

American Montessori Society - Teacher Education
CORE MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES FOR
INFANT AND TODDLER PROGRAMS

The intent of this checklist is to provide Montessori teacher education programs with a list of developmentally-appropriate materials and activities that very young children ages birth to 3 years are generally expected to have available in their classrooms. This list is comprehensive but not exclusive or prescriptive and teachers may also present other activities.

Not all of these activities are expected to be out at any given time, but a wide variety of them should be provided at some point throughout the year. It is particularly important to consider cleanliness and safety with this age group, including awareness of potential choking hazards. As such, it is helpful for the adults to have a choke tube available to test for these hazards.

** Starred items indicate additional suggested materials or activities that may not be available at a school site, but will contribute to a new teacher's understanding of Montessori curriculum.*

INFANTS – Birth to 18 Months	
Development of Movement: Control and Coordination	
	Floor space – open areas for free movement
	Low climbing obstacles such as pillows and raised cushions
	Wall mirror – placed at floor level
	Floor beds
	Child-sized furniture, including tables and chairs of differing sizes, weaning chairs for younger infants, armless chairs for older infants.
	Bar for pulling up
	Free movement activities
	Rhymes and Singing with accompanying movements
	Maximum Effort activities
	Push and Pull toys
	Stair with rails
	Slide
	Inclined Plane
	Outdoor movement experiences
	Wheelbarrows and/or Wagon
Sensori-Motor Development	
	Black and White contrast mobile
	Variety of visual mobiles (different colors, different shapes)
	Variety of grasping (and kicking) mobiles (different colors, shapes, textures, and sounds)
	Ribbon and Bell
	Shape Sorting objects (Simple - no more than three shapes)
	Rattles
	Bell
	Scarves

INFANTS – Birth to 18 Months	
	Sensori-Motor Development, continued
	Soft Toys
	Nesting Objects
	Object Permanence activities
	Blocks
	Objects in a Basket for exploration
	Musical Instruments (Drum, Rhythm Sticks, Shaker Eggs, etc.)
	Music Box
	Sound System and Recordings
	Practical Life (Infants)
	Care of Self, Care of the Environment, Grace and Courtesy
	<i>Many of the items listed in this section are to be introduced and modeled by the adult. These behaviors are not expected to be done consistently or independently by the child.</i>
	Care of Self
	Bathing
	Changing a Diaper
	Floor mattresses or futons for sleeping
	Use of Handkerchief/Tissue
	Use of Toilet
	Washing Hands
	Washing Face
	Dressing and Undressing
	Feeding the Baby
	Self-Feeding
	Care of Environment
	Replacing materials on the shelf
	Drying spilled water
	Setting the table
	Serving oneself
	Watering plants
	Grace and Courtesy
	Greeting and saying goodbye
	Gentle touch with others
	Respecting work and space of others

INFANTS -- Birth to 18 Months	
Language	
Communication experiences	
Vocabulary experiences	
Expressive and Receptive language experiences	
Visual Tracking experiences (Ball Tracker, Bead Maze, Mobiles, etc.)	
Puzzles with 1-2 pieces	
Books	
Songs	
Reciprocal vocalization	
Verbalization and Conversations (with the child)	
Naming Objects in the Environment	
Pictures of authentic activities for conversation	
Rhymes and Songs with actions	
Sign Language	
Vocabulary picture cards	

TODDLERS 18-36 Months	
Sensori-Motor Development	
Development of Coordinated Movement	
Space for gross motor movement and free movement activities	
Stair with Rails	
Climbing Objects (for climbing over and through)	
Walking in a Circle	
Balance Beam	
Bar from which to hang	
Rocking Horse/Boat/Chair	
Vestibular Board (e.g. sit and spin)	
Riding toys (e.g. tricycles)	
Maximum Effort activities (Carrying and pushing heavy objects)	
Outdoor Movement activities (walks, varying terrains, etc.)	
Outdoor Swing	
Slide	
Development of Motor Skills (Fine Motor Development)	
Sequence of Transfer activities (large object transfer, small object transfer)	
Sequence of Scooping/Spooning activities	
Sequence of Squeezing activities (sponges, baster, tongs)	
Sequence of Stringing activities (Ring Posts, Beads and Posts, large bead stringing)	
Sequence of Twisting activities	
Sequence of Pouring activities	
Sequence of Rolling and Folding activities	

	TODDLERS 18-36 Months
	Sensori-Motor Development
	Sequence of Opening and Closing activities (opening and closing drawers, opening and closing containers)

	Practical Life (Toddlers)
	Personal Care and Health
	Dressing and Undressing
	Using the Toilet
	Washing Hands
	Simple Dressing Frames (zipper, button, snap, buckle, velcro)
	Bathing the Doll
	Object washing (tables, chairs, simple objects)
	Folding and Putting Clothes Away
	Taking off and Putting on a Coat
	Taking off and Putting on Shoes
	Using a Tissue/Wiping Nose
	<i>Brushing Teeth *</i>
	<i>Combing Hair *</i>
	Care of Environment
	Using a rug or mat
	Using child-sized furniture
	Replacing materials on the shelf
	Setting the Table
	Wiping the Table
	Sweeping and Dusting
	Cleaning up spills
	Mopping the floor
	Washing Dishes
	Scrubbing objects (tables, cloths, baby doll)
	Washing Windows
	Caring for Pets (providing food and water)
	Caring for Plants (watering, polishing leaves)
	Flower arranging
	Folding
	Shoveling and Raking
	Planting seeds & plants
	Picking up sand, mulch, rocks
	Outdoor activities to care for the environment

Practical Life (Toddlers)	
	Food Preparation
	Washing fruits and vegetables
	Cutting fruits, vegetables, cheeses, eggs, etc.
	Mixing Ingredients
	Spreading (nut butters, cream cheese, etc)
	Preparing drinks (making juice, tea, etc.)
	Serving Food (with hands, scoops, spoons, tongs, etc.)
	Clearing the Table
	Washing Dishes
	Development of Grace and Courtesy
	Greeting and saying goodbye
	Asking for help
	Giving assistance
	Respectful requests and polite conversation (Use of please, thank you, excuse me)
	Gentle touch
	Respecting work and workspace
	Developmental Art Materials and Activities
	Clay and/or Play Dough
	Chalkboard
	Vertical Easel
	Painting
	Crayons
	Simple Scissors
	Glue with small brush or glue sticks

Sensori-Motor Development (Toddlers)	
	Stacking/Nesting Boxes/Nesting Objects
	Object Permanence Boxes
	Geometric Shape Box / Imbucure Box with Geometric Shapes / Shape Sorter
	Puzzles (including a geometric shape puzzle)
	Sorting
	Color Matching
	Music
	Sounds in the Environment
	Voice: Tone and Volume
	Simple Sound Matching (4 Pairs)
	Percussive Instruments (e.g. maracas, small floor drums, bells, rain sticks)
	Music Box
	Mystery Bag
	Texture and Temperature in the Environment
	Sandbox

Sensori-Motor Development (Toddlers)	
	Rough and Smooth Textures
	Smelling and Tasting experiences (e.g. food, flowers, grinding spices)
	Outdoor experiences in nature

Language (Toddlers)	
	Development of Oral Language
	Opportunities for receptive and expressive language (conversations and exploration)
	Oral language games
	Singing and storytelling
	Stories with finger plays, felt boards, relevant objects
	Books (Objects, Actions, Stories)
	Rhyming Games
	Reciprocal vocalization
	<i>*Non-working telephone</i>
	Development of Vocabulary and Classification
	Naming objects in the Environment
	Naming objects (baskets of objects, picture cards)
	Object to Object matching
	Object to Picture matching
	Picture to Picture matching
	Vocabulary Cards
	Farm
	Sequence of Knobbed Puzzles (Large knobbed puzzles, Small knobbed puzzles)
	Categorization of Objects and Pictures (Fruits and Vegetables, Cats and Dogs, etc)
	Matching: Pictures of Objects that Go Together (i.e. spider and spider web)
	Mystery Bag
	Objects for "I Spy" with initial sounds

The Adults in the Environment

It is important to recognize that the qualities, skills and behaviors of the adults responsible for meeting the needs of these young children is incredibly important during this most important stage of self-construction. This is the crucial time in which children are absorbing experiences, making early decisions about the kind of persons they are, and about the world. They are developing basic trust in themselves and in their environment, which will affect them for the rest of their lives.