

## Montessori Method

### Learning How to Write

As adults when we write we feel as though it is a natural process but what we forget is for a child, learning the physical task of writing is a big job. There are two major skills to master before being able to be successful at writing. The first is committing the shape to memory and knowing what sound that specific shape makes and the second is developing the muscular skill necessary to hold and use a pencil with control.

To actually absorb both of these tasks at the same time is often discouraging as well as frustrating for the child. It is extremely hard for the child to visually recognize and learn how the shape is formed and the sound it makes while trying to move the pencil with enough control to make the shape. Maria Montessori recognized this and designed materials to give the child the opportunity to learn the shape and sound of the letter in a way that is independent from their perfection of the fine motor skill. Through a number of specific materials and lessons the child learns to write, by not actually writing. The sand paper tray and sandpaper letters are some of the lessons that give the child the ability to perform purposeful activities which prepare him both directly and indirectly for the actual task of handwriting.

As the child becomes confident in his ability to write with a pencil, the lessons move from the sand to paper. By giving the child the preliminary stages of writing in a specific and intriguing way, he is able to naturally merge to the task of writing. And as we all know, writing is something that as you grow becomes more and more important. Even with our current society leaning so heavily on typing, verbal dictation and the all dreaded texting, giving the child the ability to write is a trait that she will use throughout her years. The primary environment is an amazing place where children are given the tools to grow and explore all areas of their being. When you stop and think about it, in so many ways the three years spent in a Montessori primary classroom lay the groundwork for the rest of their lives.