

Integration of MMUN with Montessori Curriculum

The Montessori Model at the United Nations seeks to give young students an understanding of the world through research and earnest debate with other students. During the MMUN students represent different countries with the objective of discussing the policies of each country and then creating the best resolution to solve different issues. The students first educate themselves about specific international issues, and once they begin to debate, they gain a better understanding of what actual delegates encounter when international relationships and possible conflicts coincide on a world stage. In the classroom as well as in the course of the conference, students also have the opportunity to gain experience with:

- Research skills
- Time-management skills
- World affairs and issues
- Partisanship among countries
- Debating and negotiating
- Showing tolerance for other cultures
- Leadership forums
- Written communication in a variety of formats
- Public speaking
- Real-world applications of classroom material
- Interactions with students of different cultures and countries
- Role-playing situations
- Projects using creative outlets
- Empathy concerning the plight of the world's citizens.

Students who engage in the work related to the MMUN are able to use classroom subjects throughout the project. Their language skills inform the research they must do to gather information about global issues. Writing aims such as persuasion are crucial to developing issue papers and resolutions. Being able to outline main and secondary points while listening to discussion is extremely important during debates and negotiations. Negotiations and compromise, of course, play an essential role in any political encounter, and students must be ready to engage in lively, sometimes-heated but always-interactive, student-led debates.

Two of the important subjects covered during preparations for the MMUN are history and geography. Students will research the histories of their countries and the surrounding regions to understand the problems facing their represented countries. Lessons in geography help the students understand relationships and potential conflicts among various countries. Students also study the development of societies, the political ramifications of economics, and the different aspects of each society such as religious beliefs and governmental controls.

Creativity is important in every level of a Montessori education, and MMUN students use drama and role-playing when undertaking the important part of a delegate discussing

serious issues that affect the world's population. Projects involving art also help the students while displaying their countries' flags, historical dress, and important historical events.

The MMUN delegate is involved in every stage of the preparation leading to the actual conference. These students are motivated to find out how the UN functions and to discuss global issues with their peers. The conference itself is managed to maximize student involvement in the entire process, and the students' motivation and commitment are crucial to the success of their own experience. Students are involved from the very beginning. They are the ones who hold the discussions concerning which countries to represent, how to conduct research, the preparations for debates and resolution writing, and the fundraising to attend the conference. Students who are fully involved will have that important sense of ownership, which is a cornerstone of Montessori education. These students will complete their MMUN experience with a better sense of what it means to be a responsible and participatory citizen of the world as well as their own communities.