

Observing in the Prepared Environment¹

The Montessori prepared environment is a holistic, integrated and highly coherent space for learning. Every element of the environment is organized intentionally to create an optimal setting for purposeful interactions among students, guides, and materials within the space. This rubric is designed to assist the visitor in tracking qualities of the environment that are necessary for ensuring high quality Montessori implementation.

Classroom _____ Level _____

O= Observed NO= Not Observed

Beauty and Order	O	NO
Shelves are clean and uncluttered		
Materials are in the correct sequence within each shelf		
Materials are kept in good repair		
Students assist in the maintaining of the room, as appropriate for their age		
Plants, pictures, fabrics, and work samples are displayed beautifully		
Procedures and Routines		
Students and Guides open and close doors quietly		
Students follow directions cooperatively and in a timely manner		
Students and Guides handle materials with respect		
Students get help from each other and the guide in the manner consistent with class protocol		
Students transition independently from one activity to another		
Students use work rugs, tables, and low tables appropriately		
Students respond to a bell or other signal to- stop, look and listen		
Students gather materials for their work as needed		
Students work independently		
Students clean up and put away work in proper location when complete		
Grace and Courtesy		
Student voices are quiet and peaceful		
Students speak next to each other quietly, not across the room		
Students move carefully and calmly		
Students use steps of peaceful conflict resolution		
Students use a respectful tone		
Students use please and thank you with each other		
Students know how to offer an apology		
Work Habits		
Students engaged in work individually, in a small group and in the whole group daily		
Students exhibit persistence and confidence in their efforts		
Students have follow up-work		
Students have opportunities for independent work choices daily		
Student behavior supports concentration in the classroom		

¹ Thanks to our friends at [New View Montessori Consultancy](#) for developing and sharing this document.

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Students know the system for filing work in folders, binders, and bins		
Organization and Maintenance of Space & Materials	O	NO
Montessori Materials- a full spectrum of Montessori materials are available in every area representing the majority of materials on each shelf		
Walls- attractive, current, relevant, appropriate amount, uncluttered		
Classroom library – organized by genres, author, topic, etc.; bins at student eye level or lower		
Seating – space is available for groups at tables, low tables, or on work rugs and for individual work with freedom of seating as the norm		
Whole group area – designated area for whole group lessons, carpeted		
Small group area – designated area invitational groups		
Supply area – materials available to whole class as appropriate for each level– pencils, assorted paper, markers or crayons, scissors, tape, hole punch, stapler etc.		
Daily schedule posted – as appropriate for each level		
Observer’s Chair- a chair is designated for the purpose of daily observations, and for visitor use		
Instructional Approach		
Guide follows the rhythm – present, circulate observe		
Guide’s voice is quiet- not heard above others		
Guide approaches children at their level		
Guide has drinks and snacks at snack area- not walking around the room		
Guide presents lessons in various locations through out the classroom		
Guide uses a lesson plan/ record keeping system		
Guide uses intentional movement, careful and calm		
Guide observes classroom regularly, has recording system		
Guide confers with other adults quietly		