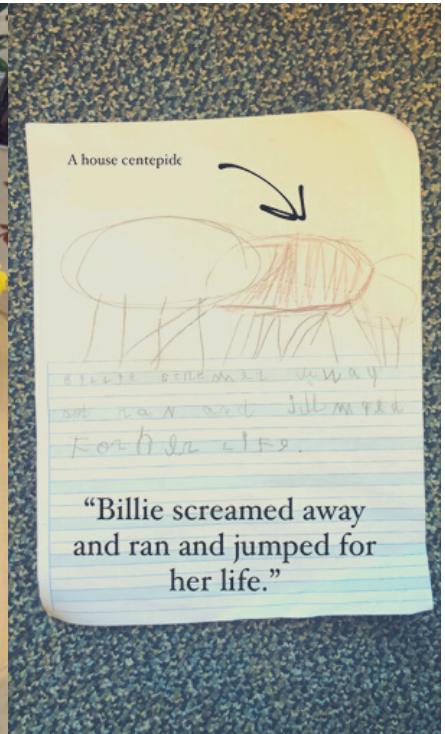


CASA LAKE MUSINGS

A MOSTLY MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM CASA LAKE



WHAT WE'RE LEARNING

by Vanessa Padua-Evans

Casa Lake has been indulging in a lot of storytelling...and I'm not using air quotes to facetiously describe the storytelling as lies. We are loving sharing our true experiences, jokes, laughter, thoughts, history, community, and ourselves through our written or spoken stories.

The science of storytelling reveals that through the production of cortisol, dopamine, and oxycontin that the human brain connects to stories intellectually, personally, and socially. This makes it an amazing tool in helping us be able to adapt to our ever-changing world. Also, telling stories about your life, your child's life, and your shared experiences give children a sense of place and also helps them to see their life as a story in process. This supports a growth mindset and the development of self-compassion and forgiveness. Furthermore, oral telling storytelling helps children experience all elements of communication including eye-contact, vocabulary, tone, and inflection. It also allows us to focus their attention on certain aspects of the story and develop relational connections including trust and a feeling of being valued.

So I hope during this Thanksgiving break you take the opportunity to share your stories with your child or children. Don't worry. I'm not putting you on the spot and panic into thinking, "Oh...great! Now I gotta think of stories for my child!? Ugghhhh!" Developing an oral tradition within your family does not have to be elaborate or complex. Starting with stories as simple as, "This is an apple. It is red." and moving to a story about how you went shopping for apples supports a child's awareness of the stories of our life. This tradition will continue as your child grows to include wonder and a sense of self and civic awareness. You can even have other family members Zoom, FaceTime, Google Meet/Duo their stories. Based on Dr. Montessori's planes of development, children need to hear different types and lengths of stories. We focus on true stories and try to keep them as brief as possible to leave room for reflection and processing. It is a good rule of thumb that the younger the child, the shorter the story. Even stories for elementary students and adolescents need to be short enough to leave room for reflection, wonder, and curiosity.

Wishing you a healthy and peaceful thanksgiving with your immediate family and may it harvest reflection, love, wonder, and hope.



HOW STORIES SHAPE OUR MINDS

by BBC Ideas



"Is the child's mental horizon limited to what he sees? No. He has a type of mind that goes beyond the concrete. He has the great power of imagination."

—Dr. Maria Montessori, *The Absorbent Mind*