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The Home Kindergarten

"Little Girl doesn't mind me!"
"Little Boy doesn't pay any attention when I ask him to do something!"
"I believe that my children are deaf!"
The weary plaints ring from east to west, from pole to pole, from overseas.

How shall we teach children to listen? First, listen yourself. Do you hear all the voices of a summer day ranging in tone and degree from the whirr of a bird's wings to the rhythmic tap, tap of a horse's hoofs on a hard road? Can you determine, without seeing, the direction the bird is taking by the beat of his wings as he leaves his nest in your garden? Can you tell how far away the horse is by his resonant hoof ringing on the road pebbles? When you have learned to listen, help your child to hear with you.

A mother who believes that her children's ears and eyes are their souls' doors takes "sound" tramps with her boy and girl in the summer. These are short, quiet walks thru the streets of the town or into the near-by fields, countryside and woods. On their return from one of these purposeful tramps, mother and children compare notes to determine how many sounds each has heard. Crickets, cicadas, different bird-notes, whirring wheels, street organs, dropping water, running water—all these melodious sounds and countless others are noted.

The baby and kindergarten child may be taught to listen as the Italian babies are being taught. Part of the Montessori material consists of wooden receptacles, cut in bottle shape, sealed and filled with different kinds of rattling objects: pebbles, shot and small seeds. These are used to train a child's sense of hearing. The directress places them in a row, allows the child to shake them, rattle fashion, then blindfolds the child and leads him to try and tell which she gives him.

Kindergarten Busyness

We all know the delight of the baby in his rattle. Why have we never given our babies different kinds of rattles—rattles with different sounds—to help them in learning how to listen?

Any mother may carry out this sound-training at home by using a series of empty bottles as these wooden bottles are used by Dr. Montessori. Children are always fascinated by bottles; using them for sense-training makes an otherwise aimless play educational. Let the baby fill a set of bottles with dried peas, beans, small pebbles, tiny shells, coarse sand or any small objects.

The cork is then inserted firmly so that it can not be removed. Then "dress-up" the bottles by fitting them into close-fitting colored cambric bags: red, orange, yellow, green, blue and violet if these rainbow colors are available. The cork may have a grotesque little face inked on, and these doll-rattles should have a box in which they are kept for very special play.

They may be used as are the wooden "rattles" of Dr. Montessori, but in the case of this set of home rattles the very young child is able to combine color and sound-training as she says, blindfolded: "You shook the red bottle," or, "the blue," or, "the purple one."

The child who has learned to listen is not only better off morally than the child who is deaf to tones, but he is infinitely more happy. Your child's summer will be richer than any of his other summers if he is able to hear the fine, cheerful note of a cricket, shrilling above a jargon of other sounds; if he has the power to sit quietly in the grass, listening, senses alert, for the cricket's voice.

Help your child to hear the summer and build his integrity and his joy at the same time.

Picture-Sewing

Why all children love holes so is one of the riddles of the Sphinx, but the fact remains that they do. They love to punch little round holes in paper, to dig rows of holes in the sand at the beach, to make finger-holes in their play-room clay. This instinctive child-like for holes is utilized in the kindergarten occupation of sewing. Thru sewing up and down thru a series of coarsely punched holes in cardboard with heavy, bright-colored worsted, children find hand-training and learn to see outlines of objects.

The materials for this kindergarten sewing, which is a form of play-work especially adapted to outdoor use, are easily available. The mother will need to provide herself with several skeins of coarse

colored worsted or yarn in the prevailing colors of fruits and flowers. A skein each of red, blue, yellow, green and brown will prove satisfactory. Blunt-pointed needles, a pair of kindergarten scissors and a number of picture sewing-cards complete the outfit.

These cards may be found at a kindergarten supply shop, ready perforated in picture designs for sewing, or they can be made at home. If they are bought ready perforated, great care should be exercised by the mother in selecting those sewing-cards that are perforated with large holes. Those sewing-cards in which the holes are only pricked result in eye-strain for the child who sews the pictures. Those with large punched holes are easy to sew and really educational.

To make these picture sewing cards at home, use rather large square cards that may be found in packages among kindergarten supplies. Select a picture design that is simple in outline: a circle, an apple, a potato, a simple vase, the fat pussy from the child's nursery book, a tulip, a round clock-face, a leaf—in fact any well-known object that will interest a child because it is part of his out-of-door or indoor life.

Transfer this design to the centre of the card and, laying it down on a few thicknesses of flannel or felt, perforate large holes with an awl or stiletto in the outline at distances of a quarter inch. A child of five and a half or six years will be able to do this drawing and perforating himself, which will add much to his interest in the occupation.

The card ready, the actual picture-sewing begins. To determine the length of worsted to be used in doing our picture outline, that little arms may not ache with a too-long thread or the sewing be spoiled with a too-short one, measure twice and one half the length of the picture outline. The sewing is done by putting the needle down thru one hole and up thru another until the picture outline is completed, and then going over the outline again, filling in the spaces that remain between the first stitches. The fastening of the worsted is done, of course, on the wrong side of the card.

In doing kindergarten sewing as well as in accomplishing any other form of child craft-work the play is more educational if the child does as much as possible of the occupation himself. Help little fingers to measure the length of worsted necessary for each card, to thread the needles, to fasten the worsted when all the sewing is accomplished. The coarse needles used for this sewing have large eyes and may be easily threaded. Thru this play a child begins to learn the right use of a needle, and it will be an easy step from this cardboard sewing to taking practice stitches with crewel on canvas and then on finer materials.

Let the baby select his own colors for each picture. A strong cardboard box may hold the sewing-cards, perforated for use, while the many colored skeins of worsted may fill a basket. The pleasure that is the child's in seeing this mass of color, in feeling of it and selecting scarlet for sewing his apple picture, orange for doing a pumpkin outline, green for a leaf, and gray for his pussy sewing-card, will be itself educational.

But for the child's own good, if not for yours, keep carefully his handwork. A satisfactory way to keep these sewing-cards is to mount them in scrap-books.

THE DELINEATOR.

IN APRIL

Nonseñe, Pussy Willow,
Put your muff away!
Fur is out of season
When the sun has come to stay.

Robin has a tailored suit,
The latest shade in red;
The way he eyes the spinster birds,
I'm sure it's turned his head.

The river wears, for boutonniere,
A sun-gleam on his breast;
And even I am out to air
A brand-new coat and vest.

Women will never again be pushed back into the old seclusion and the old narrowness of life. If they are good enough to be the comrades of the men in the hour of war, they are good enough to be citizens in the days of peace.—Rev. Anthony Gut-tery.