

## Culture Curriculum

Culture includes the study of Science, Geometry, Geography (cultural & social), History, Botany, Music, Art and Craft. The purpose of the materials in this area is to sharpen the child's powers of observation and understanding of the world around him/her, progressing from immediate to distant.

### SCIENCE:

Since children experience sensitive periods for minute details and order at around 2 or 3 years of age, this is a good time to begin simple scientific activities. Activities are structured so the child can make their own discoveries. Curiosity is stimulated by showing the child how to observe. At this stage, the emphasis is not so much on facts, as on how to approach a scientific problem.

### GEOMETRY:

The Geometric Cabinet consists of 6 trays containing wooden geometric insets of increasing complexity. A demonstration tray teaches circle, square and triangle; one contains 6 circles of different diameter 1 containing 6 triangles of different kinds etc.

There are a companion set of cards which consist of a series of 3 cards for each inset, one solid shape, one outlined with thick lines and one with thin lines. The child can match the insets to these cards.



### CONSTRUCTIVE TRIANGLES:

These triangles develop a sense of geometric form, spatial discrimination, conservation of area and fraction readiness. The child can form and identify different shapes, triangles, hexagons, rhombus, trapezoid etc. as well as explore, superimpose, make comparisons and experiment with the shapes.

## GEOGRAPHY:

The child aims to explore the whole world, if not in fact, by imagination. The globes we use for the younger children are made with the land showing and the sea in blue, so it gives some idea how the earth would look if you saw it from space. Knowledge of this kind satisfies a real need of the child at this age.

Puzzle maps of different countries of the world enable the children to construct the puzzle, and begin to understand the different towns, states, or countries of the world. Constructing these maps also provides an opportunity to develop spatial and fine motor skills. Children can explore the different flags of each country and match these to the puzzle maps.



MAP OF AUSTRALIA

Our teaching of Geography also gives some knowledge of the Solar System. Now that space travel has become a topic of general interest, it is more necessary than ever. Children of this age learn the comparative sizes of planets and consequent differences of gravity, orbits, distances and periods of rotation.

At this time children learn the reason for the alternation of day and night, summer and winter, and if we can, the waxing and waning of the moon. Other topics here include: navigation of the stars, volcanoes and the shifting of the earth's plates, discussions on how the earth was formed, different sorts of rocks, from different parts of Australia; the effects of weathering and erosion.

Models of land and water forms are presented to the child to teach the meaning of geographical terms and their names. For example: The opposites 'lake' and 'island' are usually presented together. Children experiment with pouring the water into the land forms to discover how water flows around an island, a lake, a peninsula, a gulf, a cape, a bay, an isthmus and a strait.

Another area of tremendous interest to the children are volcanoes, this subject leads to a discussion of how the earth was formed and the different kind of rocks. Experiments which include clay volcanoes (which the children create) erupting are also fascinating for children. Photographs are shown of different places in the world, particularly the countries of a child's ancestry. The children are introduced to different people and cultures all over the world, to show how other people live, their cities, towns/villages, their way of life and the individual beauty of their countries.

### **HISTORY:**

In looking at the beginning of historical times and early civilisations we aim to combine myths and stories with factual knowledge of the way people lived. The stories are read aloud, while the archaeological details are given in pictures.

We begin by telling the story of mankind in the world. We do not expect that children of this age can grasp the whole concept (they take in only small items of interesting and striking facts), but these are remembered and are of a help in the development of a deeper knowledge later on. Our syllabus includes the appearance of Homo-sapiens or even an earlier species of man and covers the different races and cultures of mankind. Children usually find the early part of the period (the pre-history), most appealing at this age. It is believed that this period lasted a very long time in historical terms and this should be presented to young children in visual form. For example, we may look at some primitive tribes living today who are still in the food-gathering stage of culture. We may also explore our own indigenous Australians to look at the impact of other nationalities upon their religion and culture. We are able to access their culture at centres in Victoria.

### **BOTANY:**

In previous times, contact with nature was taken for granted. Today, when so many people live in towns and cities, the pre-school must try to prevent children from being deprived this area, as it is essential for their development. Children will be given the opportunity to plant a variety of plants, vegetables, trees and flowers and learn to care and nurture them. Teachers will emphasise the need to treat living things with care and respect. For instance, if garden flowers are picked they must be put in water and used for study and display. The children develop a "real reverence for life" to understand that even worms and insects serve a purpose and to be careful when digging that we care for living things.



We will study and observe plants and flowers, leaf and flower forms and the parts of flowers, trees, leaves, and plants. The Botany materials include sets of cards that show the meaning of the terms referring to plant morphology. We investigate our role in caring for the environment (disposal or rubbish recycling) and how plastics can impact on our marine environment.



**BOTANY PUZZLES**

We are no longer able to keep pets at the pre-school due to health concerns and allergies however the preschool hopes to provide children with opportunities to visit animal farms, the zoo or marine facilities in order for the children to have more exposure to the natural world.

### **MUSIC:**

The learning of music is like the learning of a language. The young child must listen to the language and its sound pattern before s/he is able to use it. Therefore it is essential that the young child also hears a great deal of music to provide a foundation of growth". (Marvin Greenberg: "Your Children Need Music")

Parents and teachers can assist the children's appreciation of music in a number of ways, especially through live performances. As a rule, simple rudimentary aspects of music are taught from an early age. Children should have music in their environment so that they can hear it while they are awake/active. They will be introduced to an instrument and are then free to explore the sounds, play a tune, sing a song etc. The children may use music as communication; by learning lots of songs and tunes the child can extend his/her repertoire. With the help of the bell material, the child has the opportunity to learn the graphic representation of music and can develop his/her own music.

### **MUSICAL BELLS**

