



MONTESSORI
CHILDREN'S HOUSE

Developing Independence

Some of the most important lessons in a Montessori classroom help the children to develop independence and the self-esteem that accompanies it. There are many small things we can do to help them develop practical life skills.

For example, consider the choice of shoes. They should be comfortable and safe for playing outdoors, and have closures the children can do themselves. Even the youngest child can use Velcro straps. When they are ready to learn to tie, shoes with laces give them a daily opportunity to practice.

All that healthy outdoor play can track a lot of dirt into the classroom. Our students help keep their classroom neat by cleaning the dirt from their shoes after playing outside and before entering class.



When possible, while buying shoes to wear for school, take a minute to check the soles. Soles with deeper tread and grooves tend to pick up more dirt and sand; making it more difficult and frustrating for the children to clean. By choosing shoes with more shallow treads, you will be helping your child to simplify the task of cleaning their shoes. **Thank you for your assistance, cooperation and support with this matter.**

From the Elementary Side

The elementary class is well-underway on their Writers Workshop journey for the 2011-2012 school year. The theory behind the Writers Workshop program is to inspire students to use their creativity and develop a love of the craft of writing. Through repetitive exposure to the different forms of both formal and creative writing, students begin to hone the most basic of writing skills – the mechanics of punctuation, spelling, and sentence structure – on through more complex aspects of description, the use of literary devices, and detailed research.

The Writers Workshop methodology intermingles beautifully with the Montessori pedagogy, allowing each child to develop his or her own written style, in their own time. Each child is able to come to Writers Workshop with something to say, and something to share, and we encourage them to see the value of their experience, share it, and that their experience is not limited by their age. This is the essence of what Maria Montessori intended when she said **“Our aim is not only to make the child understand, and still less to force him to memorize, but so to touch his imagination as to enthuse him to his innermost core.”** We believe learning to love writing is at the heart of this inspiration; the success of a beautifully written sentence for a hard-working child, is the very soul of the independence Montessori heralded.

We began the year covering Small Moments from their summers – snippets of time, with a focus on description of detail. Then, in October, the students learned about compiling a newspaper, and worked on being reporters in their world; stay tuned for a copy to come home! They have also just finished up the reading and book reporting on a Biography of choice. They are currently working on their Autobiographies – an excellent exercise in getting to know themselves and their own personal history. We will cover different kinds of fiction, non-fiction, and poetry in the months to come, while keeping at the heart of the Writers Workshop the modeling of mentor authors - the students love to hear the classic and current best-sellers of literary greatness. All the while, they break up these long-term projects with dynamic work on handwriting (cursive and print, depending on age), grammar, the history of the written word, revision, and free writing. We hope you are enjoying reading your child's work as much as we are!

Note: AZ Tax Credit Donations will be accepted up until April this year.
 If you are interested in donating go to www.phxchildrenshouse.com/contact.html
 to download the donation form.

January '12



| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|--|-------------------------------|-----------|---|--|----------|
| 1 | 2 Happy B-Day Martha | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 Elementary Field Trip Az Science Center 8:45 - 12:00 | 13 Staff Work Day No School | 14 |
| 15 | 16 Martin Luther King Day No School | 17 Happy B-Day Cheyenne | 18 | 19 | 20 Elementary Library Trip | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 Elementary In Class Field Trip - Phoenix Art Museum 2:00 - 3:00 | 27 | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | |