Pablo Picasso once declared: ‘Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up.’ Well, something similar can be said about scientists. According to a new study in *Cognition* led by Claire Cook at MIT, every child is a natural scientist. The problem is how to remain a scientist once we grow up.”

That’s from Jonah Lehrer’s article “Every Child is a Scientist,” in *Wired* magazine. Three characteristics I admire in Post Oak students are curiosity, initiative, and perseverance—clearly prerequisites for a scientist. So after reading this article, I went looking for evidence on a typical Tuesday. I wasn’t looking for science with a capital ‘S’; I was looking for an experimental approach to doing and learning and the emergence of those personal characteristics.

I observed a five-year old girl writing letters in a sand tray. In front of her she had a model letter...
on a wooden card. She used her index finger to write an “a” in the sand. Then she erased the mark with her other hand and wrote the letter again. She repeated this slowly, deliberately, methodically for almost ten minutes before putting away the wooden card and choosing another to copy. What makes this activity experimental and scientific? This young girl working to perfect her letter “a” in the sand tray reminded me of Thomas Edison, who tried 3,000 different materials for the carbon filament in his electric light bulb before discovering that bamboo worked, and was both durable and inexpensive.

I observed two boys, a six-year-old and an eight-year-old, making music together on the “tone bars,” a sort of xylophone with movable bars. They were picking out the notes to a familiar song, first one boy, then the other. They had the first part of the song figured out, but were hung up in the middle. Progress came with repetition, and each time one of them pushed deeper into the song, he would pass the mallet to his buddy so he could try to duplicate the effort. Were they learning music? Yes. And they were developing curiosity, initiative, and perseverance.

I observed teams of nine, ten, and eleven year old students erecting tents on the soccer field behind the school. They were practicing tent assembly so that when they got to McKinney Falls State Park west of Austin, they would know what they were doing. Ever put up one of those free-standing tents with a carbon fiber exoskeleton? There’s a lot of trial and error involved when you’re on the steep part of the learning curve. This activity is more “practical life” than Science. But it certainly demanded all the social and emotional skills that make for effective teamwork, in addition to curiosity, initiative, and perseverance.

I asked two twelve year old girls if they observed in their classmates “experimentation” in learning. They asked questions to understand clearly what I was thinking; then they asked when I wanted their answer. Two hours later they stopped by my office with a written report. There were six bullet point examples, academic and personal, of students demonstrating curiosity, initiative, and perseverance. Their examples were based on observation, interviews with classmates, and personal reflection. In fact, merely accepting my inquiry as an “assignment,” demonstrated those characteristics.

Yes, academic content matters. And the written report from these two girls clearly shows that they are mastering language arts content. But developing certain personal characteristics is even more important in the education of future scientists. And inventors, artists, engineers, and entrepreneurs.

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Many Thanks to Our Trustees

We would like to acknowledge the Board of Trustees for their tireless work behind the scenes to orchestrate the exciting changes happening at the school this year. We are very grateful for their continual commitment and support of Post Oak.

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The Post Oak Fund is underway! In order to reach our $250,000 goal and complete the campaign by November 15, we need everyone’s support. Please take a moment to help Post Oak be the best it can be. Early thanks to the board and to employees for reaching 100% participation. —Christina Kopanidis-Cantu, Development Director, 281-822-8024

Ways to participate:

- Turn in a response card and gift to the front office.
- Pledge with the response card, or send an email to christinacantu@postoakschool.org.
- Use the online form (www.postoakschool.org) to contribute with a credit card.
- Pledges are due by the end of the school year.

Participation as of 10/13/2010:

- Total parent participation: 42%
- Basham: 17%
- Hacker: 14%
- Hansen: 7%
- Kluk: 31%
- Lodrig: 0%
- Long: 8%
- Middle School: 9%
- Moudry: 0%
- Nickerson: 9%
- Parraguirre: 21%
- E. Pinto: 14%
- M. Pinto: 6%
- Roark: 8%
- Smith: 0%
- Sobhani: 8%
- Winton: 13%
- Yeager: 0%
- Board of Trustees: 100%
- Faculty & Staff: 100%
Embrace the excitement of a Montessori Journey

Online registration open, limited space available

November 4, 6:00–9:00 pm & November 5, 8:00 am–2:00 pm

Each year, the faculty of Post Oak invite prospective and current parents to participate in Montessori Journey.

During this (adults-only) two-day event, participants will experience the five different classroom environments from Infant Community through Middle School, first as an observer and then as a participant receiving lessons and working with classroom materials.

This is a hands-on approach to understanding how and what your child is learning. Enrollment is limited to 40 people and the charge is $30 per person. Register online through the link on the left side of our website.

Get ‘Em While They’re Hot!

Mystery Box Raffle Ticket Sales Are Next Week

Field Day Mystery Box Raffle Tickets will go on sale next week. Tickets will be available for purchase at drop-off and pick-up, as well as the development and business offices. Tickets are 2 for $5 or 10 for $20.
This year we are introducing two exciting new events at Field Day for the whole family in support of our theme, “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.” Hifa Sobhani’s Lower Elementary class is sponsoring our Mosaic bookmark project where young and old can create an artistically crafted bookmark created from 100% recycled mosaic cardstock pieces. We have even used re-purposed cardboard from cereal, snack, and tissue boxes to create the bookmarks themselves. Make sure you stop by the Book Fair table after you are complete to finish off your bookmark with a special tassel!

Have you ever thought about all the extra wood left at a construction site? We are going to bring new life to the scraps of forgotten wood through Post Oak’s project: Blocks for a Brighter Future. Habitat for Humanity has donated leftover wood from a local job site. The 2x4s have been cut to size and shaped and routered for soft edges. At Field Day, children of all ages (and adults too!) will complete the final step of sanding the blocks. A complete set of playing blocks will be donated to a local Habitat family with children. The wood will come full circle – first as discarded wood from a Habitat work site and eventually re-purposed into a new set of blocks to be used for years to come. Make sure you stop by the Block Station and be part of this fun and meaningful activity.

—Jamie Lee & Vivian Lee, Field Day Chairs
Bearkats Pep Rally

We’ve got spirit, yes, we do! Coach Tucker introduced the 2011–2012 Bearkats teams at the pep rally during the September 23 spirit day. The players introduced themselves to the crowd and shared which sport(s) they are playing. Go team! Have a great year!

Fall Schedule

**Soccer games**
- October 11: St. Nicholas Charter School in Meyerland
- October 12: St. Stephen’s at Feld Park at 4:15
- October 26: St. Stephen’s at Feld Park at 4:15
- November 2: St. Stephen’s at Feld Park at 4:15

Basketball practice will start the week of November 7.

**Cross country**
- October 1: John Cooper High School in the Woodlands 9:10 am
- October 4: (6th graders only) at Hershey Park 4:00 pm
- October 20: Dolphin Dash at 4:30
Individual student pictures scheduled
Monday–Thursday, October 17–20

MON., OCT. 17
Maya Pinto
Barbara Hacker
Tamara Basham
Miriam Winton

TUE., OCT. 18
Middle School
Sarah Moudry
Julie Parraguirre
Emily Hansen

WED., OCT. 19
Errol Pinto
Deidre Lodrig
Kathy Long
Hifa Sobhani
Debbie Nickerson

THU., OCT. 20
Laura Roark
Phoebe Yeager
Erin Smith
Orly Kluk

"What did you do at school today?"

"We started assembling the stegosaurus in the Paleontology Hall at the science museum. It was cool."

Learn more at the High School Huddle on October 25 at 7 pm in the gym.
Welcome to New Employees

Ryan Tucker joined the middle school team in June as the humanities and language arts teacher. He immediately set off for Cleveland, Ohio to participate in the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) “Orientation to Adolescent Studies” – the AMI training for middle school and high school teachers. Before joining Post Oak, Ryan taught high school English, language arts, speech, geography and drama at Chinquapin School, where he also coached flag football. Before that, Ryan taught English as a Peace Corps volunteer in Azerbaijan. Ryan has a B.A. in English and Philosophy from East Tennessee State University.

We’re also pleased to introduce James Winslow as Post Oak’s new music teacher. James has a rich and varied background as a teacher, conductor, music director, and performer. He has worked with music students ranging in age from six to eighteen in schools, churches, and youth orchestras. His eight years’ experience singing in the chorus of the Houston Grand Opera will serve him well as we move into opera season here at Post Oak. James has a B. Mus. in vocal performance from Rice University.

Kathryn Murphy joins the Development Office as Development Coordinator. Kathryn will work with POPA leadership coordinating events and with alumni relations. Kathryn comes to Post Oak from the corporate world where her six years’ experience included organizing events, marketing, client relations, information and database management, and organizational planning. Kathryn graduated Magna Cum Laude with a B.S. in international marketing from the University of Alabama.

Welcome to Post Oak!

Bake sale

October 14, 2011
10 am to 1 pm

Mrs. Roark’s class is hosting a bake sale in the common room for the American Red Cross–Texas Wildfire Assistance. Please bring $1 to $5. Donations are welcome. Please make checks payable to the American Red Cross.

Thank you for your participation!

Ante up

The Dad’s Club is looking for a poker night host. Please contact Travis Crabtree at [email] if you are interested. Please join the Dad’s Club group on LinkedIn for more information.
New Faces in Primary

Welcome to students new to Primary this year. Check back for the rest of the new Primary faces in the coming weeks.

Photos by Erin Stus
1. Learning the mechanics of folding.
2. Exploring materials in Infant Community.
3. Threading a needle to sew a button.
4. Reading independently.
5. Skip counting by 3’s and recording the numbers.
6. Learning to tie bows with the bow frame.
7. Counting in millions on the large bead frame.
8. Working with fractions.
9. Preparing wrapping paper for the classroom’s Field Day mystery box.
10. Working together to fill in the landscape.
11. Searching for a biography in the library.
**CALENDAR**

For more, visit www.postoakschool.org

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<tr>
<td>OCTOBER 9–15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 10/10</td>
<td>Columbus Day (school closed) Faculty Retreat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 10/11</td>
<td>Mystery Box Raffle Tickets on sale all week! Prospective Parent Class 9:00–10:00 am</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thu 10/13</td>
<td>Infant Community Parent Ed Event Personality development of the toddler 7:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 10/14</td>
<td>Bake Sale hosted by Laura Roark’s Class. 10:00 am–1:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat 10/15</td>
<td>Field Day Family Event All families &amp; friends are invited! 10:00 am–1:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCTOBER 16–22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon–Thu 10/17–20</td>
<td>Individual school pictures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tue 10/18</td>
<td>The Post Oak Middle School Experience (all parents welcome) 7:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 10/21</td>
<td>Conference day Classes not in session: only expanded year contracts attend</td>
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**NOTICE BOARD**

**Grandparents’ Days invitations**

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 in November, please give your form to the front office or go to www.postoakschool.org and submit mailing information. Please include anyone you think would like to observe and/or interact with your children in their Montessori environment. Invitations will be mailed directly to those individuals the week of Oct. 24.

**BOOK FAIR**

**The Post Oak School**

**BOOK FAIR**

save the date

Thursday, Nov. 3, 9 am–9 pm
Barnes & Noble at 3003 W. Holcombe Blvd.
Chairs: Jennifer Chavis & Jessica Gregg

**Experienced Nanny Available**

Our nanny of five years is available immediately Monday – Friday. She has over 25 years experience as a nanny. She is fluent in English and Spanish and is an extremely safe driver. She handles transportation for the child/children, overall childcare, and light housekeeping. She is honest and trustworthy and she was a joy to have in our home.

If interested: Please call Mary at [phone number]

**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 Communications Coordinator Elaine Schweizer (elaineschweizer@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 Elaine Schweizer 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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