we returned from spring break.

However, before we get too deep into graduation, April and May both have events coming up. In May, Parent/Teacher conferences will be the week of May 13-17, the same week as our annual Scholastic Book Fair. Speaking of the Book Fair, I am looking for volunteers this year to help set it up, run it, and pack it back up in the Founder's Room of the church. Please contact me if you can help.

It is time to close out the Newsletter with the important dates in April. On April 8th, the summer school info went home. The applications are due back on April 26th. It is imperative that I receive the applications by the 26th. I have a waiting list of families who are



interested in starting Meher in the summer and may not have enough spaces to accommodate everyone. April 26th is also School Shirt Day. As we did not earn 100% participation last month, there was no baking activity for April. Hopefully, we will have full participation this month so the children can make pancakes in May.

One last note: Summer School and Summer Camp are two different programs we offer here. Summer Camp begins the Monday AFTER Summer School ends, and is on a weekly, flat-rate basis. The info on Summer Camp will go out towards the end of April. Please be advised; some weeks we will only have 12 spaces available, and those spaces will fill up very quickly.

Until Next Month,

Mrs. Wildhaber  
Miss McCray, Miss Tinajero  
and Miss Sykes

## MAPS! MAPS! MAPS!





**You've chosen Montessori for your child because it helps them become capable and well-rounded individuals who are lifelong learners and doers.**

But Montessori may not be like the education you received, and that might make it hard for you to share your child's experience and talk about how they are doing in school. We've developed this guide to help you connect with your Montessori student, learn about their experiences, and grow together.

**Let's Talk About Our Day: A tool to help parents share their child's Montessori experience.**

**Talking about your day invites them to talk about theirs.**

Montessori students work individually and share their experiences and observations with others. One of the best ways to find out about their day is to tell them about yours. Talk about the interesting parts of your day in detail. These don't have to be significant moments—you can turn any part of your day into a topic for conversation. Include the who, what, where, your reactions, thought process, and/or emotions. In this way, you become a guide like their Montessori teacher, and they will likely engage you in a similar conversation about their day. Please be patient and let your child respond in their own time. The younger the child the more time they may need. Also, don't feel as though this always needs to be the first thing you say when you pick them up or greet them after school. Often these precious moments are spontaneous.

**Here is an example:**

• "Let me tell you something that I saw on my way to work today..."

**Your child may or may not decide to reciprocate. You could say:**

• "Did anything like that happen to you?"

## Create a conversation with guiding questions.

Parents can also use a similar style of questioning at home that Montessori teachers use as guides. We sometimes play a game with children called the “questions game.” The game consists of the same questions a reporter might ask—**who**, **what**, **when**, **how**, and **why**. Then, add in the other questions. Keep in mind the “**why**” questions is often very difficult for children under the age of 6, and they may not be ready to answer just yet.



- **What** story did you hear today?  
**What** happened?
- **Who** told the story? Did anyone else hear the story, too?
- **How** did you feel about the story?
- **Where** did you hear the story?
- **When** did you hear the story?
- **Why** is this story important?

At the end of the questions, you can summarize the child’s answers using their information. For example, “So this morning your teacher told a story. Lots of children came to hear the story, and you were one of them. You all sat together near the windows to listen to the story. The story was about \_\_\_\_\_. You thought the story was really funny...” continuing on until all details are included.

You’ve now modeled how to talk about

an event that happens during the day and learned something about your child’s day. This type of communication is also an excellent pre-literacy experience. This type of modeling and practice helps your child understand how a story is created, leading to both oral storytelling and learning how to write sentences and paragraphs, as well as reliable comprehension when listening to or reading a story.

### Other sample topics include:

- New words
- New environments
- Meals and snacks
- Numbers
- Stories and songs

**This list is not exhaustive but may give you a few great leading questions to open up conversation naturally.**

You want to avoid rapid fire questions. Don’t worry if there are periods of silence or short answers. You’re both learning and exploring together.

## Want to learn more?

We also encourage you to bring your questions to your child’s teacher.

Asking questions and building that connection is one of the best ways you can understand more about Montessori.

Visit [montessori-ami.org/resource-library/videos](http://montessori-ami.org/resource-library/videos) to watch videos about the practices of Montessori and see them in action.





# EASTER

