

Montessori Method

The Geometric Cabinet

As we head into October and end our first six weeks of school, our teachers are busy bringing new lessons to the classrooms, introducing more complex versions of lessons already in the environment and incorporating art and music. The beauty of the Montessori materials and their many aspects is the vastness of what they can teach the child.

One material that does this wonderfully is the Geometric Cabinet. This material lives in our sensorial area and is greatly loved by students of all ages. You may have seen it or your children may have brought home tracings of different shapes. It is a wooden box filled with six shallow drawers, each drawer painted blue on the inside and each filled with a different type of wooden shape.

There are many lessons that are presented with the Geometric Cabinet and the lessons incorporate many indirect purposes. The preliminary lessons are exposing the children to different shapes, both visually and tactically. The child manipulates the shape, traces it with his or her fingers and then traces the shape on paper. Nomenclature is introduced through the material as well, educating the child on each shape and its name. This tactical manipulation of the material indirectly begins to prepare the child for writing. The muscular familiarity with the movements connects with the ability to form letters. Also, the manipulation of the geometric shapes begins to educate the child on geometry and the later mathematics that comes with it.

When receiving the lessons, the children are intrigued to learn large words. Tracing and categorizing the parallelograms and trapeziums is also enticing and exciting to the child. Through the lessons of the Geometric Cabinet, the child's visual discrimination of different types of shapes increases. Don't be surprised if when you are driving down the road, your child begins to point out the hexagons and rhombuses.