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**Cultural Subjects**

**History and Sciences**

**History**

**An Introduction**

History in very basic terms is the study of past events that help us understand where we are coming from and where and how we can proceed from the present into the future, learning lessons from the past and planning intentionally for the future.

This is a field of study that we find has been denied a lot of the present generation of young adults and children in our country.

Luckily Montessori has this well entrenched in the Montessori curriculum. Start gradually though, as we need to be mindful that even the Montessori Teacher may not know much about the history of the country.

The beginning lessons are basic and general so it is possible to start here and not get overwhelmed. Please start building your lesson on historical personalities to share with the children.

**DAILY CALENDAR**

**Material:**

* A three-ring binder with removable pages.

**Objectives:**

* To chart daily events.
* To give an impression of the passage of time.

**Presentation:**

* Tell the children this is a calendar and we will use it to record daily events in the classroom. Also use it as a countdown for exciting upcoming events.
* Have the date written on the top of the page and a fresh page for each day. Either the teacher or a child can record events.
* Each morning have a child turn over the page.
* On Friday call the children together and state that many things happened during the week. Remove the pages and lay them out in sequence saying the days of the week.
* Invite the children to read the pages out aloud. Discuss the events which have occurred and what might happen next. Place the pages back in the binder. On Mondays you can record what happened on Saturdays or Sundays. This helps to establish a cycle of time.

Age: 3+ years

**SEASONS** (individual and collective presentation)

**Material:**

* Time line for the seasons with a symbol of each beside its name, i.e., DRY SEASON: leaf turning dry.
* Selection of pictures depicting the seasons.

**Objectives:**

* To help the child note the sequence in the passage of time with an emphasis on the cyclical pattern.

**Presentation:**

* Bring the materials to a mat with the children.
* Unroll the time line and note the seasons, discussing the particular characteristics of each.
* Make a circle with the line. Look at each picture and determine which season it depicts. Lay the card by its corresponding season on the time line.
* Children can check their work by the use of control dots on the back of each picture.

Exercise 1: Discuss changes in seasons as they occur and reinforce with stories and poems.

Age: 4+ years

**LINEAR TIME LINES** (small group presentation)

**Material:**

* Time lines for the days of the week in one colour, and the months of the year, in colours symbolic of the seasons.
* A set of loose labels for each timeline in a box or envelope.

**Objectives:**

* To emphasize sequence in passage of time and the cyclic pattern.

**Presentation:**

* Invite a small group of children who are able to read to join you.
* Show them where the labels and linear time lines are kept. Take materials to a mat. Unroll the line, laying it out in a horizontal fashion so that the blank side is face up.
* Children read through the labels. Then ask what is the first month/day. Place the appropriate label in the first space to the left.
* Repeat placing the months/days in order, assisting as necessary.
* Children can check their work by looking on the back.
* Ask the children to read out the days/months in order. When finished have the children put away their work.

Exercise 1: Later on invite the children to make a circle with the line. When the children pace out the months/day they will experience its cyclical pattern.

Age: 4-5 years

**SUMMARY CALENDAR/WEATHER CALENDAR** (small group presentation)

**Material:**

* Large calendar with loose labels for the date and pictures of weather conditions.

**Objectives:**

* To record changes in daily and seasonal weather conditions.

**Presentation:**

* A board with positions for the day, month, numeral, year and a pictorial representation of the weather.
* The construction of the board allows for the labels to be placed in the appropriate position and is hung in a visible area, accessible to all children.
* A child who is able to read can place the date on the board. A child who cannot read can look through the pictures, select the one which best represents the day and place it on the calendar.
* If the weather changes, the picture should also be changed.

Exercise 1: You may add printed labels to the weather pictures.

Exercise 2: The older children can keep a detailed log of the temperature, wind, cloud patterns, etc. for each day. They can see how weather cools down in the winter and warms up in the summer. They can look back and see the coldest day, the largest snowfall recorded, etc. The emphasis is on the changing pattern.

Age: 3+ years

**EVENTS CHART** (individual or small group presentation)

**Material:**

* Events board divided in half by a line and labelled "Past" and "Present".
* Child brings in cutouts from magazines and newspapers.

**Objectives:**

* To give an impression of the passage of time.

**Presentation**:

* Encourage parents to show their child magazines or newspapers.
* If the child seems interested in a news story, have the child cut out the corresponding picture.
* The child would bring the picture to school and informally tell the story to the teacher and a few classmates. "Let us put that story on the events chart and you can tell the story to more children." Pin the story under "Present", on the right side of the board.
* The next day invite the child to go to the board with you. Remind the child it happened yesterday so let us move the story to the left side of the board under the "Past". Bring in your own current events for the chart in case the children have forgotten to do so.

Age: 3+ years

**SEQUENCE CARDS** (individual or small group presentation)

**Material:**

* Related assortment of cards which can be arranged in sequence. For example, "My day" pictures.

**Objectives:**

* To give the impression of the sequence of time.

**Presentation:**

* Invite a small group of children to join you on a mat. Show the children where the sequence cards are kept.
* Lay out the cards from one set. Ask the children which card do they think comes first. Place the card to the top left of the mat.
* Continue placing the cards in sequence. Engage the children in conversation and discuss why they choose their particular order.
* Encourage them to work with other sequence cards and discuss the story the pictures tell.
* When finished have the children replace the materials.
* Age: 3+ years

**BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS** (individual or small group presentation)

**Material:**

* A large sun cut out
* A globe
* months of the year labels.

**Objectives:**

* To help the child realize the passage of time and how it relates to his personal growth and development.

**Presentation:**

* Invite all the children to sit in a circle round the large sun cut out.
* The child whose birthday it is carries the painted globe. Explain the earth orbits the sun and each orbit takes a whole year.
* The child walks around the sun once for each year he has been on earth.
* Discuss major events and abilities gained in the child's life as he walks around the sun.
* He may bring in one or two pictures for each year.

Exercise 1: Make the child's birthday special. Recognize its importance in a manner appropriate to the individual child, i.e., sing Happy Birthday, read them a special story, give a special lesson, etc. Parents may be willing to bring in a treat which the child can share with his classmates. For a child who is reading you can introduce the printed labels of the months of the year and arrange them around the candle.

Age: 2+ years

**TIME LINE OF CHILD'S LIFE** (collective presentation)



**Material:**

* A wide strip of paper.
* Photographs of main events of different periods of the child's life to date.
* Child makes an envelope large enough to contain photographs.
* Writing paper.

**Objectives:**

* Linear, visual presentation of passage of time.

**Presentation:**

* Ask the parents for photographs from birth to the present age of the child. Assure them that you will take good care of the photographs. They may include other important people in the child's life.
* Ask the parents to write the child's age on the back of each picture. Ask the child to make a special envelope for his pictures.
* Unroll the paper. Fold it in half lengthwise and draw a line down the centre.
* Divide the paper in equal measures to represent the child's age.
* Write zero to the numeral representing the child's age along the length of the paper. Say, "This will be the story of your life. We have some photos that your mom sent us."
* Establish the order with the child by discussing each picture.
* Lay the pictures beside the time line in order.
* When the child is finished, fold the paper and place with the photographs in the envelope.

Exercise 1: The child can lay out his pictures in order and tell the history of his life to another child.

Exercise 2: At another time he can write his story on a separate piece of paper. Have one sheet for each photo. Keep the stories in a separate envelope.

Exercise 3: Repeat as above for other family members.

Age: 4+ years

**HISTORY STORIES** (individual presentation)

**Material:**

* Pictures of famous people, i.e., musicians, artists, explorers, inventors, doctors, authors, athletes, etc.
* A corresponding written story or book.

**Objectives:**

* To appreciate the contribution various people make on our lives.

**Presentation:**

* Present a picture and give a short interesting little story about the person including any interesting facts.

Exercise 1: Follow-up information can be attained from books in the classroom or a visit to the library. Card stories and booklets can be made up.

**List of Important personalities to work with:**

Wole Soyinka

Oba Kosoko

Jaja of Opobo

Awolowo

Fela Anikulapo-Kuti

Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti

Madam Tinubu

Ola Rotimi

Nnamdi Azikwe

Muritala Muhamed

Herbert Ogunde

Age: 4+ years

**THE CLOCK** (small group presentation)



**Material:**

* The clock, movable hands and loose numerals in a box.
* A series of cards,
* set of corresponding labels
* and stand.

**Objectives:**

* To help the child to tell the time.

**Presentation:**

* Introduce the clock to the child, showing him where it is kept. Bring the materials to a table.
* Show the child how to put the numbers in order on the clock face. Begin with one, select it from the box and place it on the clock. Invite the child to continue.
* Explain that these numbers show us the hours. With the child, demonstrate how the hands of the clock go around.
* When the child is finished he replaces the materials on the shelf.

Exercise 1: Child places the numerals on the clock. Introduce the short hand. "This is the short hand. When the short hand points to a numeral, it tells us what hour it is." Point the short hand to the 'one' and say "one o'clock". Continue in the same manner to twelve. Invite the child to tell the time in this way. Proceed with the three period lesson.

Exercise 2: At this point the child should be able to skip count by five. Child places the numerals on the clock. Begin at twelve, explain that between the numeral twelve and the numeral one is a time span of five minutes. Then, with the child, skip count by five around the clock, from five to sixty. Introduce the long hand. "We have sixty minutes in an hour. This long hand tells us how many minutes before or after the hour we are referring to." Show that the short hand only moves a short distance in an hour, from one numeral to the next. The long hand goes all the way around the clock, covering sixty minutes. Go over the time now using both hands on the clock. Proceed with a three period lesson.

Exercise 3: The clock game, using the cards for all of the hours. Show the clock faces to the child one at a time, have the child identify the time. Mix up the cards. The child places the clock faces on the stand and matches the appropriate label to the face. Have him check his work when finished. Encourage the child to draw some clock faces and label them. When the child knows his fractions you can introduce half past, quarter past, quarter to, etc.

Age: 5 - 6 years