“Trinomials are the subject of today’s lesson,” said the Upper Elementary teacher. “What is a trinomial?”

“We’ve studied binomials and they have two parts,” answered one of the five students sitting at the kidney-shaped table. “So a trinomial must have three parts.”

“That’s right. Tri- means three. It is the ancient Greek word for three and we use it in many words to mean three. Can you think of any others?”

“Triangle.”

“Triceratops.”

“Tricycle.”

“Triaminic.” (It’s the cold season.)

“Try to win a million dollars.”
I remember squaring binomials and trinomials in algebra I. The binomial squared is \((a+b)^2 = a^2 + 2ab + b^2\). The trinomial squared is \((a+b+c)^2 = a^2 + 2ab + b^2 + 2ac + 2bc + c^2\). Soon these Upper Elementary students will be doing this same algebraic representation – and they will have a clearer arithmetic and geometric understanding of it than I ever did.

Next step? Squaring the decanomial!
We are $25,000 away from our $250,000 goal.

Please consider becoming a member of the Leadership Circle (contributors of $2500+) to help the school meet its goal. Leadership Circle members are identified in the annual report and are invited to an exclusive spring reception.

Some of the things this year’s annual fund will be used for: a new school bus(!), several technology enhancements, and a variety of unexpected maintenance repairs including replacement of a blown-up chiller, and extensive repair to our tile roof.

This year’s campaign needs YOU to help us reach our goal. Please give generously.

Grandparents’ Days invitation mailing

Grandparents’ Days will soon be here! If you would like your child’s grandparents or other relatives/friends to be invited to this year’s Grandparents’ Days (November 22 & 23), please go to www.postoakschool.org and submit mailing information. (Grandparents select the most convenient day to attend.) Please feel free to include anyone who you feel would like to observe and/or interact with your children in their Montessori environment. Invitations to Grandparents’ Days were mailed directly to those individuals on Friday, Nov. 5. After Nov. 8, invitations will only be emailed.
SCENES from The Post Oak School

1. Dancing the story of Diwali.
2. Fun with bubbles in the courtyard.
3. Do you think the food coloring will travel up to the leaves and flowers?
4. Pizza tag is the most fun!
5. Dramatis personae in Middle School.
What and when is the Post Oak gala?
The Post Oak School hosts a biennial gala, which is a fun, festive, parents-only event. It consists of an extensive silent auction and an exciting live auction of our children's class art projects. This year’s Gala will take place on February 4, 2011 at the Houstonian Hotel. Watch for your invitation in early January. We hope to see you there.

What is the financial goal of the gala and for what will the funds raised be used?
The biennial gala is the school’s largest fundraiser. Our goal for 2011 is $320,000. Funds are raised through underwriting, ticket sales, advertising, and the live and silent auctions. These funds go toward a variety of school needs, such as technology upgrades, capital improvements, and professional development.

Who underwrites a table and who is invited to sit at the table?
A few tables are corporate purchased; however, most are parent purchased. Many times parents ‘go in together’ and purchase a table. Five couples may team up and purchase a $10,000 by contributing $2,000 per couple, or four couples might buy a $5,000 table, pay $1250 each and then ask a teacher, school administrator or other family to join them. For more information or to purchase a table, contact Lisa Reed or Carol Howenstine.

Why buy a table?
Location, location, location! Underwriters get prime seats in the ballroom amidst all the action plus they have secured seating with friends and fellow parents. Anyone contributing $1,000 or more will be invited to an underwriting cocktail party on January 18, 2011.

I am new to the school. How do I go about finding parents to share a table?
The easiest way is to just ask fellow parents as you meet them and begin to get to know them. Birthday parties are in full swing; so begin asking around and see what other parents are doing. Most likely they are navigating this like you and will be glad you asked! Another way is sending out an email to the parents in your child’s class saying you are pulling together a class table and would any parent like to join in at the $X level.

What is the underwriting cocktail party and why would I want to attend?
This is a small cocktail reception, January 18, 2011, hosted by Post Oak Parents John and Carol Howenstine and John and Lisa Reed. It is a chance to visit with Post Oak Parents on a social basis, preview some of the exclusive items that will be available at the silent auction as well as pre-purchase certain fixed price items that historically sell out with in the first few minutes of the gala.

What can I donate to the silent auction?
Paula Mey and Suzan Samuels are looking for donations of air miles, vacation homes, hotel rewards, restaurant experiences, sport or concert tickets, and hand crafted items along with other consumer goods. If you have a hobby you would like to share or an idea you think would sell, please contact these ladies at [contact information].

I have been seeing ads calling for hosts and hostesses. What does this entail?
Parent hosted social events are some of the most sought after auction items. Historically couples have joined together and hosted an event. Event ideas include a ladies happy hour or dinner, progressive dinners, themed parties for a group of kids and most popular, dinner hosted in a home. The parent hosted dinners can take on any theme: wine paring, ethnic food, etc.

Is it too late to get involved?
There’s lots left to do. Many committees such as decorations and auction display do not begin work until after the first of the year. Plus volunteers are always needed the day of the event. Contact Annette Gregory for more information.

Who buys ads in the gala program?
Ads are a great way to support the school. Commercial business, parent owned companies and families all purchase ads in the gala program. We have law firms, banks, medical offices, landscape architects and many other service providers. Family ads consist of a photo and a simple statement of school or teacher support. Packets are at the front office. Pass them along to your favorite service provider or contact parent Renée Locklar at [contact information] for rates and additional information.

What is the format for the evening?
Cocktails and the silent auction begin at 6:00PM. The class projects are available to view at this time. The seated dinner begins at 8:00 with the program and live auction following shortly thereafter. The live auction consists of the class projects. It ends with lots of dancing!

What is the dress for the event?
Historically the event has been cocktail attire; however, this year in support of our theme ‘Dancing across Cultures’ we are encouraging traditional dress. Don your sari, kimono, cheongsam, kilt, bolero, or cocktail dress and help us celebrate!

Are there hotel rooms available?
The Houstonian is offering Post Oak parents a discounted room rate of $169 the night of the event. Please contact the Houstonian Hotel at 713-680-2626 to reserve your room. Please let them know you will be with The Post Oak School to receive the reduced rate.
The prepared environment—
in High School

by James Moudry,
Middle School & High School Director

In real estate, we know it’s “location, location, location,” but it’s all the more true for a Montessori high school. The past couple of articles about the High School have focused on the budding partnerships in the Museum District. However, to establish the partnerships is just the beginning. The creation of relationships is part of the preparation of the environment for the adolescent students. Remembering that our mission is to create an environment that helps them “prepare themselves” for life, the proximity to the partners is a key factor in choosing a location for the High School.

This past weekend’s Montessori Journey gave us a great opportunity to experience the Montessori prepared environments that our children enjoy everyday. Notice that these are not mere classrooms—a room for a class—but are “prepared.” How are they prepared? Each space is dedicated to a specific age range and the room is carefully arranged and ordered to serve the developmental characteristics and needs of that age.

The environments contain just what is necessary and sufficient for the children’s development. If we add too much, it’s just clutter. If we don’t have enough, the children will be bored. Either way, negative behaviors can result. Each Montessori teacher shows her sensitivities to the age by choosing what materials are available, in what quantities, and in what arrangements—then adds to the room an array of work spaces where children may take the materials to work with them. The materials and the work spaces invite the children to activity, not passivity. Each environment then is more than just a room—it is a laboratory, a studio, a senate, a canvas, a party, a workshop—the environments for each age are optimized to help children prepare themselves for life. The teachers don’t prepare the children, the children prepare themselves!

How should the environment for adolescents be prepared? What should it look like? This environment would not be just a single room, but a series of world-class institutions, each representing a variety of disciplines and providing opportunities without an upper limit. This environment, like all the other Montessori prepared environments before it, calls out to the students; it is attractive and compelling. This prepared environment provides a safe and engaging core learning space from which students can leap off in any direction and to any depth. The environment is populated by adults who provide challenge and support to the adolescent students who are making their way to adulthood. These subject experts must be readily available to students to foster a close connection with the disciplines, but also with the adults who are contributing to society through their work. The location of the High School places the students into direct contact with these exemplars of human society in a variety of fields.

So get ready, because in the afternoon on Saturday, November 3, 2012, we’ll put the journey in Montessori Journey as we travel to the Museum District and see that Montessori prepared environment through the eyes of the Post Oak School class of 2016.

Braes Interfaith Ministries food drive at Post Oak

As the Holidays approach, our thoughts turn to those who are in need of help. We have initiated a community service project in which the children and families in Upper and Lower Elementary can participate. Braes Interfaith Ministries is a group of several churches and denominations in the South Braeswood and West Belfort area of South West Houston. They serve the most urgent needs of a wide cross section of people in our community. To the right are some of the items they are in special need of at this time:

We will be filling our class boxes during the week of November 29–December 3, and we will deliver the donations on December 6. Please help us make this a meaningful experience for the children of Post Oak and a welcomed gift for the families in our community who need our support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Toiletries (indv. pkgd.)</th>
<th>Non-perishable canned &amp; pkgd foods including:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bars of soap</td>
<td>boxes of cereal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shampoo</td>
<td>pkgd pasta &amp; sauce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toothpaste</td>
<td>canned veg, meats etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toothbrushes</td>
<td>rice, lentils, beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hand lotion</td>
<td>evaporated or condensed milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deodorant</td>
<td>tea, coffee, sugar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>talcum powder</td>
<td>cookies/crackers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pkgd soups/broth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dried fruit and nuts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For Infants:

- diapers (sizes 4 & 5)
- Enfamil with Iron; powder baby formula
- baby food (esp. fruit and vegetables)
Race to Nowhere
Screening in the Post Oak gym on
Friday, November 12 at 6:30 pm
Make your plans to attend this eye-opening film.
*Free and open to the public.*
Post Oak School will host a screening of this thought-provoking film about the pressures faced by American schoolchildren and their teachers in a system and culture obsessed with the illusion of achievement. The film will be followed by a panel discussion. Every parent should have an interest in seeing this film and being a part of the conversation.

For more information about the film and to see the trailer, go to www.racetonowhere.com/about-film
For questions about the event, call Christina Kopanidis-Cantu at 713-661-6688 or email her at christinacantu@postoakschool.org.
Childcare is available for Post Oak Primary and Elementary students. (Limited space: call the front office to reserve space - $5 per child).

Becoming a Love and Logic Parent©
Follow-up Conversation with Phylis Tomlinson
December 9, 9:10 am–10:30 am
All are welcomed.

Freedom within limits
The Post Oak School is a Montessori school where children are free to work on whatever they want...the Montessori spirit is for a child to...be spontaneous and unique, and to have spirit for what they're doing.

Conversation quoted by Maria Montessori:
“Is this the kind of school where you do what you like?” — a visitor
“No, but it is the kind of school where we like what we do.” — a child

Bellaire Recycles Day
Nov. 14, 9 am–1 pm
7008 S. Rice Blvd at Jessamine
(the lot w/ water tower @ Bellaire town square)
www.bellairerecycles.org

There will be: kids’ activities; recycling information; a Bellaire garbage truck to check out; and an opportunity to take the recycle pledge.
Groups collecting items for reuse: (note: only the following items will be collected; general recycle materials will not be accepted at the event) Bellaire Lions Club—eyeglasses; Fairy Godmother Project—gently used prom attire; Faith Lutheran Church—coats, jackets, blankets and sleeping bags for Houston/Harris County homeless; Techs and Trainers—computer equipment; and Shred It USA will shred up to 5 bankers boxes per person free of charge.
The 2010 Post Oak School “World’s Fair” Book Fair was an exciting time for all! Thanks to all who attended and helped us achieve record sales to support our school library and provide reading materials for our classrooms. Thank you to Book Fair Chairs Jennifer Chavis and Jessica Gregg, POPA Chairs Melissa Cordero and Erin Stus, and to all who volunteered to make this such a fun and successful evening.
Montessori Journey

Each year, parents, prospective parents, and employees have the opportunity to explore the world Post Oak students experience each day. These are some photos from this year’s Montessori Journey.

Above: Montessori Journey leader Barbara Gordon and Head of School John Long.
Bearkats Soccer

Bearkats had an exciting start this year with several soccer games and enthusiastic crowds.
CALENDAR

For more, visit www.postoakschool.org

NOTICE BOARD

Dad’s Club Poker Tournament!

Monday, November 15 at 8:00 pm

Hosted by Alan Ying

All Post Oak dads are invited • Space is limited

RSVP:

For more information on the Dad’s Club, join their LinkedIn group:
www.linkedin.com/groupInvitation?groupID=3665485

Parent/Employee Basketball every Wednesday

8:00–10:00 pm in the Post Oak gym

Contact Travis Crabtree
tcrabtree@mlaw.com

Barbara Hacker’s green tip

Get on board with “no waste lunch.” It is not so hard! This website can help:
KidsKonserv.com

ABOUT THE WEEKLY POST

The Weekly Post appears on most Fridays of the regular school year.
You can receive a printed copy from your oldest child, or a PDF version online.
Submit letters, articles, or photos in electronic form by 5:00 pm on the Tuesday before publication to Communication Coordinator Shannon Neufeld (shannonneufeld@postoakschool.org). If publication is on a Thursday due to school closure on Friday, then the deadline is 5:00 pm on the preceding Monday.
All photos in The Weekly Post are by Shannon Neufeld unless otherwise noted.
The Post Oak School was founded in 1963 and accredited by both the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) and the Independent Schools Association of the Southwest (ISAS)
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