Montessori Moment - The Prepared Environment

In the September issue of *Franklin Focus*, we discussed how teachers “follow the child in a prepared environment”. This month we focus on explaining the concept of the “prepared environment”.

The “prepared environment” is Maria Montessori’s concept that the space in which a child learns can be designed to facilitate maximum independent learning and exploration by the child. In other words, in the “prepared environment” the environment is arranged to meet the child’s needs. It is filled with a variety of materials and activities which are placed at a child’s level and are arranged in a specific place on open shelving. In the calm, peaceful, ordered space of the Montessori “prepared environment,” children work on hands-on activities of their own choice at their own pace. They experience a blend of freedom and self-discipline in a place especially designed to meet their developmental needs. The materials help the child to focus attention through purposeful activity so as to develop consciousness, will and self-direction.

The “prepared environment” is organized in the following curriculum areas:

- Practical Life
- Sensorial
- Geography/Culture
- Language
- Mathematics
- Science
- Art & Music

In conclusion, the Montessori “prepared environment” is designed to allow the child to take control of his/her learning and enables the child to gain important skills and experience success.

The great variety of materials in the prepared environment reinforces Dr. Montessori’s basic concern for the development of the whole child. In future issues of *Franklin Focus* we will explore the purpose of the practical life, sensorial, language, mathematic and cultural materials found in the prepared environment.