

## Educating the Whole Child

The ultimate purpose of education is not only to enable individuals to assimilate successfully into their culture, but to empower individuals to transcend their culture in order to make a positive impact and help it to advance.

—ANDREW KUTT, FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
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THE INTERNATIONAL PEACE ACADEMY

## Educating the Whole Child

# Oneness-Family School



## THE PEACE ARBOR

ages 6-9

grades 1-3

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# The Weekly Schedule

8:30–9:00 am .....	Social Bonding
9:00–9:30 am Monday–Thursday ..	Music/Self Discovery/Brain Gym
9:00–9:30 am Friday .....	Community Meeting
9:30 am–12 noon .....	Monday–Wednesday Contract Work
9:30–11:45 am.....	Thursday Contract/Yoga
9:30–11:00 am .....	Friday Contract/Communication
11:00–11:30 am .....	Recess
12:00 noon–12:30 pm .....	Lunch/Story
1:30 pm.....	Lunch/Jobs
12:30–1:00 pm .....	Jobs/Reading
12:30–1:00 pm.....	Sustained Silent Reading
1:00–1:30 pm .....	Recess
12:45–2:00 pm .....	Sustained Silent Reading/French
1:30–2:15 pm .....	Writing Skills
1:00–3:00 pm.....	Art/Spanish
2:15–3:00 pm.....	Science/Culture
2:00–3:00 pm.....	Music/Spanish
3:00–3:30 .....	Class Meeting
3:35 .....	Dismissal

# The Day's Schedule

**8:30-9 am Social Bonding**

**9-9:30 am Morning Circle Time** (Monday-Thursday)

**9-9:30 am Community Meeting** (Friday)

Our morning circle is a time of self-reflection as well as community building and special lessons. The class gathers each morning for sharing of news, feelings or thoughts; discussions of a particular virtue; as well as lessons in self-esteem, cooperation, conflict-resolution, phonics and learning skills. During circle time, we may discuss heroes and heroines (dead and alive), their achievements, self-transcendence, and heroic display of virtues on global, local and personal levels, and to show there is a hero/heroine in everyone.

**9:30 am Contract Work Time**

Mornings are set aside for the children to work on the subjects that require more concentration and include independent work assignments and teacher lessons. Individual work contracts are set up with the children that indicate their daily assignments, according to their own individual needs. The students are then responsible for fulfilling their contracts. Drawing on the Montessori philosophy as a base, they work either independently, in small groups, or in lessons with a teacher. Subjects include math, language, spelling, reading, writing and typing.

**12:00 noon Lunch**

**12:30 pm Recess**

Each day (except on days where the children have P.E.) the children have an outdoor recess, usually after lunch. This is a time where children choose from a variety of activities, such as 4-square, jump rope, basketball practice, hop scotch, etc.

**1:00 pm Classroom Jobs**

**1:10 pm Silent Reading**

After lunch and classroom jobs, the children have approximately 20 minutes of sustained silent reading, choosing a book on their appropriate reading levels. We believe that the silence is relaxing, and also enables each child to become deeply involved in the reading material.

**1:30 pm Afternoon Work and Specialists**

Another important part of the 6-9 curriculum is when a free time is offered. This varies from five to thirty minutes a few times a week during which the children are allowed to choose any activity in the classroom they wish, (plus some additional educational games) either independently or cooperatively.

**3:00 pm Afternoon Circle**

# Philosophy

Children come to the Peace Arbor classroom with incredible curiosity and enthusiasm for the wonder of life, for their rapidly expanding abilities, and for their new learning environment. They have reached a new level of development; physically evident in the growth of permanent teeth, and intellectually evident in their savvy communication, quick witted senses of humor, and delightful, imaginative storytelling. Their focus is shifting, from a parent-centered one, to an other-adult-centered and eventually peer-centered frame of reference. They are more aware of the larger world around them, and they are very eager to find their place in that world.

In the Peace Garden, students were mainly involved in working with concrete materials. Now students are ready to begin their journey towards the abstract thinking and understanding that will carry them as adults. In the Peace Arbor, students still rely heavily on hands-on materials, but also are introduced to the more abstract concepts those materials symbolize. Students at this level are also ready to use their maturing imaginations to understand life's complexity. They are excited to learn all about everything, and a common question at this age level is, "What is that?" They want to know it all.

Peace Arbor students strive to master everything around them. They begin to assume more responsibility for themselves and their classroom. Students at this level are very social, and are better able to help each other in their daily activities. Students at this stage of development are also very sensitive, imaginative, and eager to understand and develop values and communication skills. Fairness becomes very important, and the children need and want to learn how to cooperate better, and how to resolve conflicts fairly and peacefully. The Peace Arbor classroom eases the children into academic studies while continuing to develop life skills, creativity, and personal growth.

# Curriculum

Our unique curriculum is divided into 3 parts:

◆ **Academy**

The traditional academic subjects representing the child's exploration of the world around him/her.

◆ **Self Discovery**

The arts and other subjects representing exploration of the child's inner world.

◆ **Manifestation**

The crystallization of Academy and Self Discovery representing how the child views him/her self in the world and how he/she chooses to participate in it.

Please see curriculum chart on the next 2 pages to view the curriculum parts in more detail.

# 3 Parts of the Curriculum

## Academy, Self-Discovery & Manifestation

### Academy

A journey of exploration of the world around us.

#### LANGUAGE

Stories, poems, readings, creative poetry, writing, telling stories, vocabulary, handwriting, communication skills

#### MATH

Processing, practical skills, problem solving, computation

#### SENSORIAL

Developing the senses, learning to discriminate sizes, shapes, colors, textures and order in preparation for later academics

#### CULTURAL / SCIENCE

History, Geography, Biology, the Sciences:

The integration of them all, originating from the great lessons about the history of our world

#### PRACTICAL LIFE

Developing practical skills, improving fine and gross motor control, promoting self-awareness, self esteem, order, independence, concentration and coordination

#### FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French, Spanish– foreign languages as a gateway to communicating and understanding people of other cultures

#### OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Appreciating the core essence of nature, identification of plants and animals in the natural world

#### HEALTH

Body awareness and knowledge

#### FIELD TRIPS

Leaving the classroom environment, exploring places connected to the curriculum

### Self-Discovery

A journey of exploration of the world inside of us.

#### SELF-REFLECTION

Guided meditations at circle time, time for individual reflection, peace corner, sacred items, morning circle, silent moment, activities for inner peace

#### TEACHING VALUES AND VIRTUES

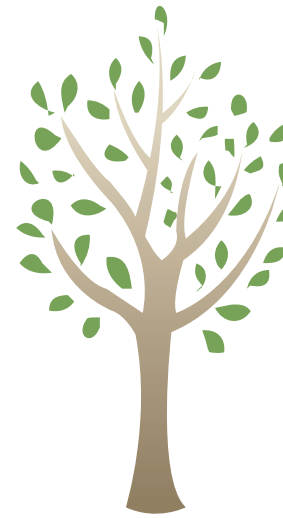
Peace studies, discussions – using stories, plays, role plays, songs

#### INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Conflict resolution, peer mediation, cooperation, communication and relationship skills

#### DRAMA

Acting, singing, choreographed dancing, skits in the classroom, performances at community meeting, story extensions, role play



#### MUSIC

Rhythms, songs, singing, instruments, reading music, creation of own songs/music

#### WORLD RELIGIONS

In conjunction with our cultural studies, we expose students to differences and similarities in belief systems around the world to promote tolerance and understanding

#### COOKING

Cultural food preparation

#### ARTS / CRAFTS

Visual arts, painting, sculpture, form drawing,

#### HANDICRAFTS

Sewing, finger knitting, weaving,

#### MOVEMENT

Brain gym, eurhythmy, creative movement

#### PHYSICAL EDUCATION / SPORTS

Team games, individual skill-building

# Manifestation

A culmination of Academy and Self-Discovery work brought forth to the world.

#### COMMUNITY MEETING

Songs, dances, skits, community games, seasonal/holiday celebrations

#### FESTIVALS & SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

United Nations Day, Festival of Lights, Earth Day/Week, Peace Run, Science Fair, Spring Tea, Field Day, Art show Auction,, seasonal celebrations

#### PERFORMANCES

Within each classroom, at community meetings, at festivals, organized around a central theme, talent shows

#### EXHIBITS & DEMONSTRATIONS

Art shows at school, libraries, and local businesses; special class presentations, peaceful conflict resolution demonstrations

#### BUDDIES – KIDS HELPING KIDS

Manifestation of the multi-age classroom, interaction between the age levels

#### COMMUNITY SERVICE

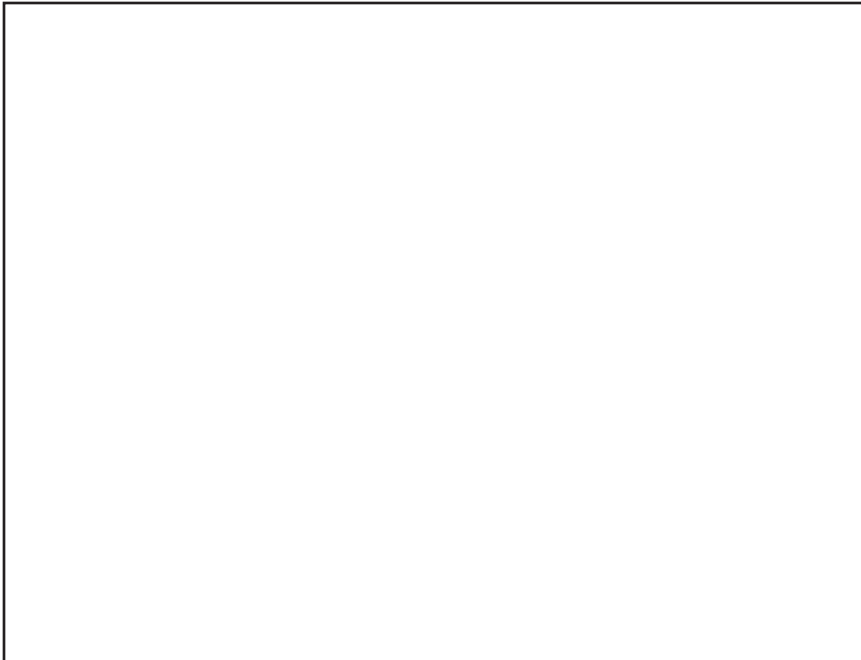
Identifying the needs of others in the world, helping those in need, manifesting values learned, practical applications.

#### AFTER SCHOOL CLASSES

Music lessons, soccer, art classes, drama, chess, dance, mad science

# Academy

In the Peace Arbor classrooms, children work with hands-on materials (called “manipulatives”), have individual and small group lessons, and engage in independent and small group follow-up activities. They have special assignments based on their individual skill levels, and a variety of assessments to test their mastery. Children gradually master new skills at their own pace, according to their individual interests, needs and abilities. Students begin to take more responsibility for their own learning and time management, creating and working on daily work “contracts”. A mixed age environment provides younger students with mentors and role models, and older students with a chance to develop leadership skills.



# Language

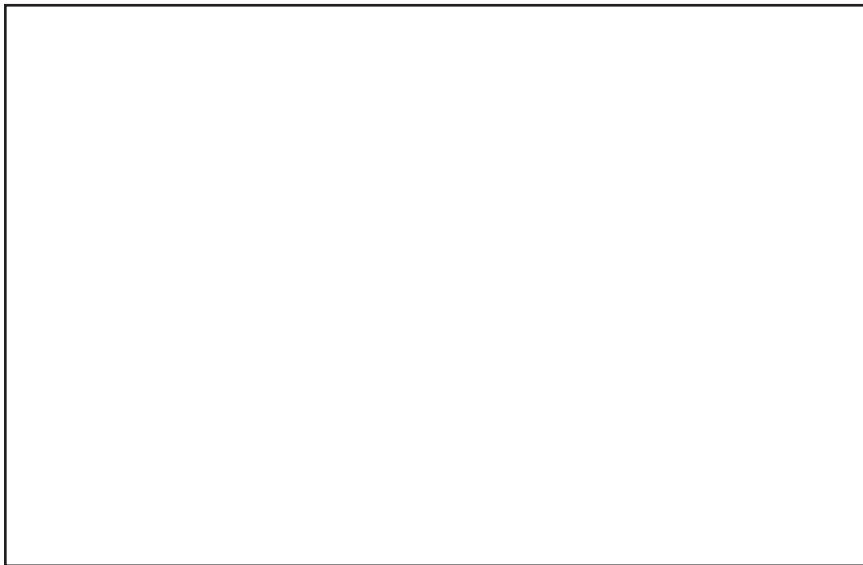
Whereas the understanding of the spoken word was of key importance at the Peace Garden level, the Peace Arbor student is ready to master the written word. Through reading, the student can find out any information known to humanity, and through writing, he or she can add to that knowledge and communicate with the world. Also, children of this age are growing in their capacity to understand abstract information, and are fascinated by words themselves: how they are classified, how they function in our language, and the complex rules associated with them. It is a perfect time for the study of language to begin in earnest.

In the Peace Arbor, students begin to learn about sentence structure, punctuation, and word study (compound words, alphabetical order, synonyms, homonyms, contractions, etc.). In addition to traditional methods of diagramming sentences, students study the parts of speech using a material called “The Grammar Boxes”, which help them identify various parts of speech in sentences. In the reading program, students use a phonics-based program that includes readers, manipulatives, and journals, which also develop students’ reading comprehension. Students meet with a teacher weekly to read and discuss a story written on their level. Students begin with readers that teach beginning, middle and ending consonant sounds, as well as short and long vowel sounds. Once mastered, the child begins reading simple chapter books with multiple syllable words. Once a child can read comfortably, students progress at their own rate, using various reading materials in the classroom to learn how to decode more complex words and to enhance their reading comprehension skills. The spelling program compliments this reading program by reinforcing essential phonics skills, investigating word-building rules, and practicing commonly misspelled words.

Keyboard skills on Apple/ Macintosh computers are introduced. Three skill levels are taught to prepare the students for the typing skills needed in the Peace Academy and beyond.

## Mathematics

Students in the Peace Arbor have reached a new, more sophisticated, level of development. They seek out “the Big Picture” in learning; they need to understand “Why” everything is the way it is. They also have a more fully developed sense of imagination that allows them to envision in their mind things they have never seen before, or would never be able to see, such as the concept of infinity. To meet these new needs, the mathematics program is designed to help students bridge the gap between concrete and abstract understanding. Many of the same tools and materials they used in the Peace Garden are now used as a jumping-off point to exploring much larger, more complex mathematical concepts, such as square roots and area. As students make the transition from concrete to abstract thinking, they gain a true understanding of how math works, and will be ready for all that the mathematical world has to offer.



Peace Arbor students get a firm foundation in understanding place value in the decimal system, and in reading and writing numbers into the millions. They master addition and subtraction facts, and work on becoming fluent with multiplication and division. They practice both standard and metric measurement, and are introduced to perimeter and area. They are introduced to concepts and operations with fractions and geometry. They are introduced to concepts of pre-algebra and work to understand time and money operations. They are given many opportunities to use their math skills in real-life problem-solving situations, including cooking, building, and graphing. Each new concept learned is incorporated as much as possible into other areas, thus helping students to connect up their mathematics studies with the “Big Picture” of their learning world.

## Science

Dr. Montessori’s concept of a “Cosmic Curriculum” underlies how the science themes are presented in the Peace Arbor classroom. A “Cosmic” education emphasizes the value of helping the child to respect the unity of all life, and to recognize, “in all creation, a unifying plan upon which depends not only the different forms of living beings, but also the evolution of the earth itself.” (Basic Ideas of Montessori’s Educational Theory: The Clio Montessori Series, pp. 128-129). Peace Arbor students are at the level where they want to know it all. They want the “big picture” of their world; they want to know the name of every last thing in the universe. The Peace Arbor offers students a way to develop a sense of their place in the cosmos, and a sense of awe and respect for all the physical processes of life.

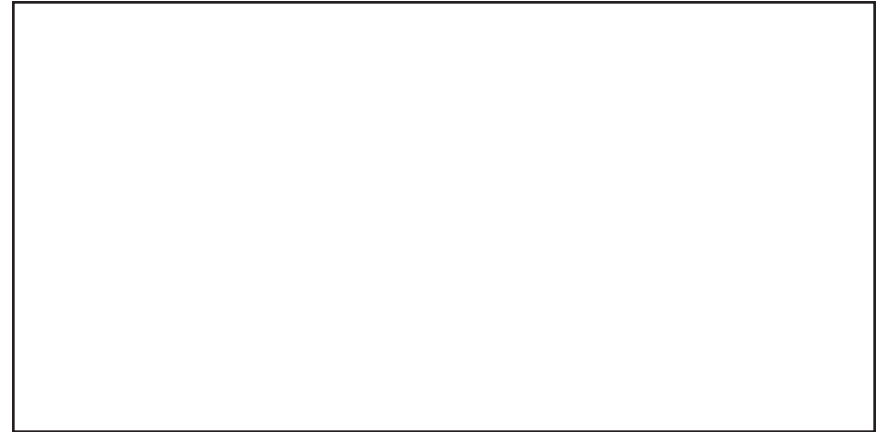
In the Peace Arbor program, science is presented through thematic content areas, science experiments, and field study. In addition, students develop individual science projects (that extend over a period of time) that they present at a Science Fair during second

semester. The themes are generally presented in three-year cycles, drawing from all branches of science. In one year, for instance, the class might study Earth History and the beginnings of life, later studying and drawing various forms of early life. They would then travel to the Museum of Natural Science to study fossils. Later in the year the focus might be on animal studies, and the theme of "circulation" (in animals and plants).

Because the Peace Arbor student learns best through a "hands-on" approach, there is an emphasis in the class on an experiential approach to science. There are many opportunities for field study--i.e. trips to gardens, local parks, and so on. In addition, the classroom offers many visually appealing science materials for the children to observe, touch, sort and match. It is important for children to experience and care for real animals and plants, as much as possible, so students help in the care of the classroom creatures -- Iggy the iguana, Pooter the Cockatoo, and several hermit crabs. In the spring, students often have the opportunity to tend the school gardens. The spring Science Fair fosters a deeper appreciation for science content as well as introduces them to the scientific process.

## History and Geography

A strong belief that the child needs and wants to be grounded in the "real world" plays a major part in how the Geography and Culture (Social Studies) is presented in the Peace Arbor. Maria Montessori believed that 6-9 year old children are in a sensitive period for the development of a sense of responsibility for the earth and a global consciousness--a belief emphasized increasingly by modern thinkers. The Peace Arbor Geography and Culture program underscores Montessori's belief that it is important for children to develop a sense of "the big picture"--including a sense of the place of humanity in the universe.



Geography includes lessons on the history of the earth itself. Theories such as the "big bang" are presented in appealing and "impressionistic" ways--to interest and inspire the children, and help them develop a sense of reverence for the universe and their place in it. Other lessons involving earth history are often presented in three-year cycles. For instance, one year we may emphasize the very beginnings of life (from plant to one-celled animals), the following year the prehistoric period that includes the dinosaurs, and the next year the period of prehistory that includes prehistoric mammals. Other units that are offered in three-year cycles include the solar system, geology (types and formation of rocks), and ecology.

Each year, students focus on one geographical area, and one country, for an extended period of time. The students become involved in lessons about the globe, the continents, land forms, climate, and geographical features of the area of study.

Arts, crafts, music, and field trips help the study of a culture "come alive." During the all-school celebration of United Nations Day, the children present "their" culture to the whole school. Culture studies in the Peace Arbor also sometimes include special lessons presented by parents or guest speakers, focusing on a country or region where the presenter has lived, worked, or visited recently.

## Practical Life

Peace Arbor students have reached what Montessori called, “the second plane” of development. Their focus is much more on the outer world than on themselves. They have a greater measure of independence than at the earlier level, and want to be as self-sufficient as possible. Their desire to please the adults around them is shifting towards a need to be accepted by their peers. To this end, practical life in the Peace Arbor is focused on giving students the skills they need to be successful learners, friends and community members.

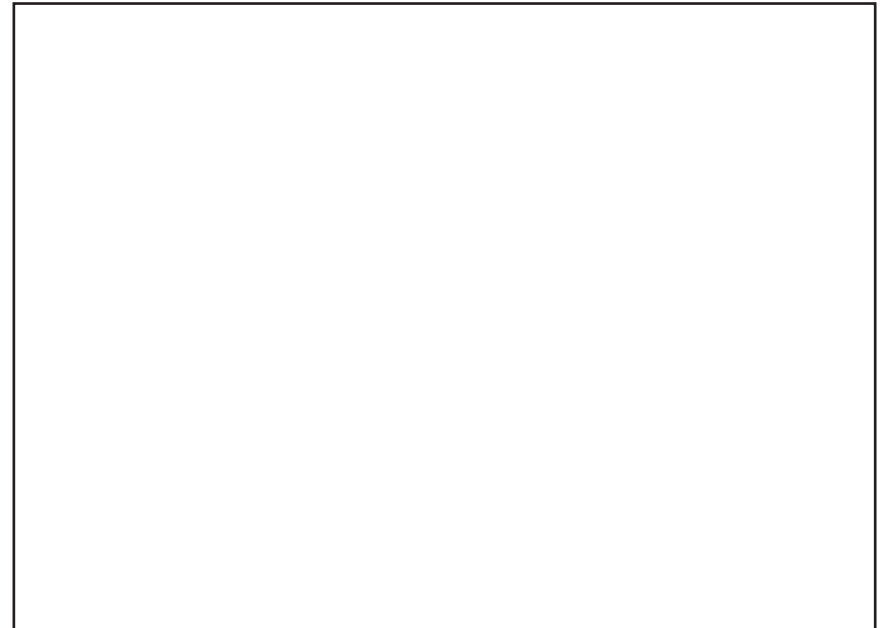
Peace Arbor students learn study skills such as how to keep their desk organized, how to write in cursive, or how to take care of their classroom environment. They learn care for themselves and practice personal hygiene such as hand washing and care of their hair and clothes. They take care of pets and plants in the classroom, and learn to care about others by being buddies to the preschoolers. They role play to learn more about how to act in various social situations, and put these lessons into practice with their peers and adults in the community. Each life skill they put into practice helps them build self-confidence, poise and the knowledge that they are successful, integral members of their community.

## Foreign Languages

In the Peace Arbor the children may select either French or Spanish to study twice weekly, for one hour each class. Foreign languages are taught by native speakers. The aim is to introduce the children to the language and culture of another country through fun and educational activities, including some arts and crafts projects. The children are divided into groups (of not more than 15 in a group) so that there will be sufficient time for individual children to practice the language.

## Field Trips

The Peace Arbor class participates in many educational field trips, taking advantage of the rich cultural offerings around the D.C. metropolitan area. These trips are directly related to the current studies in the classroom, such as going to a Native American Pow Wow while the class is studying Native Americans, or visiting a Buddhist Temple as part of a study of the world’s religions. These trips are an integral part of the curriculum, and students are often involved in completing assignments as part of the trip. In addition, toward the end of the school year the children have the option of participating in an overnight camping trip with their teachers as a celebration of their learning year together, and also as an introduction to the skills necessary for camping.



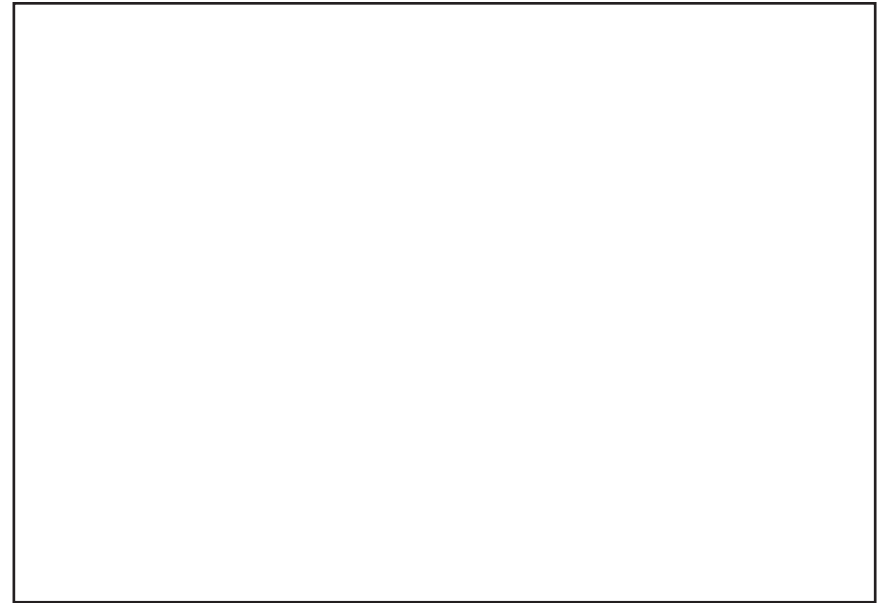
# Self-Discovery

As students make the transition to the Peace Arbor level, they are also transitioning into a new understanding of reality. They are much more conscious of others and the larger community. They are very concerned with what is “fair” and just. They are able to understand and explore value systems, their own and those of others. At the same time, their imaginations have more fully matured, allowing them to imagine what it would be like to be someone else and to develop empathy. Their creativity is in full flower, and helps them to learn more deeply about their feelings and ideas.

## Self-Reflection

In the Peace Arbor, there are many times during the day when children are able to take time to reflect, either by themselves in our sacred area, or with the group. During circle time each morning, students have a moment of silence to go within and breathe. If a student needs alone time, there is a peace corner in our sacred area designed for just one person to think and muse. In addition, there are several programs that are used to help students discover more about themselves, learn skills to understand and manage their emotions, and take time to express their deepest hearts.

The Pumsy in Pursuit of Excellence program teaches self-esteem to children through cognitive restructuring and positive thinking skills. Children learn better when they feel good about themselves. They also have better relationships with others. The program offers a variety of materials and activities, including a storybook about Pumsy, a little dragon who sometimes has a hard time feeling good about herself. With the help of her friend and along with the students, Pumsy learns skills that help her know she is O.K. in spite of difficult things that happen, and empower her to be in control of her own feelings, thinking, and decision-making.



Another program, called Flights of Fantasy, provides ideas, activities, creative visualizations, and meditation techniques that foster the development of imagination, relaxation, and self-concept. This program is a right-brained approach designed to enhance and refine children's natural inclination to imagine and fantasize and to use this special ability as a powerful vehicle for developing language, creativity, relaxation and a positive self-concept.

Journal Writing occurs at least 2-3 times per week. Students are given writing journals at the beginning of the school year. Sometimes the children are asked to write on a particular theme, such as a virtue story they have heard recently in class, or use a particular poetic device or form taught previously. At other times students choose what they wish to write about. Toward the end of the school year, the class often publishes a booklet of poetry composed by the students.

## Virtues & Values and Interpersonal Skills

In the Peace Arbor, students are encouraged to become aware of how they differ in their interests, abilities, and cultural backgrounds, and that they mature physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially at different rates of speed. This helps students become more tolerant and promotes peace and understanding. All About Me lessons provide stories, pictures, poems and activities that help Peace Arbor students realize and express positive qualities about themselves. This program assists the children to grow in self-awareness and to have confidence in themselves and their unique abilities.

Rainbow Heart Jewels, small colored, glass hearts, are given to the group and to individuals when the students self-transcend. For example, if a child helps someone or puts extra effort into his or her work, the teacher or another student acknowledges this by giving a heart jewel to the child, who then places it in a community container.

Once the container is full the children have a brainstorming session during which they suggest and then vote on an activity that becomes the “celebration” activity for having filled their community container (a morning of ice skating, a pajama and pancake day etc.).

Rainbow Heart Jewels have been extremely effective in building students’ self-esteem in a non-competitive environment, and in team building.

Peace Arbor students are taught a 3-step system for conflict resolution. They practice this system through role-plays, and when actual conflicts arise in the classroom. As they become comfortable with the system, they are encouraged to deal with conflicts on their own. Students also have communication classes with a specialist to learn more effective ways of expressing their feelings and needs.

## Performing Arts

### **(Drama, Music, Dance)**

Music instruction not only helps the Peace Arbor students learn specific skills (rhythm, pitch, tone, etc.), but also offers a very powerful form of self-expression. Singing is very important, and this is done not only in our scheduled music period (once weekly for one hour), but also often during our Morning Circle. Often the children learn songs that relate to a cultural or curricular theme. Students learn harmony through singing. They are also introduced to aspects of classical music: the instruments (through listening and looking), particular pieces appealing to children, and selected composers.

## Visual Arts

### **(Fine Arts, Crafts, Handicrafts)**

The students are introduced to a variety of art media through one hour of instruction weekly. Activities include drawing, painting and craft activities (such as beeswax or clay modeling, origami, papier-mache, etc.). Frequently, the art projects relate to a particular focus of study. For instance, the children were able to make origami creatures during the period they were studying Japan. There are also art materials readily available in the classroom for children to use whenever they feel the need to create. As much as possible, students are provided with an environment that may inspire them. Therefore, sometimes the students work on an art project after listening to poetry or while soft music is playing in the background.

## Physical Education and Movement

Formal Physical Education is offered for one hour a week in the Peace Arbor. The aims of the P.E. program include skill development, self-efficacy, fitness, and good sportsmanship. Various games are played, such as kickball, badminton, dodgeball, and volleyball. However, competition is not emphasized, as it is more important for the 6-9 year old to experience the spirit of camaraderie and the experience of self-transcendence. The students are enabled to develop physical skills that foster coordination in a variety of ways. Skills include ball throwing, ball passing, "dribbling" with the ball, running, jogging, and various warm-up exercises.

Brain Gym, also known as Educational Kinesiology, is a series of quick, fun and energizing movements and activities that are effective in preparing the student for specific thinking and coordination skills. The purpose of Brain Gym is to enhance the students' experience of whole brain learning and making learning easier. The word education comes from the Latin word "educare" which means, "to nurture." Kinesiology, derived from the Greek root "kinesis" which means, "motion," is the study of the human body. Educational Kinesiology, therefore, is a system for empowering the student by drawing out potentials locked in the body.

The Peace Arbor students take Yoga class once a week. Yoga postures are exercises that promote the control of muscles and balance. Yoga is a way to help the children loosen up their muscles and become more flexible and relaxed. Yoga teaches self-awareness of the body, mind, and spirit as separate entities and as a unified whole, with the ultimate object being to find peace and serenity within.

## Manifestation

Manifestation is the crystallization of Academy and Self-Discovery where students bring together what they have learned about the world with the knowledge of their own talents, interests, and ideals. Performances, field projects, classroom displays, school fairs, and outreach programs are some of the many ways they use their skills, energy and insights. The students gain a sense of competence and achievement, and learn to see themselves as valuable contributors to the community.

## Community Meeting

Friday mornings the entire school gathers together for songs, community games, class presentations, and seasonal celebrations. Parents are invited to join in the fun.

## Field Trips

Hikes in Rock Creek Park, boat rides on the Potomac, trips to the Smithsonian, Baltimore Aquarium, and the Kennedy Center as well as excursions to other cultural sites of the Washington, D.C. region complement and manifest the yearly studies.

## Festivals

School-wide festivals such as United Nations Day and our Winter Solstice Festival of Lights honor the different cultures and religions. In the spring, the children bring forth their appreciation of the earth at Earth Day and their studies of the physical world at the Science Fair. Manifestations are the culminating projects and works that student's display or perform for others and for their own sense of satisfaction.