

# AMA Parent Learning Guide

At American Montessori Academy our mission is to organically grow a healthier, happier, and more peaceful world. We begin by educating all of our children in how to be mindful and resolve conflicts in peaceful ways. Our unique Peace Education programming is integrated throughout the school day. As a result, AMA students begin to demonstrate complex problem solving skills at a young age.

Our rigorous, standards-based, academic program provides meaningful choice for students as they move along their unique learning paths. Below is an outline of what your child will learn this school year:

## First Grade

### Mathematics

- Operations & Algebraic Thinking – Number Sense / Patterns
- Numbers & Operations – Basic Facts / Place Value / Using Equivalence
- Measurement & Data – Time & Length / Organizing Data
- Geometry – Geometric Shapes & Patterns

### English Language Arts

- Literature
  - Retell stories using details to show understanding and moral of story
  - Identify who is telling the story at various points in a text
- Informational Text
  - Ask and answer questions about key details in the text
  - Use illustrations and details in a text to describe key ideas
- Writing
  - Name a topic and supply some facts about the topic and provide a sense of closure to what he/she has in writing

### Science

- Physical (Sound & Light)
- Earth (Air & Weather)
- Life (Plants & Animals)

### Social Studies

- What is a Family?
- How Do We Get What We Need or Want?
- How Do We Learn About Places?
- How Do We Learn About the Past?
- What is a Citizen?

## Montessori Method

Montessori is a philosophy of education developed by Dr. Maria Montessori at the turn of the twentieth century. Dr. Montessori said of her philosophy, *“Our aim is not merely to make the child understand, and still less to force him to memorization, but so to touch his imagination as to enhance him to his inmost core.”*

Montessori philosophy differs from traditional school systems in three primary ways. The first is through the use of multi-age classrooms. This allows for a more natural progression of learning through the childhood years with the barriers of nine month increments. Children receive lessons in the things they are ready for and interested in with the two-three year cycle, while always meeting state guidelines. The young child looks to the older child for guidance both socially and in the academic arena. This in turn gives the older child a sense of responsibility and leadership.

A second philosophical principle involves the child’s development of abstract understanding from sequenced concrete experiences. The child gains thorough understanding of introduced concepts.

The final principle focuses on having an individualized program for each child. In the Montessori classroom, children are honored for who they are, and for where they are in their personal development. Each child’s strengths are recognized and built upon.

The Montessori approach to education is grounded in the belief that children have a dynamic inner desire to explore and learn about their environment. All children carry within themselves the person they will become. Developing the physical, intellectual, and emotional potential to the fullest requires freedom – freedom achieved through order and self-discipline. A prepared and stimulating environment allows children to learn at their own pace, according to their own capabilities in a non-competitive atmosphere.

American Montessori Academy	Traditional School
View the child holistically, valuing cognitive, psychological, social, and emotional development	Views the child in terms of competence, skill level, and achievement with an emphasis on core curricula standards and social development
Teacher is an instructional facilitator and guide	Teacher has a dominate more central role and controls classroom
Child is an active participant in learning – allowed to move about and respectfully explore the classroom environment	Child is a more passive participant in learning
Instruction both individual and group, adapts to students’ learning styles and development levels	Mainly group instruction
Mixed age groups	Same age groups
A carefully prepared learning environment and method encourages development of internal self-discipline and intrinsic motivation	Teacher acts as a primary enforcer of external discipline promoting extrinsic motivation
Instruction, both individual and group, adapts to students’ learning styles and development levels	Instruction, both individual and group, adapts to core curricula benchmarks
Grace, courtesy, and conflict resolution are integral part of daily Montessori peace curriculum	Conflict resolution is usually taught separately from daily classroom activity
Care of self and environment are emphasized as integral to the learning experience	Less emphasis on self-care, spatial awareness, and care of environment
Goal is to foster a love of learning	Goal is to master curricula objectives