**Essential Components of the Prepared Environment for Creating a**

**Peace Literate (PL) Culture of Respect and Belonging in a**

**Montessori Learning Community**

**1. The Physical Environment**

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| **Essential Components** | **Details for your grade band** |
| **a) Materials**   * Provided by students as co-creators of their environment, establishing belonging, e.g.,   + Student art shared after lessons on, e.g.,     - Fires of distress     - Alternatives to aggression     - Nonphysical needs * Provided by adults * Core values/virtues of each building are displayed * Peace Literacy materials displayed in Peace Corner, e.g.,   + - 9 Nonphysical Needs     - Fires Beneath Aggression     - 7 Deep Roots of Healthy Belonging     - Muscles of Our Humanity   + Artifacts     - Objects that reflect the seasons (and change with the seasons)   **b) Room layout/furniture**   * Children are able to move freely throughout the classroom without asking permission to do their work.   + Rugs/mat for floorwork * Classrooms have a combination of floor surfaces, part carpet and part hard surface for ease of cleaning and designated for “messy” work. * Furniture can be moved and arranged to meet specific work needs. * Materials and furniture are made of natural elements and cared for with natural/environmentally friendly products where possible * Information is provided visually as to the materials’ components to support and enhance students' understanding of their learning environment. * Observer chair is present in a designated location   + Detailed large group lesson/procedure on observer chair at onset of school year including general observer protocol   + Children are prepared prior to observer’s arrival and procedure is reviewed   + Children are provided leadership role in observer protocol * Furniture and equipment is available for children to support sensory needs (ex. wiggle seats, fidgets, noise-canceling headphones, etc.) * Natural light * **Four fundamental freedoms** are reflected in the room layout that give children control over:   + What to work on   + Where to work   + With whom to work   + How long to continue with a chosen work     - Self-directed learning is supported by choice of work with manipulatives, requests to teachers for lessons and choosing to work with peers.   **c) A**[**ssistive technology in the classroom**](https://study.com/academy/lesson/assistive-technology-in-the-classroom-types-uses.html)   * is any program, device, or equipment piece that is intended to help improve the way children comprehend and interact with others. * Becoming informed on the [history and advantages of assistive technology](https://study.com/academy/course/assistive-technology-in-education.html) in learning can help teachers better incorporate it into their classroom. * Children with [intellectual or emotional disabilities benefit from assistive technology](https://study.com/academy/lesson/assistive-technology-for-intellectual-disabilities.html) because it gives them more independence over their work. * [Assistive technology has benefits for gifted and talented children,](https://study.com/academy/lesson/assistive-technology-for-gifted-talented-students.html) too, as it allows them to learn at their own pace as well as participate in collaboration. * Technology is used as a means to meet developmental goals of a child * Technology is viewed as a component of preparation for life and is used to prompt tech literacy * Distance learning basic technology protocols are developed and revised as needed   **d) Outdoor space/space beyond the classroom**   * Classrooms have procedures for work to happen in the hall or other parts of the building, safely and responsibly. |  |