



Southern African Montessori Association

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Message from the President

Dear SAMA Members

The focus of this issue of the newsletter is Language and Vocabulary Development. It is such a fascinating area to explore as language is a vital link between one another.

One aspect of language development that is often overlooked is the skill of listening. And there is no one better to observe doing this than a newborn. It never ceases to amaze me how all those months of just listening allow the child to absorb their entire mother tongue – provided of course it is heard.

The children of Southern Africa are fortunate to be exposed to so many languages. We need to give them as many opportunities as possible to hear, speak and experience the beauty of all our African languages.

A friend in the States, who has since retired from Montessori teaching, advised me years ago to always ensure a second language is taught by a mother tongue speaker – through experiential and incidental exposure to the language. There are a number of schools in the States too who have a policy of only having ‘minority language speakers’ (i.e. Spanish) as assistants in the classroom. We may do well to adopt this approach given the number of languages spoken in our classrooms.

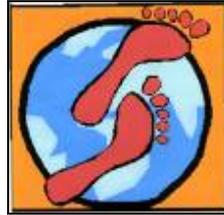
There is very little to match the honour of being present when a child realises he/she can read – that absolute delight in themselves is priceless. And what never fails to astound me in the Montessori prepared environment is that no one really ‘teaches’ the child to read – they simply acquire the skills and then jump right in.

Best of luck for the last term of the year – may it be exciting, fun and full of wonderful surprises!

Warm Regards
Sam Streak

Centenary Celebrations

“100 Steps for Montessori” is a sponsored walk to raise awareness of Montessori during the Centenary year. It is an invitation to every Montessori school in the world to take part in a global sponsored walk.



100
steps for
Montessori



12 – 14 October to be the South African 100 Steps weekend
For more information and forms contact Sharon: sharon@freedomtolearn.co.za

Well done to Little Fish Big Fish in Table view Cape Town, they had a successful 100 steps walk.



The Hermanus Montessori School has celebrated Montessori's centenary year in education each month this year. In August the entire school (18 month old - 13 yr olds) contributed towards a quilt which was auctioned for funds for the school and this is the result of 100 children's handiwork!



At Hatfield Montessori in Pretoria, Lina shared information about her homeland in Bangladesh, showing the children how to write their names in Bangla. We also shared traditions foods and presents from Bangladesh and these two young girls, Tyrique and Vevina are experiencing how saris are worn.

TEACHER : Why are you late, Frank?
 FRANK : Because of the sign.
 TEACHER What sign?
 FRANK : The one that says, "School Ahead, Go Slow."

ubuntu

I am what I am because of who we are

(oo-boon-too) n. Zulu or Xhosa word, a traditional African belief.

Ubuntu is a term for humaneness, for caring, sharing and being in harmony with all of creation.

"Ubuntu is very difficult to render into a Western language. When we want to give high praise to someone we say, "Yu u nobuntu"; "Hey, so-and-so has ubuntu." Then you are generous, you are hospitable, you are friendly and caring and compassionate. You share what you have. ... We say, "A person is a person through other persons." ... A person with ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good, for he or she has a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed."

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, from "No Future Without Forgiveness"

Semantics!!!

In a discussion we were having on South African birds we got onto the topic of the Secretary Bird. A little boy looked at the picture of the bird in a very puzzled way, and said, "My Daddy's secretary bird doesn't look anything like that!"

If looking for a resourceful Montessori periodical then try Montessori **International**
www.montessorimagazine.com

Not only do you receive a wonderful magazine you can download back copies as a subscriber.

"I can't splash the toilet!" declares a three year old boy having difficulty with the flushing mechanism.

At present, roughly 5,1000 languages are spoken around the globe.... Yet many indicators suggest that within a generation or two, not more than 100 of these languages will survive. Languages are dying out every bit as quickly as species. While in the latter case, plants and animals disappear from the history of nature never to be seen again, with the demise of languages, entire cultures are vanishing from the history of civilization never to be lived again- Wolfgang Sachs

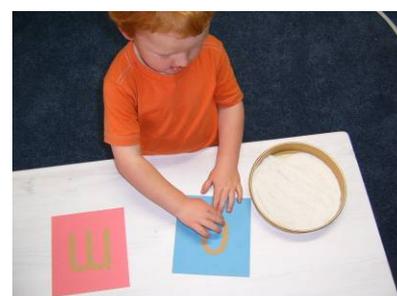
**The limits of my language
mean the limits of my world.
- Ludwig Wittgenstein**

Some Interesting Thoughts on Language from Professor David Crystal's book, *Words, Words, Words* (Oxford Univeristy Press, Oxford, 2006)

- Whenever it appears (usually around 12 months), the first word is soon followed by others. Between 12 and 18 months, most children produce around fifty words.
- In one study, the average time it took them to get from ten to fifty words was 4.8 months – that is, about ten new words a month.
- Between eighteen months and two years, the rate increases to about twenty-five a month.
- By two, active vocabulary has grown to around 200 words. By three, the figure is somewhere between 3000 and 5000!
- One study recorded a child at age three years and six months for a whole day and counted up all her words. She produced 37,000 words in total, and over 4000 different words. At times she was talking at a rate of 100 words a minute!
- To put this in context – the number of different words used in the King James Bible is around 8000...
- English has borrowed words from over 350 languages around the world.
- *Pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanoconiosis* (as 45 letter word) was recognised as the longest word in English by the National Puzzlers League in 1935. It means “a special form of silicosis caused by ultra-microscopic particles of siliceous volcanic dust”.
- Children are fascinated by long words and love to play with and create them!
- ‘Hippopotomonstrosesquipedaliophobia is a fear of long words!!!



The importance of finger painting should not be underestimated in the development of pre writing skills. The three year old is sensitive to tactile experiences as well as auditory. There is a tendency in schools to leave this a little too late.



Observations on language used in preschools.

We get caught up in the daily business of the morning class and without realizing it we are using phrases like “get out your work”, “find something to do”, “take out a tray”, “choose your work” or “find an activity to do.” We are the role model during the school times from which children learn language and if we are calling specific materials “something” then we are missing the opportunity to give the child language to the materials. We, as adults, take for granted the names of the vast array of materials available and miss those golden opportunities to pass on to the children. Even our descriptive language could be improved upon for example when asking the children to sit under the tree it could be the “leafy, oak tree” or pick up the red broom.”

**If you talk to a man in a
language he understands,
that goes to his head. If you
talk to him in his language,
that goes to his heart.
- Nelson Mandela**

There is a slow attrition of good speaking language and it is up to us to see that we remove the slang and impart a love for the magic of words, the love for a sharing of ideas and respectful communication.

Department of Education: Language Policy

The *National Education Policy Act* (Act 27 of 1996) empowers the Minister of Education to determine a national policy for language in education. Subsequently the *Language-in-Education Policy* was adopted in 1997. This policy operates within the following paradigm (paragraph 1):

1. In terms of the new Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the government, and thus the Department of Education, recognises that our cultural diversity is a valuable national asset and hence is tasked, amongst other things, to promote multilingualism, the development of the official languages, and respect for all languages used in the country, including South African Sign Language and the languages referred to in the South African Constitution.

2. The inherited language-in-education policy in South Africa has been fraught with tensions, contradictions and sensitivities, and underpinned by racial and linguistic discrimination. A number of these discriminatory policies have affected either the access of the learners to the education system or their success within it.

3. The new language in education policy is conceived of as an integral and necessary aspect of the new government's strategy of building a non-racial nation in South Africa. It is meant to facilitate communication across the barriers of colour, language and region, while at the same time creating an environment in which respect for languages other than one's own would be encouraged.

4. This approach is in line with the fact that both societal and individual multilingualism are the global norm today, especially on the African continent. As such, it assumes that the learning of more than one language should be general practice and principle in our society. That is to say, being multilingual should be a defining characteristic of being South African. It is constructed also to counter any particularistic ethnic chauvinism or separatism through mutual understanding.

5. A wide spectrum of opinions exists as to the locally viable approaches towards multilingual education, ranging from arguments in favour of the cognitive benefits and cost-effectiveness of teaching through one medium (home language) and learning additional language(s) as subjects, to those drawing on comparative international experience demonstrating that, under appropriate conditions, most learners benefit cognitively and emotionally from the type of structured bilingual education found in dual-medium (also known as two way immersion) programmes. Whichever route is followed, the underlying principle is to maintain home language(s) while providing access to and the effective acquisition of additional language(s). Hence, the Department's position that an additive approach to bilingualism is to be seen as the normal orientation of our language-in-education policy. With regard to the delivery system, policy will progressively be guided by the results of comparative research, both locally and internationally.

6. The right to choose the language of learning and teaching is vested in the individual. This right has, however, to be exercised within the overall framework of the obligation on the education system to promote multilingualism.

According to the *Language-in-Education Policy* the main aims of the Ministry of Education's policy for language in education are (paragraph 5):

1. to promote full participation in society and the economy through equitable and meaningful access to education;
2. to pursue the language policy most supportive of general conceptual growth amongst learners, and hence to establish additive multilingualism as an approach to language in education;
3. to promote and develop all the official languages;
4. to support the teaching and learning of all other languages required by learners or used by communities in South Africa, including languages used for religious purposes, languages which are important for international trade and communication, and South African Sign Language, as well as Alternative and Augmentative Communication;
5. to counter disadvantages resulting from different kinds of mismatches between home languages and languages of learning and teaching;
6. to develop programmes for the redress of previously disadvantaged languages.

The *Language-in-Education Policy* also makes the following statements:

- The parent exercises the language choice (the document uses the wording 'language rights') on behalf of the minor learner.
- Learners (i.e. their parents) must choose their language of teaching upon admission to a school.
- Where a certain language is not available, learners may request the provincial education department to make provision for instruction in the chosen language.
- Governing bodies of schools must stipulate how the school will promote multilingualism through using more than one language of learning and teaching, and/or by offering additional languages as fully-fledged subjects, and/or applying special immersion or language maintenance programmes, or through other means approved by the head of the provincial education department.
- Where there are less than 40 requests in Grades 1 to 6, or less than 35 requests in Grades 7 to 12 for instruction in a language in a given grade not already offered by a school in a particular school district, the head of the provincial department of education will determine how the needs of those learners will be met, taking into account:

- 1.the duty of the state and the right of the learners in terms of the Constitution, including
- 2.the need to achieve equity,
- 3.the need to redress the results of past racially discriminatory laws and practices,
- 4.practicability, and
- 5.the advice of the governing bodies and principals of the public schools concerned.

The objective of the *South African Schools Act* (Act 84 of 1996) is to provide a strong foundation for the protection and advancement of the country's diverse cultures and languages. Section 6 of this act empowers school governing bodies to determine the language policy of schools within guidelines set nationally and on provincial level.

According to the Department of Education's language policy school pupils have a right to be taught in a language of their choice and they should inform the school which language they wish to be taught in when applying for admission. Schools should take these preferences into account and work towards multilingualism.

Only official languages may be used for instruction. From Grade 3 onwards, all pupils will have to study the language they are taught in, and at least one other approved language. Furthermore language may not be used as a barrier to admission. Governing bodies must stipulate how their schools will promote multilingualism. Failing a language will result in failing a grade.

Current language situation in schools

Despite the government's commitment for multilingualism and the promotion of language rights in all spheres of public life, the education sector does not totally reflect the multilingual nature of South Africa. More can definitely be done towards the promotion of mainly the African languages in South African schools.

In terms of learning areas (subjects) all eleven official languages can be taken as a 'home language', 'first additional language' and 'second additional language' [with the initial school curriculum, called Curriculum 2005, the learning area was called *Language, Literacy and Communication*]. Despite the names for the learning areas very often learners take languages on a 'home language' level whilst the specific language might only be their second or third language. This is especially true in multilingual communities and in former white schools (sometimes called *former model C schools*) that have taken in a number of African language speaking pupils. This is quite a contentious issue as parents want their children to rather study in English than in their own home languages. Possible reasons that may be reason of this situation are:

- to ensure a successful financial and social future parents may think it necessary for pupils to know an international language such as English;
- parents may believe that the job market demands knowledge of English;
- studies can not be completed at secondary and tertiary level in African languages;
- schools where African languages are used as medium of instruction might not have the same resources and expertise due to the injustices and policies of the past;
- schools (formerly advantaged or disadvantaged) might not have the infrastructure or even motivation to accommodate more languages

External Information

Useful links

[South African government](#)

[South African Department of Education](#)

[Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa \(PRAESA\)](#)

Legislation and policies

[National Education Policy Act No. 27 of 1996](#)

[Language In Education Policy](#)

[Language Policy Framework for South African Higher Education](#)

[Higher Education Act: Language Policy for Higher Education](#)

[National Language Policy Framework Final Draft](#)

Academic articles

[Language-in-Education in South Africa: the process](#)

[The South African language policy-in-education: realistic or an ideological import?](#)

[The promise of Multilingualism and Education in South Africa](#)

[Language Policy in the primary schools of the Western Cape](#)

[English With or Without G\(u\)ilt: A Position Paper on Language in Education Policy for South Africa](#)

[Language rights versus educational realities — a South African perspective](#)

[Language policy and mother-tongue education in South Africa: The case for a market-oriented approach](#)

[Decentralisation and Language policy in South African Education: inevitable degrees of social exclusion evidence from sociolinguistic research in Gauteng](#)

Additional related sources

CUVELIER, P., DU PLESSIS, T., TECK, L. eds. 2003. **Multilingualism, Education and Social Integration**. Pretoria : Van Schaik. 210p.

LAUFER, M. 2000. **The multilingual challenge**. Cape Town : Via Afrika. 100p.

Source: SAlanguages.com

Number of speakers per language in South Africa (1980, 1991, 1996, 1998 and 2001)

LANGUAGE	1980	1991 (a)	1996	1998 (b)	2001 (c)
isiZulu	6 064 480	8 343 587	9 200 144	10 194 787	10 677 305
isiXhosa	2 879 360	6 729 281	7 196 118	7 610 435	7 907 153
Afrikaans	4 925 760	5 685 403	5 811 547	5 945 805	5 983 426
Sepedi	2 431 760	n/a	3 695 846	3 832 645	4 208 980
English	2 815 640	3 422 503	3 457 467	3 692 157	3 673 203
Setswana	1 444 908	3 368 544	3 301 774	3 613 925	3 677 016
Sesotho	1 877 840	n/a	3 104 197	3 539 261	3 555 186
Xitsonga	888 140	1 439 809	1 756 105	1 776 505	1 992 207
siSwati	650 600	952 478	1 013 193	1 068 733	1 194 430
Tshivenda	169 740	673 538	876 409	1 227 824	1 021 757
isiNdebele	459 880	n/a	586 961	654 304	711 821
Other	292 360	640 277	228 275	157 767	217 293
Unspecified	n/a	n/a	355 538	10 868	n/a
TOTAL:	26 271 060	31 255 420	40 583 574	43 325 017	44 819 778

Source: [Statistics South Africa](#)

Primary and High School SAMA Members

EMIS – The Education Management Information System – forms are an annual nightmare for independent schools. Montessori schools often find them even more challenging as the statistical information required is set out by grades, race, traditional subject areas etc.

Together with Sharon Caldwell, we have made some progress in creating a page especially for Montessori schools. As a trial, the Eastern Cape EMIS department will add a list of “Montessori Subjects/Learning Areas” to select from. We have also been given the contact details of the national head of EMIS to propose further changes on a national level.

One pleasant surprise following our EMIS meeting was the discovery that a computer programme exists that will simplify all our lives in submitting the Annual Report. SAMA was given free copies of this programme (called SA-SAMS) for its school members! If you are required to fill in the Annual Report (all registered independent schools are required to do this) and are a SAMA school member, please contact me and a copy of the disk will be sent to you. This is applicable on a national level. You can email me your details on president@samontessori.org.za

Sam Streak

Don't you just start to break out in a sweat when the “wise “ kid in the class looks you straight in the eye and gives you a f* for the f sound! Susanne from Durban has recently experienced this not just from the older brother, but from the younger one too. They must be in cahoots!**



A gem has been found in the quiet, but interesting town of Grahamstown. This is what Antoinette van Winkel has to share with our readers.

I am so honoured that I have this opportunity and you need to know that I am a shy person actually and it was really hard for me to trace back the years filled with so many memories. I have never given an account like this before and it somehow distils much of one's life and work. A large part of it was also quite a lonely walk for me, initially trying to get Montessori accepted, understood and respected in my area. Regionally, everyone has probably their own perception of Montessori depending on their training and support they received. Montessori Society, as I recall has gone through profound growth, changes and some fragmentation over the years. I think it is true to say that essentially it is the people who keep the spirit of Montessori alive and well, no matter where we find ourselves in the world.

1. How did you become involved with Montessori education?

Montessori philosophy and the understanding of the child was to me as a young mother the perfect continuation of our own children's journey towards independence. Our son attended a small home-based Montessori School under the Directress Julia Wiegand in King Williamstown. This was the 80's and SA was on the brink of changes which permeated a tension and expectancy throughout the lives of every South African who chose to stay and make it the best country for all it's people. Here I learnt to "follow" the child. I read, observed, learned, listened and shared. I made equipment to use. I was encouraged and supported with so much wisdom and practical assistance from inspiring Montessorians in this region. When we moved to Grahamstown shortly thereafter, I confidently started Timlin Montessori as a small home school primarily for my own children in 1986. Balancing full time mothering of our own two children, working as a volunteer for La Leche League International (breastfeeding and mothering support) and studying and changing my career while my husband was finishing a Masters degree at Rhodes University, was quite daunting at times.

In 1987, at the height of political tensions and deep social struggles, I attended the "Free To Be" symposium at the University of Cape Town. We were part of 2000 participants from every corner of the country, all deeply concerned about the education, health and welfare of our young children in our divided society. Our common conviction was and remains today; that the early years are the most important in a child's life. The coming together gave SAAECE (The Southern African Association For Early Childhood Educare) the voice to initiate nation-wide networking and advocacy for a better world for all South Africa's children. Montessori Education was presented at a panel and workshop forum. That event alone created more media coverage for the young child's educational and welfare needs than anything I can recall. From the Eastern Cape, an even stronger bond resulted; we were inspired to serve our communities against all laws and restrictions. Our townships burnt. We waited. Families on both sides of our communities were ripped apart by military presence in the townships, detentions and interrogations dominating our newspapers. We tried bravely everyday to be the hope for our young children's future in our care. Very few Montessori schools here, as I recall, had the financial means to start beautiful Nienhaus equipped environments. People were unbelievably resourceful and schools in East London, King Williams Town, Queenstown and Transkei were an inspiration to us all. We upheld one another. Strong woman! By 1990 Grahamstown had 3 small home-based Montessori Schools.

I am proud to say that now, after 21 years, Timlin Montessori School, a small home based learning environment, is still serving the education needs of children as a recognized, early educational institution in Grahamstown.

2. Describe your involvement in Montessori over the years. Has it evolved? Stayed the same? Declined? What is your involvement today?

My involvement with Montessori has been primarily through my school and the valuable contribution it is making. I accept children between the ages of 2 ½ years and 6 years of age. I also work with children who have special educational needs. I continue to upgrade my expertise and qualifications in various learning areas through research, accredited workshops, certified courses and meaningful interaction with professionals particularly in the educational and developmental field. Grahamstown has a wealth of expertise to offer in this regard! I was a member of the former Montessori Society and am a current SAMA member now. I have served as chairperson for our Eastern Cape Regional Chapter, served on forums to develop Montessori standards and ethics and have represented Timlin Montessori over the years on various educational platforms and societies in our broader educational arena.

My walk with Montessori is ever evolving and growing! South Africa has experienced so many profound changes over the last 20 years and our children have many new and exciting educational challenges to meet. Globally we are connected on so many spheres and I continuously check and analyze the relevance of what I teach and live everyday in the context of the real contribution Montessori can make to young minds of tomorrow and the parent of today.

What I know for certain is that Montessorians have a particularly valuable and unique contribution to make and we should be immensely proud of our work and the learning environment that we offer our society. Montessori values and principles, if well integrated, are sustainable and enduring for life. It inspires the person's entire approach to knowledge and skills well beyond formal school years. I have always found people interested to know more about Montessori education and we should be prepared to share eloquently.

3. Did your Montessori training have a significant impact on your philosophy of education? A significant impact on who you are now?

Yes. I have a measure and reference unsurpassable. The more I have learnt and observed, the more sensitive I have become to my children's needs and the rhythms and patterns of growth and learning, and I have come to trust the process in confidence, respecting the timing. I delight in that one moment that makes it all worth while, igniting the next spark towards the great potential in each of us. I have grown in gratitude and joy. I trust the process more! I have found my passion through Montessori education and it has enabled me to use my unique skills, gifts and talents in a meaningful unapologetic manner everyday. This is my personal contribution to life and people. I strive to keep things simple and maintain the balance.

4. Has experience in the classroom altered your philosophy or view of yourself?

Children create their own patterns, they weave their own energy and I often ponder on the way Maria Montessori described her view of what the teacher will become - ultimately not the centre of the learning dynamics but rather the one who directs, supports and brings the appropriate materials to enable the absorbent mind of the young child to enfold into the greater work of "becoming" our full person. For me, one of the most challenging and beautiful areas of Montessori philosophy, is her writings on the inspiring, inner character of the "directoressa", the preparation of the teacher. My experiences with children have deeply rooted my understanding of the connection between the way children learn through their sensory pathways and the extraordinary well designed materials of Montessori. I have creatively adapted challenging ways of bringing knowledge to my children and I learn from the child everyday. Children are extraordinary inventors and problem-solvers. The sheer will and innate force of life that children manifest in order to learn and just be, is so contagious that I am inspired daily.

5. What do you see as the most significant accomplishments of the Montessori movement in SA in the past 50 years?

The courageous perseverance, selfless time and tenacity of the Montessorians. We continue against all the political odds, disagreements and socio-economic challenges. We aspire and work together for the good of all teachers and members. Our differences of opinions, diversity in training and strong personalities should encourage us all to find ways to unite and be more interdependent and connected with one another. I give my full support and thoughts of goodwill to everyone in SAMA who is putting their efforts and hearts together to keep Montessori education at the forefront in this country. Thank you for all you do.

6. The most significant failure?

I substitute all perceived failures as challenges. We still need to build bridges respectfully and work together to seek better ways to accept and understand each other and to find better ways to reach out and reconsider how best to meet the needs of our children in the country without alienating our wonderful diversity. Challenge yourself today and get on board. Help SAMA reach the goals they have set out to get Montessori the recognition it deserves at the level where it matters most - the government! I want to see my grandchildren in affordable Montessori Schools for ever!!

7. What is your favourite book written by MM?

I treasure these in my heart: "The Absorbent Mind"; "The Secret of Childhood" and "Education and Peace". Each is chosen for a special reason.

8. What is your favourite book or resource of any type that you use or refer to often?

I am a passionate reader of books and it is very difficult not to fill this page with commentary as well! Here are a few that I happily share with you which helps me during a hectic school week!

Paula Polk Lillard – Montessori: A Modern Approach

Recommended Montessori Curriculum - great to keep me on track!

Montessori Courier

Montessori International

Montessori Education

Tots to Teens

The Absorbent Mind

Child Education, UK.

Catherine McTamaney - The Tao of Montessori (for those quiet moments in the garden)

SARK - Prosperity Pie (gets me out of my box and for a good laugh at myself!)

The following are latest additions to my bookshelf and I highly recommend them:

Papanek, Victor -The Green Imperative

Gerald, Sue - Why Love Matters

Holford.P - Optimum Nutrition for your child's mind.

For sheer visual delight for teacher and parent;

Seldin, Tim - How to raise an amazing child the Montessori way

9. What is your favourite children's book?

Again, there are so many wonderful books on the shelves these days and even more beautiful ones get published all the time! Our Timlin children helped me select their favourite books for this year.

Yes We Can! - Sam McBratney & Charles Fuge

No Matter What - Debi Gliori

Owen and the Mountain- Malachy Doyle and Giles Greenfield

Stellaluna - Janelle Canon

Wonderful Earth- Nick Butterworth & Mick Inkpen

African Nursery Rhymes - Liz Mills (I love this one and we have fun reading this book)

10. Describe a favourite Montessori memory:

There are so many, they bring a smile and a tear at times! Meeting and sharing with old pupils at our celebrations, listening carefully to the memories they have retained from their Montessori years. Keeping their friendships formed years ago regardless of where they are at school or whether they live elsewhere in the world. Receiving a letter from a young girl who wrote her first story book about trees and sending a copy to Timlin, her first school. She recalls her love for nature as she remembered tracing the outline of the leaf puzzles over and over. Spontaneous visits to the classroom by previous students, quietly walking up to a piece of equipment and touching it as if to once again experience that memory. One young man exclaimed, "Oh I am so glad it is still here!" Another is hearing about and seeing old pupils making valuable contributions to their formal schools and chosen careers, proudly acknowledging their Montessori roots.

One of Grahamstown's highly rated scientists in his field, an old Montessori pupil himself, who attended a small school in Holland, shared one of his earliest memories with our parents and children a few years ago. He said that by being allowed to use an iron to try and do a task that would otherwise have been "verboden" for a child in those days, gave him a sense of his ability to do whatever he put his mind too. He contributed the self discipline and passion he has for his research field directly to the skills and inner motivation that was fostered through Montessori Education.

11. Did you have a mentor, supervisor, teacher or student who has significantly affected you?

I am grateful to so many wonderful and wise women and men that have crossed my path over the years. Some I have never met and they talk to me through their works and books and art and music. I find it difficult to single one out because they have all brought their special contributions to my life in so many unselfish ways, some knowingly and others unknowingly. Their faces are carved in my heart - my parents, my husband, my son and my daughter. I learn something from everyone even if it is a lesson best forgotten!

12. Do you have any particular memories of your first day (s) of teaching?

Always the same anticipation that I have only learnt to accept as the years of experience calms the nerves and fortifies the spirit - a mixture of excitement, happiness and expectation. Being a little unsure of what to expect, but having a sense of knowing and trusting that I am ready for this! Not very different from the little person that comes through my door each day!

14. What do you think the future holds for Montessori education?

That is entirely the choice and responsibility of every Montessorian to determine their future in the broader educational arena in this country. The time to consolidate is never better than now. We have very capable and smart people who can take this and run with it. We pride ourselves as one of the most constitutionally liberated countries in the world which potentially means that freedom of educational choices should be a right for every parent and child to exercise. However, for us as Montessorians, there are expectations and standards to be met and we have to work together to meet these in all areas without delay to create a strong united core of educators who is prepared to take our rightful place as contributors to our future in education in SA. Keep the common goal for the good of all and compromise and negotiate the unnecessary differences we have. SAMA has become the forum to find ways to succeed together. I congratulate Sam Streak and her team on the work they do. I am immensely proud to be a Montessori teacher.

Thank you Antoinette for offering us a wealth of personal insight into your journey with Montessori education. I know that my travels need to take me through Grahamstown! You have given us much food for thought.

This has been edited and anyone who would like to read the full transcript can let me know and I will email this to you. chandler2@telkomsa.net.

TEACHER:	Millie, give me a sentence starting with "I."
MILLIE:	I is...
TEACHER:	No, Millie..... Always say, "I am."
MILLIE:	All right... "I am the ninth letter of the alphabet."

<p>There is in every child a painstaking teacher, so skilful that he obtains identical results in all children in all parts of the world. The only language men ever speak perfectly is the one they learn in babyhood, when no one can teach them anything!</p> <p>- Maria Montessori</p>
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So, what does the SAMA Exco do?

In short – a lot! We communicate by email often, meet once a month, either by conference call or face to face (every 3 months or so) and are focussed on offering members the most we can.

Standard items on our agenda include membership figures, looking at finances, fundraising / awareness events such as the 100 Steps, feedback from each portfolio as well as conference planning.

Each portfolio holder has at least one project for the year. Heidi, Sharon and myself are working on the Montessori Best Practice Handbook, Sharon is also co-ordinating marketing and the 100 Steps, Ally is our schools representative and is compiling a handbook for starting a school. Susanne has been working with Lorraine (our membership administrator) to get the financial and membership records up to date. Exco also discusses and looks at the grievances lodged by members of the public and formulates the best plan of action for all parties concerned, particularly the SAMA members.

The 2008 conference planning is being co-ordinated by Sharon Caldwell, Taddy Beyleveld and myself. More details on exciting developments here will be sent to all soon.

Regional reps are also present on conference calls and give feedback from SIG meetings, plan future meetings and let us know if there are any issues being dealt with on a regional level. We have a new Gauteng Representative, please refer to last page of newsletter.

Jacky Price continues to compile and edit our National Newsletter. We have been receiving such positive feedback on this and thank Jacky for all her time and effort.

Other than our two administrators who are paid by SAMA, everyone involved on the SAMA Exco, including regional reps, volunteer our time to further promote the aims and objectives of the Association. This means you may need to exercise some patience if we take a day or two to return calls and emails. While we are all very committed to our work for SAMA, we are usually juggling at least a few other jobs and our families. Last, but not least, thank you for our support as members of SAMA. As always, if there is anything you need help and/or support with in your school and work as a Montessorian, please let us know. All our contact details are on the SAMA website www.samontessori.org.za

Sam Streak

Language is the blood of the soul into which thoughts run and out of which they grow.
- Oliver Wendell Holmes

Words of Thanks

SAMA

Attention to whom it may concern.

The Words of Thanks.

We like to thank you as a whole group which is currently trained of Montessori. What such a wonderful and amazing thing you have done for us.

We gain a lot, not only for us but even the most important people who we dealing with which is our children. Our centres we work in and the communities we live in.

Absolutely our children will excel and good succeed in their adult life through your kind and support.

Thank you so much about all you have done for us like teaching materials/resources which was too difficult to get.

Yours faithfully,
Nongoma and Ulundi Group

There are hundreds of languages in the world, but a smile speaks them all.
- Anonymous

Training



academy for teacher training
Educating the Human Potential

Join us for a workshop on Curriculum Planning and School Management

10th to 13th December 2007

This hands-on practical workshop will allow participants to develop their own plans for the 2008 school year.

We will look at topics such as:
Montessori and the National Curriculum Statement
Developing policies for your school
Ways to improve communication with parents
Managing your school for sustainability and growth

Venue: Pretoria Campus of the Montessori Academy
for Teacher Training
(Plot 84 Zwavelpoort, Pretoria East)

Time: 09h00 – 15h00

Cost: R1500.00

Facilitators: Heidi van Staden and Sam Streak

To book, contact Ina on
(012) 996 0855 or email academy@netactive.co.za



Need a change in your life?

Headstart Mercy Montessori Education Training Centre has vacancies for full-time lecturers to start either in January or April, 2008.

We also need lecturers for our part-time Pre-primary courses.

A full Montessori qualification plus a minimum of 5 years teaching experience is required. Applications please, a.s.a.p. to:

Kay Orrell,
Administrator
Headstart Mercy Montessori Training Centre
Fax: 021 797 6234
Email: mmattc@mweb.co.za

How many languages are there in the world? How about 5 billion! Each of us talks, listens, and thinks in his/her own special language that has been shaped by our culture, experiences, profession, personality, mores and attitudes. The chances of us meeting someone else who talks the exact same language is pretty remote.
- Anonymous

TEACHER: Glenn, how do you spell "crocodile?"
GLENN: K-R-O-K-O-D-A-I-L"
TEACHER: No, that's wrong
GLENN: Maybe it s wrong, but you asked me how I spell it!

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For Sale: Wooden boxes and trays in all sizes
(painted and unpainted) for storing and
displaying of Montessori material.

Craft classes offered: relating specifically to the
Montessori curriculum and craft materials in kit
form available for purchasing. Contact Details:
Shahida Asmall – Phone: 0312090675,
0848177867. Email: shaber.asmall@huletts.co.za

Print your own Montessori materials. I have
permission to sell an unused Classroom
Creations CD containing PDF versions of the full
set of nomenclatures and language cards. Once a
license has been purchased by a school, they are
granted permission to print as many copies as
they wish for the exclusive use of that school
only. Please contact Jacqueline on 083 626 6421
or jacqueline.wetselaar@gmail.com

If you would like to advertise in
the SAMA Newsletter, please
send the relevant information

through to

admin@samontessori.org

Vacancies

The Field and Study Montessori Pre-School,
Parkmore Sandton is looking for a mature student to
start in 2008.

If you are interested, please email your CV to:

nebula@global.co.za

The Children's Workshop, Cape Town requires for
January 2008: 3-6 Montessori qualified directress with
min. 2 years experience.

Classroom assistant for Nursery class (age 2 – 3)

Experience dealing with small children essential.

Montessori training preferred but Educare training also
acceptable.

Contact Jenni or Liesel at 021 671 7538 or

childwork@mweb.co.za before 31 October 2007.

Maria Montessori House, Randburg is looking
for a Lower Primary Teacher to start in January
2008. If you are interested please email your CV
to Anne mmh@absamail.co.za

Chameleon's Montessori School, Durbanville is
looking for Directress' for their 3-6 and 6-9
environments, as well as Afternoon staff for
2008. Please contact either Emma/Claire on
(021) 913 5213 or (021) 976 9611.

Sunflower Montessori School, Newton Park,
Pot Elizabeth requires 3-6 year old pre-school
teacher required for Please contact the principal
on **041 364 2943.** To begin January 2008.

For more information on Job Vacancies, Associate
Member(suppliers), Member schools and more, visit SAMA
website www.samontessori.org.za

Please ensure that all your SAMA staff members have the opportunity to read this newsletter.

The following products are available:

- **The SAMA Recommended Curriculum** – an integration of A Montessori Recommended Curriculum with the Revised National Curriculum Statement. For queries and to order, contact the SAMA office. The curriculum is printed and bound, and is available to paid up SAMA Institutional Members for R250.00 and to all other categories of membership for R1000.
- **SAMA Policies and Procedures CDs** – a comprehensive compilation of government laws, acts, and policies on CD 1 and examples from various Montessori schools and resources to use in school management on CD 2, at R50.00 each. These prices are for school members only. All categories of membership may purchase the CDs for R500 per set.

For more details contact: admin@samontessori.org.za

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Focus for October issue:
Montessori Primary, Middle and High Schools

All articles were contributed by SAMA members. We would love to hear from our readers. Please send interesting snippets, valuable insights and amusing anecdotes to share with others and help make this newsletter an exciting and interesting one. If you feel you would like to contribute, please send to Jacky via: admin@samontessori.org.za