



Parent Newsletter

January 2014

Dear Parents,

With another wonderful year ahead of us and the holidays a happy memory behind us, I would like to wish you all well, as well as welcome all our new Montessori parents. Well done on choosing what I believe is a wonderful way to interact and be with children – either to observe our young ones



slowly unfolding, showing their true selves, or to witness the maturity and awesomeness of our older children as they investigate and debate.

They are doing more than just learning. Much is

written about critical thinking, a process important to our Montessori environments. Critical thinking is not merely memorisation, but it engages logic and analysis. It is all about knowing how to think, or thinking about your thinking (metacognition). As parents how do we help our children to become critical thinkers? Here are some ideas you can use with your children, found at www.gradeinfinite.com/?p=3169:

Ask your children open-ended questions that don't have a right or wrong answer. Your goal is to try to stimulate their thought processes, so you should be talking about something that the child is interested in and something that really makes them think.

Be a devil's advocate and say something outrageous, so that your children have to debate and disagree with you. This can help them learn how to find flaws in someone else's evidence or reasoning. Also make sure you are giving the child time to respond. There is no rush, just enjoy the silence while they think about what they might say.

When reading books, have children make connections and look for clues that will help them to think more deeply about what they are reading. Making connections will help your child learn how to use what he or she already knows to tackle new problems.

Give your opinion and show your own thought processes by thinking out loud about how to solve little problems or complete tasks around the house.

Let your children make decisions themselves by weighing the pros and cons of a choice – and don't be afraid to let them make the

wrong decision. Later you can discuss with your child how they think the decision turned out.

If you like watching TV with your children, you can talk to them about commercials and how information can be manipulated to make claims that aren't necessarily true, or look at Get Media Smart. It is a great site for young people that encourages users to think critically about media and

It is vital for our children to develop critical thinking skills, instead of simply being passive receptors of the large amount of media and information they receive through the array of technology we have today. Our children, instead of passively accepting all information, need to be able to sift through this with understanding and questioning. This is, in fact, a life skill needed by us all.

become smart consumers. Activities on the site are designed to provide users with some of the skills and knowledge needed to question, analyse, interpret and evaluate media.

Another interesting article to read is:

<http://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/2012/sep/12/critical-thinking-overlooked-in-secondary-education>

Warm regards
Jacquelyn Price

The Daily Observer

Est. 2003

www.samacon.co.za

Saturday, April 26, 2014



Don't miss out – Book online!

www.samacon.co.za

Early Bird booking ends 28 Feb '14

SAMA members - R2 250

Non – Members - R3 250

- Group discount for non-members.*
- Parents attending from SAMA member schools* pay the reduced member fee.

Montessori Parents

The South African Montessori Association are looking for sponsors and exhibitors at our conference.

We would be grateful for donations towards some prizes for lucky draws, competitions, etc.

Please contact our office at admin@samacon.co.za should you be willing to donate something or exhibit a product.

WHO MUST ATTEND

We welcome delegates from Montessori and regular education sectors for children from birth to 18 years. If you are a:

- Teacher,
- Assistant Teacher
- Teacher Trainer,
- School Head,
- Parent
- Student teacher
- Child care worker

Be sure to book early so you can meet the people, share knowledge and learn new things.