Conflict is a natural part of human life. Often parents and teachers will try to arrange a child’s life to avoid potential conflict. For example, sometimes we only let certain children play together or we try to keep siblings apart, playing in different parts of the house. While this may feel like the right thing to do, it is really a disservice to our children. Children need to learn how to deal with conflict respectfully and how to negotiate fairly and they need the time and opportunity to practice these skills.

Children look to adults as their models for how to deal with anger and frustration. If we yell, punish, or humiliate others we send a message to children that these are acceptable ways to treat others. We cannot expect children to be respectful and kind if we are not. We cannot expect children to listen to each other and to work things out calmly if we do not. Children need guidance in the difficult process of conflict resolution. You can be their mentor and guide if you remember:

Young children are egocentric. You cannot expect them to understand the feelings and needs of others while they are trying to understand their own feelings and needs. Young children live fully in the present, what they want and what they feel at any moment is their world at that moment. Asking them to share or to wait until tomorrow is extremely difficult.

Having realistic expectations based upon your children’s level of social and cognitive development will allow you to help them make sense of conflict and anger.

When children get angry with each other and get into a conflict, here are some simple ways to help them work through it: Speak with your children firmly and calmly and at their eye level. Speak simply and honestly. Questions, like “Why did you hit Johnny?” are not helpful. It is simply not OK to hurt people. Let them know that you are there to keep them safe.

Encourage your children to talk to the person they are angry with about how they feel and what happened. Give them time to figure out the words they want to say. Don’t speak for them. Encourage them to come up with a solution to the problem, helping them to figure out what would be fair for everyone.

Conflict isn’t easy and it can be scary. As parents, we can give a great gift to the world by helping our children learn how to deal with conflict honestly and respectfully.
There are three new select music groups at Mountaineer Montessori!
These are optional music classes that will meet weekly on Friday mornings and will perform at school recitals.

**Choir**
The choir is open to all students with an interest in singing and performing at a more advanced level than in the general music class. Our goals are to work on singing in harmony, to advance our music reading skills, and to have fun!

**Recorder Ensemble**
Recorder Ensemble is a musical opportunity for students with previous recorder experience and who enjoy playing the recorder. Orff Ensemble

**Orff Ensemble students will play** xylophones and other various instruments, and prepare pieces for performance.

What is Orff? In the early 20th century, German composer Carl Orff (famous for Carmina Burana) developed an all-encompassing approach to teaching music for young children using percussion instruments, dance, drama, and singing.

Tell me, I forget. Show me, I remember. Involve me, I understand. –Carl Orff

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**THE GLORY OF THE SEASON**

**Kathryn’s Class Explores Nature**

“Autumn is a second spring where every leaf is a flower.” The children have been captivated as they discover, observe, examine, and discuss the many signs of autumn. Bittersweet, harvested fruit, brilliantly colored leaves, acorns, chestnuts, Indian corn, pumpkins, gourds, and pine cones are a few of these autumn treasures. The children enjoy imagining how animals show an awareness of summer’s waning and autumn’s arrival. We have had a lot of fun composing a song that captures the variety of ways that animals adapt to this seasonal change. For example, “Grey squirrel twitched his big bushy tail, on a cool, crisp autumn day. He could feel the brisk wind blowing, as he scurried off to say, ‘we must hurry, hurry, hurry, we must all get fat and furry, not a moment to be lost, I can feel old Jackie Frost.’”

On a more abstract plane, the children have been learning about the position of the earth in relation to the sun as summer transitions into fall. This is explored in a multisensory fashion, using a candle to represent the sun, a globe, and a mat (with all of the seasons visually displayed). A particular point of interest is rotating the earth as it is revolving around the sun. I frequently hear, “Kathryn, when will I be able to change the season?” Oh the love of learning!

Each of the curriculum areas continues to hold enchantment and intrigue for our unfolding community. Excitement about reading, learning the decimal system, grinding coffee, and experiencing new sensorial materials abounds. It is a true pleasure to be part of this process!

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**“WHAT IS IT?”**

**Fran’s Class Explores Differences**

“Let us give the child a vision of the whole universe...for all thing are part of the universe, and are connected with each other to form one whole unity.”

Maria Montessori
To Educate the Human Potential

In this first plane of development, the central question for the child is, “What is it?” We can see how this natural curiosity drives the child towards his understanding of the universe. While very little language is given in the classical presentations in a Montessori classroom, we provide lots of nomenclature. This month, participation in our language sharing time launched lessons on living and nonliving, vertebrates and invertebrates, amphibians, and parts of the fish. We practiced observation, and noticed how objects are the same and how they are different. These observations inspired original stories and artwork. Thank you Mitchell, Salma, Tyler, and Isaiah for sharing with us your fish, frogs, earthworms, and katydid.
OUR TRIP TO THE FOREST
Junior Elementary Field Trip

“If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder...he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it,rediscovering with him the joy,excitement and mystery of the world we live in.” Rachel Carson

The Autumn Equinox occurred several weeks ago and with the arrival of a new season Jr. Elementary students have eagerly been exploring the changes unfolding in nature. The class went to Kanawha State Forest on September 28th as part of our Botany study. David Pushkin planned the trip and enlisted tree expert Ruffner Woody to teach the children how to identify different tree species.

Prior to the field trip each student made his/her own Field Studies Booklet filled with blank pages for taking observational notes,writing descriptions and making sketches. Mr. Woody discussed trees common to West Virginia and,their classification-Deciduous,Conifer, and Deciduous Conifer. The children used worksheets for identifying three types of leaves and three patterns of leaf veins. In addition, our students can now tell you about the different leaf margins, or the distinguishing edges of various leaves. On this field trip they also learned to identify characteristics of the bark ,the trunk, and a tree’s branching patterns.

The MMS news team; Jordan Loew, Hope Spann, Jack Bailey, and Wes Goodwin, shot and recorded an interview with Mr. Woody. The video will be shared with the Montessori community.

Our adventure concluded with a roaring fire at the shelter. The children gleefully gathered sticks to roast marshmallows and gobbled up sweet gooey s’mores.

Many thanks to Adala Ashhab and Cary Charbonniez, Ruffner Woody and all of the parents who drove us.

Our TRIP TO THE MOUNTAIN
Advanced Elementary Overnight Trip

Our Advanced Elementary class had an amazing time at The Mountain Institute. Every fall, we go on an overnight field trip designed to incorporate components of our curriculum with team building activities and conservation concepts. Some of the new students have the jitters at first, but, in the end, everyone walks away with a strong sense of accomplishment and a closer connection with each other.

The first afternoon, the students went to the top of Spruce Knob to learn how mountain ranges are formed and they went on a hike, stopping along the way to test rock samples, in order to identify them. We learned there is a lot of limestone in the area and that there once was an ocean covering Spruce Knob!

Thankfully, all students came prepared for the weather, because the temperatures upper 30’s and we camped in tents! The Mountain Institute decked us out with durable tents and warm mummy sleeping bags. We were able to snuggle into our cozy bags after singing around a campfire and eating smores.

On day two, we explored the caves and underground stream at Osceola. Some of us hiked all the way through the cave system, while the others explored the large rooms and wriggled through a “worm hole.” A picnic lunch in a meadow under a sunny sky rounded out this excursion.

In addition to all of the learning experiences, we got together to play fun, cooperative games. The students continue to play them at free time and any chance they can.

Every year, our students come back feeling a strengthened sense of belonging to our group and a renewed respect for each other and nature.

Thank you Jack Rogers, Randy Melton, Lena Glasser and George Phillips for driving us!