

May 4, 2020



FCMS PRIMARY

Weekly Care Package

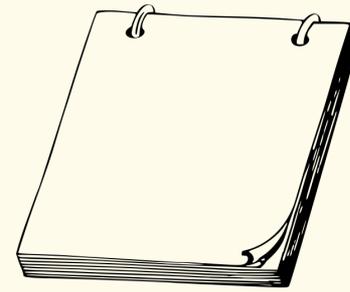
Table of Contents

- The Art of Observation, *page 3*
- Self Care for Parents, *page 6*
- Spoken Language
 - Song: Mango Fandango, *page 7*
 - Poem: Who Has Seen the Wind? By Christina Rossetti, *page 8*
 - Grace and Courtesy: Putting Belongings Away When Entering the Home, *page 9*
- Activities to do at Home
 - Flower Arranging, *page 10*

Brought to you by the FCMS Primary Guides:

Ms. Lee, Ms. Thompson, Ms. Hunt, Ms. Crews

The Art of Observation



We've discussed being the “**prepared adult**” when working with children; learning to work through our own biases and emotions so that we can support natural development as it unfolds.

One of the ways in which Montessori guides prepare themselves to be with children is learning to *observe*.

Observation means seeing things as they are, without judgement or interpretation.

This is the tool that allows any Montessori guide or parent to follow a child's development and provide “*just enough, at just the right time.*”

This can be a challenge, as many of us are accustomed to **jumping in** to answer a question, solve a problem, or comment on a child's work.

The Art of Observation

- **Pausing**
 - In our parent zoom last week, we discussed **pausing** when a child approaches with a question, comment, problem, or demand.
 - **Pausing** allows us to see patterns and more clearly articulate areas in which our child might actually need our help. Rushing in to solve the problem can take away the child's opportunity to learn, but **observing** when a child struggles can show us how and where to offer constructive support.
- **Identifying concentration**
 - **Concentration** is the goal of a successful connection between the child and a purposeful activity. The activity is *just challenging enough* that it completely engages the child, and she often emerges joyful once she has completed the activity. Some people call this a “state of flow.”
 - **Some signs of concentration:** tongue sticking out the mouth, a very still body, singing softly to oneself, not seeming to notice nearby sounds or movements, and joyfully skipping or humming after completing the activity.
- **Noticing points of difficulty**
 - **Struggle** is safe. This is when neurons fire and children learn to problem solve.
 - However, if there seems to be a recurring step in the process in which children are getting “stuck,” we can offer them support when we know exactly what is needed, without helping **too much**.

The Art of Observation

Observing for points of difficulty and ways to help “just enough”:

- ***Preparing the environment differently***
 - Your child is very interested in watering the plants, but the watering can seems to be too heavy for her to lift correctly and safely to fill up at the sink. She is successful with all of the other steps. *You can support by either finding a smaller watering vessel or creating a lower water source.*
- ***Giving another lesson at a neutral time***
 - Your child has been struggling to sew a button. You observe and see that she is successful at each step except threading the needle. *You can support by inviting her to a lesson the next day and ensure that you demonstrate threading the needle slowly and wordlessly.*
- ***Giving “just enough” help with a task***
 - Lately your child has been telling you he “can’t” put on his jacket and wants you to do it for him. You observe and see that he can independently put on his jacket, but he struggles with attaching the slider of the zipper onto the teeth. *You can support by helping attach the slider to the teeth and holding the bottom stop.* He can independently use the pull tab to zip it up the rest of the way.

Self Care for Parents

Responding to Emotional Challenges

All humans have myriad emotions! Children may be showing some big emotions during this time of upheaval, which is to be expected. Even though emotions are a wonderful and normal experience, it may sometimes feel overwhelming to help children navigate this space when we, ourselves, are experiencing our own emotional responses to huge change. Confidently supporting children in navigating these big feelings throughout their development helps them thrive not only through childhood, but into their adult years.

[This article provides wonderful insight into how to do this effectively.](#)

One thing we talk about as teachers of young children is “The Pause.” It is helpful to take a moment to center ourselves before we respond to children, especially when heightened emotions are involved. Even saying to the child, “I hear that you need me right now. I’m going to sit right here with you until I’m ready to respond.” This provides a brief moment to compose ourselves so that we can be the “pilot” that the article refers to. Keep on flying the plane, you’re doing great!

Spoken Language

Song: Mango Fandango



Chorus:

*Mama! Mama! I want a mango
Papa! Papa! Please, papaya
No, no Nana, a ripe banana
Kiwi, kiwi, kiwi, kiwi, quince!*

*Red berries, berries blue
These are fruits so good for you
Cherries, cherries sweet and new
And Coconuts yes they're fruit too!*

Chorus

*Oranges, oranges, lemons yellow
Fill my tummy sweet and mellow
Vitamins grown on a tree
In pretty packages for you and me.*

Chorus

*Oh they travel many miles
Fill our hearts with many smiles
Sweet delicious tasty treats
From Mother Nature a gift to eat.*

Chorus

Spoken Language

Poem: Who Has Seen the Wind?
by Christina Rossetti

Who has seen the wind?

Neither I nor you,

But when the leaves hang trembling,

The wind is passing through.

Who has seen the wind?

Neither you nor I,

But when the trees bow down their heads,

The wind is passing by.



Spoken Language

Grace and Courtesy: Putting Belongings Away When Entering the Home



External Order supports children in creating Internal Order. Having clear organization and a place to put each one of your child's objects will help them create order in their mind. Knowing how to 'do things' causes a sense of joy and pride in your child.

If your child is struggling with a step consider implementing techniques explained on Slide 4, The Art of Observation, Observing for points of difficulty and ways to help.

Activities to do at Home

From the Shelf: *Flower arranging*

For this activity you will need:

- Flowers (there are tons of beautiful flowers and flowering trees blooming right now...collect them from your neighborhood while you take a walk!)
- Vase, mason jar, or other small water holding vessel
- Scissors
- Pitcher
- Bowl for holding water
- Funnel (if needed)
- Basket for holding flowers (if needed)
- Towel
- Tray or plate for holding stems and leaves
- Doile, handkerchief, or coaster



This is a simple and meaningful way for the child to observe nature and beautify the home. It appeals to the child's developing aesthetic sense. You can use whatever materials you have available in your house, and allow your child the freedom to arrange to their level of contentment!

Set firm limits with your child around set up and clean up; that is part of the child's work too!

With Gratitude

“It begins with a knowledge of his surroundings. How does the child assimilate his environment? He does it solely in virtue of one of those characteristics that we now know him to have. This is an intense and specialized sensitiveness in consequence of which things about him awaken so much interest and so much enthusiasm that they become incorporated in his very existence. The child absorbs these impressions not with his mind but with his life itself.”

~Maria Montessori, “The Absorbent Mind”